

# DESERT ISLAND TIMES

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No.15

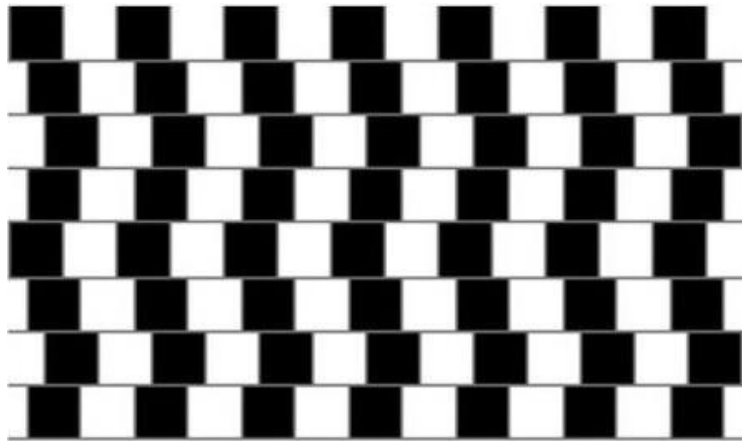
26th June 2020



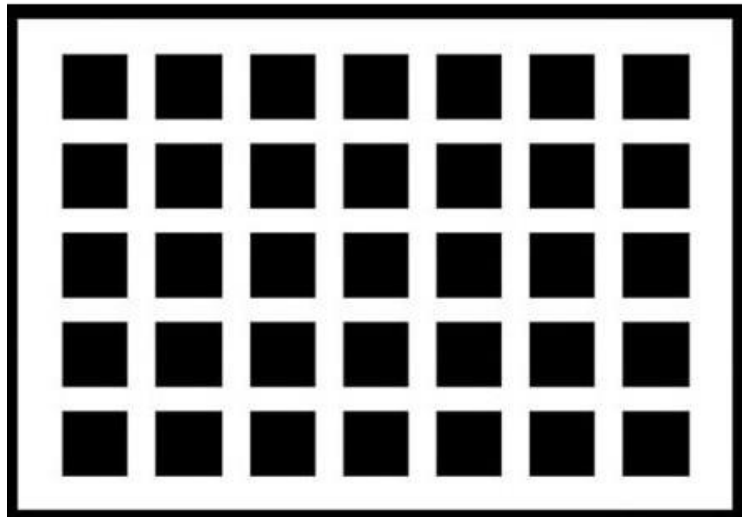
*Newport Bridge from the Old Green, c1890*

*A MISCELLANY OF  
CONTRIBUTIONS  
FROM OUR MEMBERS*

## Something Different this Week! Optical Illusions



Are the horizontal lines parallel or do they slope?



Do you see grey areas in between the squares?  
Now where did they come from?



You should see a man's face and also a word...

Hint: Try tilting your head to the right, the world begins with 'L'

## **The LBJ (Little Brown Jobs') Fatball League Match - Mike Brown.**

We have had even more time to watch the antics of our garden birds recently. We were in stitches, laughing, when the remains of a fatball fell out of the feeder and the following really did happen - or so it seemed!

Immediately it was pounced upon by a Sparrow that came running with it onto the pitch (I mean patio) followed by the rest of his team and then, in hot pursuit, by the Dunnocks' team. A Blackbird, wanting a bite of the action, joined in the fray but couldn't keep up and chased around like a demented referee.

After the kick off a young winger did well to get his pass to the fly half who touched down with ease at the rockery end of the pitch. No 8 converted and piled on the pressure.

There was some great interplay from the Dunnocks' backs and the fatball was beaked into touch. A stolen lineout allowed a full back to pluck up the fatball and he flew off into a stiff breeze. It went right along the back line, and was drop kicked over the patio table.

It's up for grabs! They were getting tired and considering bringing on some substitutes when a Jackdaw swooped down and stole the fatball! ... They think it's all over ... It is now!

Who needs live sport on TV?

## **FOOTBALL QUIZ COMPILED BY ROB WILKINSON**

- 1 Who are the top two teams in Edinburgh ?
- 2 What is the name of the Premier League team based in Perth ?
- 3 Which English football team plays in the Scottish League ?
- 4 Which team in the top three divisions is furthest north in Scotland ?
- 5 ...and which is furthest south ?
- 6 Name the current manager of Wolverhampton Wanderers.
- 7 Who is currently the first choice goalkeeper for Liverpool and where is he from ?
- 8 Which English team is known as The Gas or The Pirates ?
- 9 Only one team in England wears green as its first choice in kit. Which ?
- 10 What's the nickname for Northampton Town ?
- 11 What is the Latin inscription on the Everton shirt and what does it mean ?
- 12 Who is the oldest manager in the English Premier League, as at 21/6/20 ?
- 13 Which ex Cardiff City player died recently at the age of 35 ?
- 14 Which team play at Portman Road ?
- 15 Which two English teams play at St James' Park ?
- 16 Which English team used to play at Gay Meadow ?
- 17 Which player gained most international caps for England ?
- 18 .....and which for Wales ?

Answers are on page 13

## Two Poems by Martyn Vaughan

### BREAK OF DAY

Do not leave me yet, I pray  
though still your eyes are dry.  
Lie with me till break of day.

I turn to you, you turn away,  
my pleas draw no more than a sigh.  
Do not leave me yet I pray.

Our time (so bright!) has dulled to grey  
like winter clouds that stain the sky.  
Lie with me till break of day.

Our lives are real, not some trite play;  
let not love be murdered by a lie!  
Do not leave me yet, I pray.

If this my flesh were forged of clay  
still blood would spurt to hear "Goodbye,"  
Lie with me till break of day.

Though tears be dry and love astray  
Would your feet be still if I would cry?  
Do not leave me yet, I pray.  
Stay with me till break of day.

### THE WIND

The wind from the sun buffets the worlds.  
It streams over the lavas of Caloris;  
It presses fiery fingers into Cytherean storms.  
Here, over Peary Land its shimmering curtains  
Dance in the dark when the great bears  
And the Great Bear shiver in the night.  
Into Imbrium's dust it throws its ions,  
Sweeping on to bombard defenceless Tharsis  
And the unplumbed Valley of the Mariner.  
About The King it places twin circlets  
And around His aged father too.

The wind is fading now as it sweeps  
Past the far Frost Giants and across  
The dim Styx and its Ferryman.  
At last, in the silent darkness  
The wind flutters and dies; fades and falls.

But there in the depths of endless night  
For a moment it meets other winds  
And listens lovingly to their tales.

## Sudoku

Each row and each column has to contain numbers 1 to 9 once only; each large square of nine smaller squares likewise. Do not guess numbers! Work out each by elimination.

This week, although you have four puzzles again, only No 1 is described as "Easy". Nos 2 and 3 are described as being of "Medium" difficulty. No 4 is "Hard". Good luck!

