

OLD SEEWIG'S ALMANAC – 2023

Old SeeWig (or SeaWig, Old Norse for 'Water Wise') was the traditional name for a ship's Cat taken aboard for its fortune telling skills. The Cat would predict dangers by doing its SeeWig dance: Looking up or down or right or left to identify sources of danger and then whisking its tail to indicate their severity.

It's impossible to assess the accuracy of these four-legged seers since so few ever returned to port. But that any did at all surely indicates a degree of success. CWG's own Zebra Puss Lily comes from an impeccable Weymouth family of vatic felines. She tells the future by watching Channel 4 News and doing the traditional dance along with a few more contemporary moves as appropriate.

JANUARY

It is rumoured that in Heaven St Peter causes consternation by asking new arrivals Pele and Pope Benedict, "So which one of you is the footballer?" Before adding, "My little joke. You're very welcome Guys."

In London Prime Minister Sunak is less welcome when he passes a law requiring all UK citizens to study maths until the age of 67. Access to State Pension will depend upon satisfactory performance in annual tests. Any hint of cheating will involve permanent disqualification. (Testing to be administered by fast-tracked Mancock EdPro.)

In addition, everyone over 9 months of age will be required to pass annual assessment of medical knowledge and competence. (To be administered by Mancock EdPro.) Failure at any point will mean permanent exclusion from nursery and state school provision and NHS Services.

Sunak says Health is now everyone's responsibility and this law will reduce pressure on the NHS. Research by Mancock MedCo has shown that even neonates are capable of self-assessment and can identify health improvement strategies. (Such as by crying in order to be fed.)

A survey reveals that going on a diet is the least observed of all New Year's Resolution. (Although responses to the No Alcohol? question prove impossible to decipher.)

Matt Hancock will still appear on Strictly Come Dancing despite being paired with the re-gendered Demonica Cummings.

FEBRUARY

Prime Minister Sunak loses a snap Confidence vote and resigns.

Boris Johnson immediately returns from Hawaii by charter jet to campaign for the Conservative Party leadership. He is moving his furniture back into Number 10 when a Liz Truss victory is announced.

A computer error is blamed since Truss isn't even on the ballot. However, she returns as PM and in her first 15 minutes she sacks all Westminster personnel and replaces them with agency staff hired from Mancock ManPro.

A disastrous drop in the Pound allows savvy mid-Channel asylum-seekers to buy up 69% of British business and real estate using their mobile phones.

An immediate vote of No Confidence leads to Truss's defeat and the return of Rishi Sunak. The Pound continues to sink.

Wales, Scotland and the Isle of Wight apply for EU membership.

MARCH

Following the revelation in Prince Harry's "Spare" that domestic violence broke his pet dog's bowl, the dog sues both Princes for damages. "It was vintage Meissen and of great sentimental value," says Jaws. "Not to mention the rabbit stew it contained which has mysteriously disappeared. I JUST WANT TO KNOW THE TRUTH!" he barked.

Elon Musk launches crowd-sourced bid to buy the Vatican and pledges to "Shake the old place up!" He is supported by ex-President Trump saying, "This is going to be bigger than Bitcoin! Get in or get lost, suckers!"

Theresa May wakes up to find she has been re-elected Conservative Party Leader. She immediately loses a Confidence Vote and sets a new record in the hotly contested Shortest Serving UK Prime Minister category in the Guinness Book of Records.

APRIL

Bio-Scientists at CalTech claim success in re-constructing humans from DNA samples drawn from great composers of the past. Newly-reborn 'Mozart' and 'Beethoven' give a press conference to thank their creators. They speak in perfect English and promise to produce new works to encourage World Peace and Harmony and not sue record companies and orchestras for 200 years of unpaid royalites. This claim is greeted with scepticism by Donald Trump who launches a fund to defeat the pseudo-living Dead.

In London Rishi Sunak returns as Prime Minister. He abandons his Maths and Health programmes and is promptly sued by Mancock LawPro for loss of earnings running into several billion pounds. Sunak resigns immediately.

MAY

Liz Truss returns as UK Prime Minister and appeals to the people of Rwanda for help in re-building the shattered British economy.