1

1	6	9	8		2		4	
		3		4				8
	4	2						7
		1	7	6	4			
7				5				6
			3	9	1	7		
3						9	6	
9				8		4		
	2		9		7	5	8	3

2

4		8	5	7	3	2		
	5			2				
			6	9				7
	3	9			4	8		
			5	2			6	7
5				4	7			
				8			2	
		4	9	6	2	7		8

3

			6				8	
		7	4			6	9	1
9		1						
4			3	7	9	8		
		8	1		5	9		
		9	8	2	4			3
						5		7
1	4	6			8	3		
	9				3			

4

		1			7	5	6	
	7				4			
		5		2				
	2			4			1	
5		4		6		8		3
	9			3			5	
				5		2		
			3				7	
	6	8	4			9		

## What We Were Doing This Time ... - Angela Robins.

**Three Years Ago** members went on a day trip to the picturesque village of Ashton-Under-Hill in the south of Worcestershire. En-route there was a short stop at Cheltenham, enough time to have a coffee and admire the elegant architecture and floral displays. A brief ride and we arrived at Ashton for its 41st Annual Open Gardens Event.

The quintessential village has a mile long ascending lane which takes you past a wide selection of the local rural architecture with C16th chocolate box thatched cottages, a C15th black and white farmhouse, an elegant stone manor house, red brick Victorian cottages and even a few modern houses squeezed in. All affording magnificent views of Bredon Hill and the Vale of Evesham.

Very little remains of its old orchards although the traditions of the market gardener can be seen in the gardens which range from small cottage gardens seen from the lane through to landscaped gardens with ponds and streams that we meandered through. Most beautifully manicured but some delightfully relaxed and rambling, and all a riot of colourful planting.

Light lunches and cream teas served in the church and primary school were very popular with our members. At the Plantsman's Market many plants were purchased which jostled for room on the coach's return journey!



**Last Year** Greg Platt, the convenor of the All That Jazz Group, arranged for a professional Jazz quartet to play for the pleasure of all our members. Greg himself has performed with many musicians for several decades so he has managed to call upon some of his musician friends over the last few years to put together some great little bands for this popular annual event.

The band soon had us clapping and foot tapping to some well-known jazz tunes and the highlight was Greg singing solo for the final number.

This was Greg's last meeting as a convenor. Our Chairman, Stephen Berry, thanked him for all his hard work and for providing some wonderful memories for us all in his various roles within our U3A.

(Unfortunately, the new convenor, Mike Brown has had to postpone this month's concert).



Some Sound Advice submitted by Hannah Parker

**Just because you can, doesn't  
mean you should!**



## NEIL PRITCHARD'S MUSICAL JOURNEYS

### MUSIC OF COLOUR - BLACK COMPOSERS MATTER



Ignatius Sancho



Chevalier  
de Saint-Georges



José  
Nunes Garcia



Scott Joplin



Samuel  
Coleridge-Taylor



Clarence White

Emerging from slavery only in the early to mid 19th century, significant numbers of African-Americans, plus those of African descent living in Europe and other parts of the world, were barred from majority (white) culture musical institutions. Consequently they were generally prohibited from learning the general practices associated with the composition and performance of classical music. Against the backdrop of this history I am going to look at the lives and the music produced by Black Classical Composers since the early 18th century, which will give you some idea of the extreme prejudice they often had to overcome. In view of this I find it remarkable how they managed to produce music at all, let alone music of such fine quality. Over the years the classical music world, unlike the popular music scene in the same time period, was very often reluctant to embrace black composers. Thankfully that is less so these days, but most black classical composers still have still not got the recognition they deserve.

The first classical composer of African ancestry was Ignatius Sancho who was born in 1729 and died in 1780. Raised as a house slave in Greenwich, England, he taught himself to read and educated himself very broadly from books owned by an aristocratic family with whom he obtained employment as a young man. Sixty-two of his short compositions survive in four self-published volumes. A "Collection of New Songs" are perhaps Sancho's most interesting compositions along with a collection of minuets for chamber orchestra. It is generally accepted that the music of Ignatius Sancho is the equal of the leading composers of his day. His compositions are of great historical significance in understanding the roots and origins of a classical tradition among black musicians in the West. His published music records the achievements of one black composer from the eighteenth century who was active at a time when most persons of African descent were slaves. We are going to hear 4 minuets. These are both elegant and brilliantly composed. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9VUJY688nd8>

One of the leading black composers of the Classical period was Chevalier de Saint-Georges. He was born Joseph de Bologne in 1745 on a plantation in the French Caribbean island of Guadeloupe. His mother was Anne Nanon, slave-mistress of his father, the nobleman George de Bologne de Saint-Georges. He was educated in France, where his father became Gentleman of the King's Chamber. (His father's duties included assisting the King with his dressing, waiting on him when he ate in private, guarding access to him in his bedchamber and providing companionship). At the age of 13 he began 6 years at a fencing academy where he excelled at fencing and sports generally. When he was 17 he was renamed Le Chevalier de Saint-Georges. His skill on the harpsichord and violin earned him dedications from major composers, he then studied with the French composers François-Joseph Gossec and Jean-Marie Leclair, and became first violin of Le Concert Des Amateurs, a Paris based orchestra.

His string quartets were among the first composed in France and were performed from 1772. In that same year he became the conductor (at the age of 27) of the Le Concert Des Amateurs. His bid to manage the Paris Opera failed when 3 women objected to working for "a black man", but he then directed the prestigious musical theatre of the Marquise de Montesson. He published two symphonies in 1776, and



two more in 1778 and in the following year composed three violin concertos and six string quartets. Early that year Saint-George began performing music with Queen Marie-Antoinette which helped greatly to raise his profile and also stem the "tide of racial prejudice".

Saint-George got his big breakthrough when he was appointed conductor of the Le Concert de la Loge Olympique,(founded in 1783) which was then considered one of the finest orchestra's in Europe. He went on to conduct Haydn's "Paris Symphonies" in 1787 and directed an important private musical theatre, where some of his own songs and operas were performed. He died in 1799 at the age of 55. It's interesting to note that he was Mozart's tutor when Mozart was "learning the ropes" as a young boy - no racial prejudice there! The sad thing is that even to this day his music has a low profile, with few of his works performed. See what you think when you hear the piece I've chosen.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRBUA5rgaLs>

The next significant black composer was José Mauricio Nunes Garcia, an Afro-Brazilian composer and organist, born in 1767 (in Rio de Janeiro) the grandson of slaves. Over 240 works of music by Garcia have survived. His biographer wrote that Jose sang beautifully, wrote music, and played the harpsichord and guitar without lessons. He adds that Garcia taught music from the age of 12 and wrote his earliest surviving work, "Tota pulchra Es Maria," in 1783. He studied for the priesthood and joined the brotherhood of Saint Cecilia as a music teacher in 1784 at the age of 17. By 1788 he was composing anthems and works for church services, and two years later he gained fame with his "Funeral Symphony." Garcia was ordained as a priest in March 1792 and when the chapel master died in 1797 succeeded him.

When the Portuguese Royal Family took refuge in Brazil in March 1808 clerics who accompanied them tried to remove Garcia from his position, because of his race, but did not succeed. The Royal Family overruled them and he was then told to concentrate on composition. In 1817 he composed the first Brazilian opera, "Le Due Gemelle" ("The Two Twins"), unfortunately the score was destroyed by fire in 1825. In December 1819 Garcia conducted the first Brazilian performance of Mozart's "Requiem" . His last work, before he died in 1830, was the "St. Cecilia's Mass." One of his finest works is his Requiem, composed in 1816, which as you will hear shows the influence of Mozart.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gt7uyGa8ai8>

And now for a familiar name - Scott Joplin. He was born in Texas in 1868 and as a composer and pianist he was known, at the turn of the 20th century, as the "King of Ragtime". Joplin spent his childhood in north eastern Texas. He studied music at the George R. Smith College for Negroes and hoped for a career as a concert pianist and classical composer. His first published songs brought him fame, and in 1900 he moved to St. Louis to work more closely with the music publisher John Stark. He published his first extended work, a ballet suite using the rhythms of ragtime, with his own choreography in 1902. His first opera, "A Guest of Honour" was produced in 1903 but had limited success. Moving to New York City in 1907, most of Joplin's efforts involved work on a 3 act opera "Treemonisha", which unfortunately had only one public performance during Joplin's lifetime.

By 1916, Joplin was suffering from syphilis which led to a mental breakdown. In January 1917 he was admitted to a mental institution. He died there in 1917 of syphilitic dementia at the age of 49 and was buried in a pauper's grave that remained unmarked until 1973. His grave was finally given a marker in 1974, the year the film "The Sting" (which showcased his music) won the Best Picture at the Oscars. Joplin's reputation as a composer rests on his classic rags for piano, including "Maple Leaf Rag" and "The Entertainer", and the opera, Treemonisha. Treemonisha was well received when produced by an Atlanta Georgia opera company on Broadway in 1972, but there have been few performances since. After his death, jazz historian Floyd Levin noted: "his was the passing of the king of ragtime, the man who gave America a genuine native music".

Scott Joplin wrote a very large amount of classical music (a symphony, piano concerto, piano pieces and more) which his wife kept after his death, but it was all put in storage and is now lost. It's very sad to think that so many of his works are lost, so it's not possible to assess how significant these works were. In the end, the reason Joplin's music received little attention for a spell of forty years until the 70's, is the same reason Joplin never found true success in his lifetime. Certainly, his being black in an America, most of whose citizens saw black people as barely human, didn't help. Yet a white Scott Joplin would have had little more success. Almost obsessed with fashioning ragtime as high art, Joplin was beset by two obstacles. First, high art always has a small audience; second, even at its finest ragtime is an art of limited scope, incompatible with larger scale demanded of classical music. I thought rather than play a ragtime number, we'd hear an excerpt from the opera *Treemonisha*. The opera's theme is that education is the salvation of the Negro race and is represented by the heroine and educator *Treemonisha*, who runs into trouble with a local band of magicians who kidnap her. Joplin died in poverty after trying to secure a performance of this work. This is the finale. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ukgWU6JCZkg>

On 28 August 1912, a 37-year-old man collapsed at West Croydon station while waiting for a train. He died later from pneumonia brought on by overwork. His name was Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. Some called him the black Dvorak. His death provoked warm tributes in the press, and his funeral procession through Croydon was lined for three and a half miles by crowds with their heads bared. There was a huge wreath, sent by "the sons and daughters of West Africa resident in London", in the shape of Africa with Sierra Leone picked out in red.

Yet Coleridge -Taylor, who was born in Holborn and raised in Croydon, never saw his ancestral homeland. Born to a black doctor from Sierra Leone and a white English mother, he travelled a great deal - especially to the US, where he was phenomenally successful. But he never went to Africa. Only 14 years before his death, Coleridge-Taylor had burst upon the British music scene with the premiere at the Royal College of Music of his most famous work, his cantata "*Hiawatha's Wedding Feast*". This is the only work of his that gets a performance these days! According to the composer Hubert Parry: "word had got around London's music scene that an extraordinary event was about to take place". As a result, the small room reserved for the performance was besieged by eager crowds, a large proportion of whom were shut out - but accommodation was found for Sir Arthur Sullivan and other musicians of eminence. Expectation was not disappointed. London papers hailed the work as a masterpiece, but Coleridge-Taylor relinquished copyright for the piece for only 15 guineas, even though thousands of copies of the score were later sold. This was one of the reasons Coleridge-Taylor died so young, he had to work hard for little reward to take care of his family, and in any case he seemed incapable of turning down offers to conduct, write or teach.

*Hiawatha's Wedding Feast* is not as popular now as it was in the first decades of the 20th century, though it is one of the few of his works that remains well known and sung regularly by choral societies. Much of his other work (operas, songs, chamber music, a symphony) has fallen into neglect. The *Violin Concerto* (composed in 1912) is an example. The slow movement is a real gem. Why don't we hear this more often? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EzwbGZb9eVU>

And now to a composition pupil of Coleridge Taylor: Clarence Cameron White. Born in Clarksville, Tennessee in 1880. His father died when he was only two years old and he relocated with his mother and younger brother to Oberlin Ohio to live with her parents. It was here that he was first exposed to the violin. He records: "My mother took me to hear *The Messiah* sung at the conservatory and I came away humming snatches of it. Mother thought I had a good musical ear and persuaded my grandfather, to give me his violin. I was only six at the time, nevertheless, my grandfather pouted, "I'll give him the violin. But if he ever plays at a dance I'll take it back." In 1890, Mrs. White remarried and White moved with his family to Washington D.C, whose black communities had very active music scenes.

He attended Ohio Conservatory of Music between 1896 and 1901. Shortly after he won a violin scholarship. He was a protégé of Emma Azalia Hackley who raised money for his scholarship to allow him to study abroad (Emma Azalia Hackley was an African-American singer and political activist. She promoted racial pride through her support and promotion of music education for African Americans). Traveling to London, White studied composition with Coleridge-Taylor in 1906. He maintained an active career as a performer, teacher, and composer and during the first decades of the twentieth century - he was considered the foremost violinist of his race. From 1903 (when he was 23) to 1907 he served as the head of the string department of the Washington Conservatory of Music. As a concert violinist he received critical praise and toured the United States with his wife Beatrice (a pianist) who was a founding member of the National Association of Negro Musicians.

In his music he drew upon themes and harmonies from African American and other African musical styles and traditions. His early output consisted of compositions that incorporated spirituals and arrangements of spirituals. As White matured, the forms he used became more varied for example he used 'Negro' themes for his string quartet and other chamber music. He died from cancer in 1960 leaving a legacy of some very fine works. The Chant - "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen" based on the negro spiritual is a fine example of his writing for violin. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VIPoiD-YQ6A>

What about women composers? Florence Price was the first African-American woman to make a mark on the classical music scene, when her music was performed by a major symphony orchestra in 1933. She was born in 1887 in Arkansas to a music teacher mother and a dentist father. Her mother encouraged her talented daughter in her musical studies and Price eventually went on to study at the New England Conservatory of Music, majoring in piano and organ. She graduated with honours, and by 1910 was the head of the music department at Clark University in Atlanta, Georgia. Not bad for a 23-year-old! In 1912 she married Thomas J Price and they moved back to her home town of Little Rock Arkansas, until racial tension in the city escalated to the point that there was a lynching near Thomas's office. The family then moved to Chicago in 1927, but throughout this period Price had continued studying composition and in 1928 she published four pieces for piano.