In Russia the Tsar is restored to the throne and immediately claims to be the rightful King of Great Britain. David Starkey and other eminent historians say he may well have a very strong case.

JUNE

In London Rishi Sunak returns once more to power and promises firm, prudent and cautious policies to re-vitalise the Nation. Therefore he commits to colonising the Moon before the end of the current Parliament in 2025.

Mission Rishi Dun-Well will involve an extensive programme of oil field development in the Home Counties and the construction of a massive fleet of space ships. Once on the Moon 500 RishiDome Urban complexes will be built to house the 2 million volunteer colonists and failed asylum seekers. This intrepid band of pioneers will be known for all history as Sunaktics.

The PM says that with British ingenuity and hard work this Plan can easily be completed on time and within budget. Sir Gavin Williamson will head the project. Consultancy services will be provided by Mancock GoPro.

"With this talent what can possibly go wrong?" crows the Prime Minister.

JULY

In Windsor the Royal Family announces that it will attempt to regain its place in the affections of the Nation by ending the damaging dispute between William and Harry once and for all.

The Princes will fight a duel in Wembley Stadium under the watchful eyes of the College of Arms. Weapons have yet to be agreed but will be chosen from a list including: axes, maces, war hammers, broadswords, long swords, short swords, halberds, lances, and, of course, knives, both front and back.

Broadcasting rights to be auctioned.

AUGUST

Britain has the hottest August since records began say scientists. But dark-funded climate sceptics claim this is “a purely natural phenomenon that has happened many times before.”

Elon Musk launches bid to buy the British Royal Family. “I’ll shake ‘em up!” he vows. “Shake, Rattle, and Roll ‘em up!”

Sir Keir Starmer makes a major policy statement, promising to give back control to the Regions of the UK. “I will resist and reduce the concentration of power in Westminster. I will do this... Whatever the Resistance, whatever the Cost... Because I believe in this place,” he says in a speech made in London.

The last shop in the High Street closes.

SEPTEMBER

Scientists at Mancocks SoPro? show that human effluent dumped into rivers by Water Companies can be a cheap nutritious food, suitably processed. Water Companies impose retrospective price rises for all customers.

OCTOBER

Wholesale energy prices drop around the world. Energy Companies respond by raising prices for consumers: “Because we feel sad!”

'Mozart' and 'Beethoven' perform their “First Show in 200 Years!” in a sell-out open air concert in San Diego. This programme turns out to be a 5 hour jam based on Grateful Dead and Jimi Hendrix songs. The audience is ecstatic and begs for more.

NOVEMBER

Leicester Primary School twins, 9 year old Tracey and Terry Laquoba, claim to have found a cheap method of producing energy from household dust and an old shoe box. “It really works!” says their delighted teacher, Ms Shaw.

But neither she nor the Laquoba Family turn up for their advertised Press Conference. A typed note pinned to the classroom door reads: “We deeply regret our foolish and ill-conceived practical joke which has caused such inconvenience and distress to the Media and the Public. We are going into a retreat to meditate upon our thoughtless behaviour. Please do not look for us. We are consumed with shame and guilt and pity for our gullible victims. Leave us to wallow in our misery. *Tracey and Terry.*”

In Westminster a procedural error results in Jeremy Corbyn becoming leader of the Conservative Party and therefore Prime Minister. He appoints Mick Lynch and the entire membership of the RMT Union to the House of Lords. Together they form a government of National Unity.

DECEMBER

With Britain out of the race Elon Musk launches his bid to buy the Moon. “It’s a bit of a reach,” he says. “But if anyone can do it, it’s Me,” he promises. “I’ll certainly get there before Bezos, Branson

or that other British clown.”

Greta Thunberg rescues Ms Shaw and the Laquoba Family from the abandoned colliery where they are being held prisoner. “It wasn't hard to figure out,” she says. “The Note was typical PR blarney so I went to their house and there was the family dog barking inside. I released Lulu and she led me straight to the Family and Ms Shaw. They're all fine. Oh, and by the way, the dust and shoebox invention really does work. Happy Christmas one and all!”