In 1931 Price and Thomas divorced, leaving Florence with two daughters to look after. At this time she began working as an organist for silent films and composed songs for radio ads, to make ends meet. In 1932 she and her housemate, fellow composer Margaret Bonds, entered the Wanamaker Foundation Awards, a leading musical award body. She took first prize for her Symphony in E minor. The Symphony was then performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and she was catapulted into her life as a composer. She developed a style of music that brought together the European classical tradition, in which she was trained, and the haunting melodies of African-American spirituals and folk tunes. She was a deeply religious person, so incorporated the music of the African-American church into her music, as well as influences from the likes of Dvořák, Tchaikovsky and other European Romantic composers. She went on to write other extended works for orchestra, chamber works, art songs, works for violin, organ anthems, piano pieces, spiritual arrangements, four symphonies, three piano concertos, and a violin concerto. She made considerable use of characteristic black melodies and rhythms in many of her works. She died from a stroke in 1953 in Chicago at the age of 66. Following her death, much of her work was overshadowed. Some of her work was lost, but as more African-American and female composers have gained attention for their works, so has Price. Here's the second movement of the Symphony No. 3. This draws on a wide range of musical colours. While no actual spirituals are quoted, Price's original melodies contain their essence, and they are brilliantly worked into the music.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Z7zEYFQrTw>

We now enter the world of one of America's foremost composers, William Grant Still. He became known as the "Dean of African-American Classical Composers," as well as having the distinction of becoming a legend in his own lifetime. He was born in 1894 in Woodville, Mississippi, to parents who were teachers

and musicians. They were of Negro, Indian, Spanish, Irish and Scottish bloods. When William was only a few months old, his father died and his mother took him to Little Rock, Arkansas, where she taught English in the high school. There his musical education began, with violin lessons from a private teacher, and with later inspiration from the Red Seal operatic recordings bought for him by his stepfather.

At the end of his college years, he entered the world of popular music, playing in orchestras and orchestrating, working in particular with the violin, cello and oboe. His employers included Sophie Tucker, Paul Whiteman and the Jazzman Artie Shaw. While in Boston playing oboe in the Shuffle Along orchestra Still applied to study at the New England Conservatory with the classical composer George Chadwick and was again rewarded with a scholarship due to Mr. Chadwick's own vision and generosity. In the Twenties, Still made his first appearances as a serious composer in New York. He received important commissions from the Columbia Broadcasting System, the New York World Fair in 1939, Paul Whiteman, the League of Composers and the Cleveland Orchestra

In 1939, Still married journalist and concert pianist, Verna Arvey, who became his principal collaborator. They remained together until he died of heart failure on December 3, 1978. Still was the first Afro-American in the United States to have a symphony performed by a major symphony orchestra and he was the first to conduct a major symphony orchestra in the United States. He achieved a number of notable firsts for a black composer, he was:

- the first African-American to conduct a major symphony orchestra in the Deep South of the USA in 1955, when he directed the New Orleans Philharmonic Orchestra.
- the first American Composer to have an opera produced by a major company in the United States, when in 1949, his "Troubled Island" was produced at the Centre of Music and Drama in New York City.
- the first composer to have an opera televised over a national network.

Still wrote over 150 compositions, including operas, ballets, symphonies, chamber works, and arrangements of folk themes, especially Negro spirituals, plus instrumental, choral and solo vocal works. He certainly made a mark on the American classical music scene! We'll hear the third movement from his most popular work the Afro-American Symphony (Spot the clever use of "I got Rhythm" in this movement. Still's symphony pre-dates Porgy and Bess, so it may be that Still influenced Gershwin.).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R7ZOAVraaRU>

Another leading female composer (who I've already mentioned as the housemate of Florence Price) is Margaret Bonds. She was a pianist and composer noted for her musical adaptations of Shakespeare. Bonds was the first African American soloist to appear with the Chicago Symphony and played an important role in the development of twentieth century classical and musical theatre. Born in Chicago, Illinois in 1913, her parents were separated two years later leaving young Bonds to be raised by her mother. Showing promise at an early age, she completed her first composition at the age of five. Her musical skills were encouraged by her mother, who was also a musician and a frequent host to African American writers, artists, and musicians. Visitors from the local Chicago area and around the country would regularly play in the Bond home, and their presence and performances there clearly had an effect on young Margaret. These encounters were so extensive that Bond would later claim she knew every living African American composer.

After receiving bachelor's and master's degrees in music from Northwestern University in 1933 and 1934 respectively, Bonds went on to a successful career writing pieces for the Glenn Miller Orchestra and regularly performing on the radio. Although Bonds was educated as a classical musician, her work was versatile and strongly influenced by jazz and blues. Her compositions were performed by a large number of concert artists including Louis Armstrong and Woody Herman. In 1936 she also founded the Allied Arts Academy, an institution for talented African American children in Chicago. She later moved to New York, married William Richardson in 1939, and began working as an editor for the Clarence Williams Publishing

House. Eventually she settled in Los Angeles where she was the director of the Inner City Repertory Theatre.

Throughout her career Bonds produced a wide range of work, spanning orchestral compositions, theatrical accompaniments, and traditional African American spiritual arrangements. She was widely credited with creating new interest in traditional African American musical forms, history, and culture. She died in April 1972 in Los Angeles at the age of 59. One of her finest works is a piano piece Troubled Waters. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzdwhBsdIHY>

Finally I'm going to look at Wynton Marsalis. He is an internationally acclaimed musician, composer and bandleader, an educator and a leading advocate of American culture. He has created and performed a wide range of music from quartets to big bands, chamber music ensembles to symphony orchestras and tap dance to ballet. He also expanded the world of jazz and classical music, with a vital body of work that places him among the world's finest contemporary musicians and composers. He was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1961, the second of six sons. At an early age, he showed a natural talent for music and took up the trumpet. At age eight Marsalis played traditional New Orleans music in the Fairview Baptist Church band, and at 14 he performed with the New Orleans Philharmonic. During high school he performed with the New Orleans Symphony Brass Quintet, New Orleans Community Concert Band, various jazz bands and with the popular local funk band, the Creators.

Marsalis assembled his own band in 1981 and hit the road, performing over 120 concerts every year for 15 consecutive years. With the power of his superior musicianship, the sound of his swinging bands and a far-reaching series of performances and music workshops, he rekindled interest in jazz throughout the world, and inspired a jazz revival that attracted a new generation of fine young talent to jazz. But there was another side to his character: the love of the music of Bach, Beethoven, Mozart and others classical composer. This drove him to pursue a career in classical music. He recorded the Haydn, Hummel and Leopold Mozart trumpet concertos at the age of 20. His debut recording received glorious reviews, and he won the Grammy Award for "Best Classical Soloist with an Orchestra." Marsalis went on to record 10 additional classical records, all to critical acclaim performed with leading orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Boston Pops Orchestra.

Wynton Marsalis is a prolific and inventive composer. He is the world's first jazz artist to perform and compose across the full jazz spectrum from its New Orleans roots to bebop and modern jazz. He has also composed a violin concerto and four symphonies, introducing new rhythms to modern classical music . With that in mind I'm going to end with the fourth movement of his wonderful Violin Concerto. This is a really swinging fusion of jazz/blues, country music and contemporary classical. This is a fabulous performance by Nicola Benedetti one of the finest violinist on the classical circuit. Enjoy!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfhUV4BkbYU>

I hope this review of black composers has shown you what a fine body of work they have produced, and why the recognition of their work is long overdue. There are plenty of other examples of Black Composer's music on Youtube. If you found the composers I chose to your liking, dip into some of their other music, there's a rich vein of superb music by them, and many others, out there.

## **Football Quiz (page 3) - Answers**

1 Heart of Midlothian and Hibernian 2 St. Johnstone 3 Berwick Rangers 4 Ross County  
5 Annan Athletic 6 Nuno Espirito Santo 7 Alisson Becker/ Brazil 8 Bristol Rovers  
9 Plymouth Argyle 10 The Cobblers 11 Nil satis nisi optimum not satisfied except with the best. 12  
Roy Hodgson 13 Peter Whittingham 14 Ipswich Town 15 Newcastle United and Exeter City. 16  
Shrewsbury Town 17 Peter Shilton 125 caps 18 Chris Gunter 96 caps.

## **Procrastinate. Tomorrow...by David Jenkins** © 2019

I've recently been reading a few diaries, blogs and daily posts by various people, wondering how they plan their time during this period of lockdown. It's interesting to see how, when there may be little else to achieve, they approach a task. Some set to with a will and finish early in the day. Others seem to work on the 'I'll do it later' basis. The problem with that is the risk that on any given day you run out of 'later' before you get anything done.

Maybe following the Welsh colloquialism of promising to do something 'now, in a minute' isn't always the best plan.

The thoughts brought to mind a piece I produced early last year for the Creative Writing group, concerning writing habits. I leave it to you to judge whether I tend to do things now, or later!

### **A Writer's Mind - This Space To Let!**

Ah, good morning computer. let's get you fired up and get writing! I'll just check the news first, see if anything interesting has happened. Best make a coffee before I do that, just to get me going. let's see ... anything to inspire me? Brexit, Brexit, Brexit. Nothing there, unless I was planning to write about getting shafted by MP's who only believe in democracy if it gets them where they can keep their noses firmly in the trough. Let's try the local news. Traffic jams as ever. Welcome to Newport. Though while I'm here, best check if anyone I know has shuffled off the mortal coil...

Oh, that's a shame. I remember them quite well.

Am I ready to write? Wait, best check my mail. Better make a coffee before I face the Hotmail inbox, I think there's a gas bill due. Now then, what's on the forum for that game I spend far too long playing? There was nothing new when I logged out last night, but most of the players are in the US. They're logging in as I'm on my way out. Got to keep up with events in our mutual imaginary world.

And now my online writing group. Let's see, quite a bit of chat during the night. Wait, what's this? A link to a long article about building your own fantasy world. I'll have to read that pretty carefully. It goes on a bit, so I'm going to need a coffee before I start. There should be lots of inspiration in an article like that, and pretty soon the words will be flowing.

Hang on a mo' ... that phrase sounds like part of the lyrics of a song I half-remember. What was it called now? Let's do a search for the lyrics. Just type some of the words into Google and voila! There it is. I'd almost forgotten that band. But now I remember that hit they had. I bet it's on YouTube, let's find out. Yes it is. And a few other tracks of theirs. I'll just listen to one. Or maybe two.

Good grief, where did an hour go? Never mind. Now that song's not niggling at my brain I can concentrate on writing something. Maybe a coffee will help.

It's no good. I can't think of anything to write about. I should just empty my mind, make my brain into a blank sheet on which words will appear, the germ of inspiration. Sudoku - that's the thing. Put numbers in boxes, and not think. Something will crop up while I'm playing... ummm, I mean clearing my mind.

Good Lord, it's lunchtime. A quick sandwich will go down nicely. And a coffee of course.

Time to stop messing about and concentrate. I'll try one of the exercises from that article about world-building. How about this one on climate? Just read the entry, click a couple of the links, see where I end up...

...Aaaand it's the site for the Met Office. Now there's a thought - how about a story of a quasi-Government office that accidentally or otherwise always delivers incorrect information? Though a cynic might say that's what happens anyway!

Oh oh, there's the alarm on my phone. Time to do the grandad thing and taxi the kids to wherever they're going today. I have to drag myself away. And just as I was about to get started!

Back again, computer. Right then, it's you and me against the world. Not this world, the one that came into my head while driving around. A quick coffee, then I'll get down to it.

That film was pretty good, which is unusual. There's usually nothing but trash on this time of day. Just flip to Alibi channel, to see what Murdoch or Miss Fisher are involved in today. And no, I won't keep watching, just to drool over female detectives. Nope, none of that. Not even Rizzolli ... oh well, maybe just a few minutes. I've seen this one before, may as well switch it off.

Or perhaps not. I only watch the programme for interesting snippets of forensic science. Yes, yes, I write fantasy so the conduct of an autopsy isn't relevant. But all knowledge is good, and useful. Keeps the brain alert. Speaking of which, just time for a coffee before the evening meal.

Better check my mail again, and the game forums. And posts from the writing group. There's quite a conversation about that world-building site. I'll just throw in my two cent's worth. Or two pence - or if you must, two euros! Most of them are in Europe. Posts about the B-- word have been banned for some reason. We're here to talk about writing, not discuss politics or the machinations of some pen-pusher in Brussels.

I can't believe it's this late in the evening already. There were a few useful links posted on the writer's group site so I made a note of them for future reference. I won't follow them now, I need to get writing, get words on paper. or on screen, rather. Thinking of paper reminds me. I found a box of old printouts from years back. I should check what's there. Might be files I no longer have, so I really should check some time soon. Though I suspect it's nothing but twenty different versions of the first half of the same story. But I'll never know unless I take a read over all that's in there.

Good thing I can read quickly. And I found nothing I didn't expect to. A lot of it is rubbish, but there are one or two bits that are pretty good, even if I do say so myself. I'd better put them all together some time.

Game of Thrones - again. Gosh, is it really that late? Must be about time to get to bed, after a final cuppa.

So ... let me see. I've kept up with friends scattered across the globe. And I made a note of a dozen links which may or may not be useful, if I ever get around to taking a peek at them.

Hours at a computer... blimey! That many? But I have levelled up my character in Morrowind. And done all the puzzles on the daily sudoku site.

Coffees drunk - well into double figures.

Meaningful words written... about six.

It's been another busy day!

## A quick snapshot of Newport in the 1950s and 60s by Monty Dart

Taken from the Argus headlines of the time, I think you'll agree that things haven't changed much!

The show in the Lyceum Theatre at the beginning of 1950 was 'Jack and the Beanstalk' – and over 70,000 people went to see it during its 6 week run.

A Newport night watchman won a fantastic £23,000 on the Pools, the equivalent of over £775,000 nowadays. The last of the old Newport potteries, in Dudley Street closed down and Tredegar House was sold to become a Catholic school. In the five years since the end of the war the Corporation had built 1,760 houses with contracts for more. However, the Council waiting list stood at 5,000.

Just after the war there were nine picture palaces in Newport – Olympia, Coliseum, Odeon, Capitol, Tredegar Hall (this became the Majestic), Pavilion, Plaza, The Gem and The Maindee.

There were quite a few dance halls too – on the East side was The Palm Court Ballroom. The resident band was Henry Doughty, he played, I'm reliably informed by my friend Dai, Strict tempo. At Lysaghts Ballroom was Tony Henderson and his band. Dai quickly discovered that the way to pick up girls was to learn to dance and he and his elder brother learned to sashay around the front room to the sound of Victor Sylvester on the gramophone. You could get books to show you where to put your feet. On his first night out with his new-found skill, Dai chose the prettiest girl in the room. He wasn't bad looking so she was pleased to say 'yes'. When they began to dance Dai was at a disadvantage – in their lessons, Dai's brother played the male partner – Dai only knew how to dance **backwards** as the female partner!

On the West Side of Newport were The Westgate and Kings Head and among the acts were Jerry Stevens and Peter Rabbit & his Bunnies

The Festival of Britain ran from May to September in 1951. Newport chose the last two weeks in June for its own celebrations. A large second-hand aircraft hangar had been acquired by Newport Transport, who turned it into the Festival Hall for the duration. There were demonstrations of local crafts, pottery, weaving and furniture making and a model of the proposed developments in Newport was put on display. In the park gymnastics, art exhibitions, show-jumping and choral events were joined by band concerts and the fun fair. Children entered a competition to draw the logo of the Festival – the head of Britannia. The Festival Hall was where Malpas Fire Station now stands.

There was a spate of fires in 1951 – the first major fire was on 5<sup>th</sup> November when a blaze damaged the upper floors of British Homes Stores, burning the Christmas toy stock. This was followed by a fire in Abbot and Baker's warehouse and then a greengrocers in Griffin Street burned down. When the top floor of the Westgate was affected it was rumoured that the fires had been set deliberately – especially when nine cars, parked in different areas of the town were torched too. However, no one was ever charged for this season of arson.

Due to raising costs The Fish Fryer's Association were obliged to put up their prices – a portion of fish cost 9d and chips 4d – (approx 4p and 1.5p). Coal was £3/0/7d a ton – whilst women machinists were earning a good wage of £5 a week. A bottle of whiskey was £1/15/0. A start had been made on the St Julian's Estat which would eventually house some 4,000 people in flats and houses.

September of that year saw the rededication of St Johns Church, Maindee after 2 years and three months rebuilding following a massive fire in November 1949.



Traditionally, in the lead up to Christmas the smell in the Mitchell and Butler's Brewery in Alma Street was turned from beer to Christmas puddings, as Newport Housewives queued outside to have their puddings steamed. It took 8 hours for a good steaming, which cost 6d. When the brewery closed down some years later, another great Newport tradition ended.

1953 saw the 'thin end of the wedge' when Newport Parks Department recommended that the parks and playing fields should be open on a Sunday – the motion was carried by 25 votes to 10, one of the losing contingent **stated 'It is no wonder we are all going to Hell!'**

There was dancing at the 'Stute – Lysaghts Institute with Jack Hailey and his Band from 8pm to 11pm on Tuesdays and the Bertoni Dance Orchestra on Thursdays. The entrance fee was 2/6d. A Christmas 'Go as You Please' dance attracted a first prize of £15.

June of course saw the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, the first crowning of a Queen for 116 years. Streets had been decorated in red, white and blue; there were prizes for the best dressed street and Robert Street won first prize. At the Civic Centre there was a 21-gun salute. Residents were advised to leave their windows open so that the blasts didn't shatter the glass.

At the moment of the Coronation, Newport seemed almost subdued but of course most people were watching television, probably not their own, someone else's, or even standing outside the TV shop windows. The early sets were expensive £65 for a 9-inch screen and for an 11-inch screen upwards of £90. Several dealers also lent out sets to halls so that the wonderful event should not be missed.

Bonfires were lit on Twmbarlwm, Lawrence Hill and Christchurch and there was a great funfair and Billy Smart's Circus at Shaftsbury Park.

At Kimberley Park there were children's parties and variety shows, while the Newport Sailing Club held a regatta on the Usk. When the fuss died down Newport Council admitted that they had made a £16,000 loss on the week, but as usual, they blamed the weather. However, there was no time for despondency – Newport had to prepare for the Queen herself, on her first state visit to Wales.

During the night of 15th July hundreds of Newportonians slept in the street, so that they would be in a good position to see the Queen and Prince Phillip as they passed through Newport. When they arrived at the Railway Station there were over 50,000 people waiting to cheer them.

Another historic day that year saw the opening of the first Laundromat in Commercial Street. Very few women owned an automatic washing machine. At home, on Mondays, the boiler, the rubbing board and the dolly were still in use in Newport households. I feel that if men had had to do the washing in those days the automatic washing machine would have been invented far earlier!

#### **Christmas Prices in 1954:**

Chickens 4/6d a lb

Turkeys 6/6d a lb

Men's suits £4/18/9d

Ladies shoes £1/4/9d

My favourite Newport story of the year was in December. The Dock workers had been out on strike but had finally returned to face a backlog of work. They were working all hours and the South Wales Argus stated that they were getting £25 a week. At this point, the docker's wives rose as a woman and said '**That's not what I thought he had in his pay packet**' and the wives went on strike at home withdrawing various favours. The dockers went out on strike again in protest at what they saw as an unfair story,

revealing to their wives just exactly what they were supposed to be bringing home. A hastily convened meeting between the Dock masters and the Argus Editor ensured that there were no more leaks of docker's wages and a truce was called by both dockers and wives.

In 1955 another church fire happened – St John the Baptist on Risca Road was seen to be burning fiercely at 1.30 am. Had it not been for the actions of a group of young men returning from a dance, who, despite the fact that they were in their best suits, rescued church ornaments, vestments and valuable records, these precious items would have been lost. Thus three churches, Christchurch, St John's Maindee and now St John the Baptist had burnt down in six years.

The death was announced of Frederick, 5th Baron Tredegar. His son John became the 6th Baron on August 4<sup>th</sup>. This marked the end of the Morgan Family of Tredegar House. John had no children and on his death the family will no longer exist.

In October of 1955 the Lady Mayor, Letitia Bell made an important phone call – she was the first person in Newport to be connected to the automatic clock TIM.

The problems we have nowadays with Bonfire Night isn't new. In 1955 the Chief Constable, Mr Smeed, said that **'Youths were throwing jumping jacks and the like, terrorizing younger children and older folk.'**

In 1955 there were still 8 Nissan huts on land at Malpas Park. These had previously been occupied by American troops, then Italian prisoners of war but now they housed homeless families. Each hut was divided by a wall, in which lived two families. There were no cooking, washing or sanitary arrangements in these huts; these were to be found in a communal hut near the Malpas Road. In all thirty adults and 60 children lived in the huts, where the bare earth turned into a quagmire when it rained. 13 children had been hospitalized with gastro enteritis and one with polio.

The Town Council didn't want the Argus in on any meetings but they were invited by the tenants and there were unfortunate words said on both sides. One man stated that his family had been living in this temporary accommodation for over 6 years. The women, he said, were living on their nerves with 15 of them sharing the communal kitchen. Breeze blocks separating the Nissan huts allowed every noise to be heard by the neighbours. ***The residents are all good people," he said, "but we are getting to hate the sight of each other.*** In a letter to the Argus one tenant said ***"There are about 60 children here, and all are now being kept home from school for fear they will spread infection."*** One woman had tried to brighten up the corrugated walls with paint and wallpaper 'Yes, it cost us £3 a month ago but the damp is making it rot and flake off'. One family of 6 children ages 15, 12, 11, 8, 4, and 4 months were living in two rooms. It was some time before these families were rehoused in decent conditions.

There were problems with Teddy boys in Newport. Some came from as far away as Cardiff and Bristol to attend the dances at the Drill hall, Stow Hill. The Argus quoted Mr. Pursey, organizer of the dances in the Drill hall, as saying ***"An average of between 20 and 30 youths wearing Edwardian dress had been visiting the Saturday night dances."*** *There had been no trouble in the Hall but police were called to break up fights outside. "It is when they get in gangs that they cause trouble,"* he said. ***"The management has decided that dances must be of a character befitting the town of Newport. There will be a special duty policeman at the door and we have several staunch men available too."*** At St Julian's School, where evening dances were held a decision was made to permit jiving at two out of 7 dances.

Lita Roza – one of the great heart throbs of the time - visited Newport and was unimpressed. Having driven for 4 hours in the car, she then spent nearly an hour crossing Newport Bridge from Clarence Place to the Majestic Ballroom, Stow Hill (previously the Tredegar Hall Cinema). On the bridge she waved to the

lorry drivers. Unfortunately the audience was very small and Miss Roza performed for only half an hour, got in her car and drove off, vowing to keep away from Newport in the future.

1956 prices include a loaf of bread at 9d a new gas cooker £30/13/0d, a 14 day holiday on the Italian Riviera £21 and a Wimpey 3 bedroomed house, £2,575.

1957 saw the sale of the silver of Tredegar House; the wonderful silver plate – collected over centuries - accrued nearly £19000 at auction.

The high tide of 16<sup>th</sup> February had all the people who lived in houses on the Riverfront putting sandbags in front of their doors and an emergency boat patrolled up and down the Usk ready to save anyone whose house was flooded.

On November 6<sup>th</sup> the night sky was clear and the Russian satellite Sputnik II could be seen above Newport, carrying the first living creature in space – a dog called Laika.

In 1958 an Afternoon tea dance ticket at the majestic Ballroom was 3 shillings, a family-sized swiss roll was 1/8 (just over 8p in today's money) and a packet of Park Drive cigarettes 1/6d – or 7p. The new college of Technology opened at Allt-yr-yn and everyone was excited about the proposal of a new steelworks. A new bridge over the river Usk was approved – to be named the George Street Bridge - along with some new roads including an ambitious scheme to demolish nearly 500 houses and to avoid Maindee, a tunnel was to be built going underneath it. As we now know that proposal was defeated, much to the relief of those living in Maindee.

In 1959 Mr Spencer – of Spencer Steelworks spoke at the annual speech day at St Julian's School – he prophesised that 'Newport would see ***'a year of fabulous wealth for Newport and Monmouthshire'*** – well Mr Spencer, we are still waiting!

The Transporter Bridge was used for a scene in "Tiger Bay", starring Hayley Mills. It has always caused comment amongst Newportonians – Hayley gets on the bridge at Pill and steps off the other end in Tiger Bay. When the film was premiered there was great consternation when the mayor of Newport discovered that the Mayor of Cardiff had been invited – and he hadn't! A Cardiff / Newport Civic row ensued.

The first months of 1960s Newport were to be disrupted by the building of the largest steelworks in Europe. Utter chaos hit town as the giant shale lorries clogged up all the roads. Over 200 tipper lorries made three or four deliveries daily from quarries within a 40 mile radius. This resulted in 1,200 vehicles crossing Town Bridge every day.

Sleepless nights from noise and housewives despairing that their clean laundry came off the washing line dirtier than when they hung it out was a fact of life in Newport.

The traffic jams of three miles were an everyday menace. A Red and White driver said that he got from Caldicot to Maindee in good time but that it took him an hour to get from Maindee to the town centre. Road accidents went up 68% and personal accidents rose by 149%. Never a day passed without lorries falling into ditches or driving into front gardens and demolishing walls. There was money to be made by shale lorry drivers – the manager of a local dairy complained that as soon as men had passed their driving test with them, they flitted to the shale lorries. One day they were driving a 12 mile per hour milk float the next there were behind the wheel of a lorry carrying 10 tons. It was finally announced that night time deliveries would stop but the shale lorries got the last laugh when one dumped a full 10 tons of shale right in the middle of town bridge.

Further regeneration saw The Talbot Hotel closed down and with the ruins of the Empire in Stow Hill it was removed to make a brand new Woolworths.

A survey by the NSPCC in Newport found too many cases of overcrowding; a family of eight for example was sharing a room, whilst sanitary facilities were several floors down. The Council denied this, but some disreputable landlords were making the most of the need for accommodation with all the extra men at the steelworks construction. There were over 6,000 extra men in Newport, a figure that would rise to 10,000. Some of the workers were happy with a simple bed and bare room that didn't cost a lot. There were some winners as the clubs and pubs in town centre were seeing a boom time.

At the Royal Gwent there was a waiting list of over 1,000 patients for surgery and hernia cases were waiting up to three years. The Gwent had to expand with the rapidly expanding community. As far as hernias are concerned, they still weren't priority in the 70's. One of my unenviable jobs was to sign notes for the old men to have a new truss constructed. I learned far more about trusses than I ever wanted to know. One old gent came for a renewal of one he had been issued at the beginning of the war.

Public houses in Newport had been closed on Sundays since 1915 when it was discussed that heavy drinking amongst the munitions workers was affecting the war effort. A referendum in 1962 resulted in a victory for the drinkers – it meant that no one need pop over the Chepstow Bridge to get a Sunday pint.

In 1962 the Councillors of Newport must have had a mass brainstorm when they decided to alter town centre. Dock Street was to become a major shopping area and some well-established landmarks just had to go. These included The Capitol Cinema, (which was the old Temperance Hall), the Town Centre Fire Station, the Library, Museum and Art Gallery and the Little Theatre.

In June the first furnace was lit at Spencer Steel works, work began on the George Street Bridge, and digging of the Brynglas Tunnels commenced.

For the first 7 weeks of 1963, Newport froze almost solid in the worst winter since 1947. Snow had been falling since before New Year's Day. Water supplies were cut off by frozen underground pipes, transport was severely disrupted, railway signals were frozen solid and deliveries of food, milk, coal etc. were almost totally suspended. When the thaw arrived in late February, it revealed thousands of burst pipes and hundreds of yards of collapsed roof guttering. Walking in town centre was hazardous by massive icicles and the fire brigade were called out to snap them off before they impaled anyone. On February 4<sup>th</sup> the weather was so bad that Caerleon housewives on the Lodge Estate were boiling snow for water to cook meals. Those lucky women with unfrozen pipes woke to find queues of women with bowls, jugs and kettles outside their door. One woman angrily said to the South Wales Argus reporter '***We haven't been able to wash our clothes for a week***'.

In March, the 151-year-old Salutation Hotel at the corner of Commercial and Cardiff Roads was demolished. To make up for the cold start, June 11<sup>th</sup> 1963 was the hottest day for 45 years.

On September 10<sup>th</sup> The Borough Council voted to complete the building of the Civic Centre clock tower (suspended by the war) at a cost of £126,900, this despite a poll of 8734 signatures in which the public voted 40 to 1 against. At the time, the cost equalled two schools, 50 senior citizens bungalows or 15 78 seater buses, but whenever has the council taken note of public opinion? The people of Newport were having a clock tower whether they wanted it or not!

On 7<sup>th</sup> April 1964 – Newport welcome a visitor – when I say 'welcomed' they didn't put the flags out when I, my Mother and Father arrived from Germany. It was cold, we had been travelling for 48 hours and I hated Newport on sight. But we did get a decent breakfast in the Burlington Café in Dock Street. My Father

was being demobbed from the Army after 40 years as a professional soldier and he was bringing us back to his home town. Dad and his brother and sisters couldn't really call Newport a home. When their father died they were sent to the Work House – Woolaston House, later to become St Woolos Hospital. When I worked there in the 1990's on the wards for the elderly the patients used to say 'Tell me I'm not in Wollaston House' such was the fear and disgrace of ending up in the workhouse. In fact, thanks to Woolaston House, both my aunts were sponsored to go to America and my Father was given a job as a clerk at the Town Hall because of his beautiful copperplate writing which he had learned there.

I had been in Newport two days and Mother had already kitted me out in the uniform of Duffryn School – with a Burberry that would have fitted someone with arms skimming the floor. That and a hat – it still fits me today. The Burberry never fitted and some years later it went to the school shop to humiliate another poor child. Mother and I went to the opening of the George Street Bridge on the 9<sup>th</sup> April and walked across, along with half of the population of Newport. I also remember going to Cashmore's – where they broke up ships. Mother had spotted that the Training Ship "The Vinicatrix" was to be broken up there and did the unthinkable - she wrote me a note to say that I was supposed to be at the dentist and we snook off down to the docks. The Vindicatrix was my brother's training ship – he ran away to sea when he was 16 – never to be seen again. At the dockside there was no one around – and a gang plank went from the dock to the ship. "**Come on**", she said, "**look as if you are supposed to be here**". Bear in mind I was in my uniform.! We went on board the deserted and partially dismantled ship. The only removeable souvenir we could find was a large greasy board. I helped her wrestle it off the wall in the ship's canteen. One line reads, '**No boy to be refused a meal**' but my brother told stories of being sold a piece of dry bread for 6d.

In the August of that year Newport closed as a coal port, having been in its heyday the greatest port of all. Newport town centre was under demolition with wonderful new schemes proposed, including an entertainments complex in Baneswell, a grand concert hall and banqueting halls. John Frost Square was to be partially roofed over.

The new shopping area, the Sovereign (now Kingsway), was to be an innovative shopping experience.

The demolition of the Lyceum revealed two long forgotten, stone lined wells under the basement. Pillgwenlly was the next area to see the demolition men. 58 houses were deemed unfit for habitation, all these properties were over 100 years old and many were damp, and some had little in the way of sanitation. Frederick Street, Portland Street and Broad Street were set for redevelopment.

The Queen Mother opened the new maternity extension of the Royal Gwent Hospital.

Newport was being transformed – though most would say in reflection, not for the better. The town abattoir was hardly missed though – it had opened in 1864 and closed after 107 years of continuous operation. It was now safe to walk down Wyndham Street on a hot day without holding your breath and seeing piles of bones covered in bluebottles, through the double doors of the abattoir. This is where the first Sainsbury's site was.

In January 1968 the new library, museum and art gallery in John frost Square suffers flooding from the roof ventilation and heating systems. All is well by April and Princess Margaret opens the new library.

By 1969 the old fire station in Dock Street finally closed for demolition and a Rogerstone-born American business man offers to buy the Transporter Bridge for £1 million and relocate it over Niagara Falls but his plans came to nothing - no one in the USA wanted it!

That takes us to 1970 – and the end of an era in Newport's fascinating history.

## 'The Thirty-Nine Steps,' by John Buchan

Favourite books and films are a good source of articles for the newsletter. I am fortunate in that one of my favourite books is also one of my favourite films.

At my primary school our teacher in the final year, Mr Glass, introduced us to some interesting books. On a Friday afternoon to bring a leisurely end to the week he would read us a chapter of the 'Thirty-Nine Steps' by John Buchan. It was one of five novels featuring his hero, Richard Hannay. After making his fortune in Africa he has returned to Britain and becomes an adventurer.

He is very much the British hero, strong willed, loyal and with a strong sense of duty. After giving refuge to a dubious character, who claims he has secrets and information about a plot to kill the prime minister of Greece, he borrows a milkman's hat and overall to flee to Scotland after the mysterious visitor is stabbed. Hannay knows he will be accused of murder.

He heads to Scotland where various good citizens help him. A chance meeting with a politician leads to him addressing a political meeting and then returning to London in time to save the nation. Typical perhaps of that era the politician has connections in the government who will help him. Even at the very end he cannot be sure of the loyalty of those he meets, even establishment figures.

He discovers that the Thirty-Nine is the name of a group of conspirators. John Buchan had the idea of the title from the number of steps leading from a convalescent home, in which he was recovering from a duodenal ulcer, down to the seashore. His daughter counted seventy- eight steps. John Buchan thought thirty- nine made a better title.

A study of history of pre-WW1 Britain will place the novel in the genre of books and plays that exploited the invasion scare. General Roberts of Boer War fame even collaborated with the 'Daily Mail' on a series of articles following the progress of an imaginary German invasion.

Other examples are 'Riddle of the Sands' by Erskine Childers, so realistic prime minister Campbell-Bannerman asked if it was true, and H G Wells' 'War of the Worlds.' 'The Thirty-Nine Steps' was written in 1914, just before war broke out, and published in 1915, when it became popular reading among serving soldiers.

It laid the basis for many similar adventure stories and the model for other heroes, perhaps even James Bond and the 'Saint' stories of Leslie Charteris. The scenario of the man on the run, fighting for survival against evil, appealed to many who had experienced the war and found old values shifting and warnings ignored.

The Hitchcock film is loosely based on the book. Richard Hannay is Canadian rather than South African. New characters are introduced. The novel has few female characters. The mysterious agent who seeks Hannay's help is a woman.

Whereas in the novel the decision to go to Scotland is not explained, in the film he finds a map with a particular town circled and deduces that is where he will encounter the conspirators.

The 'man on the run' is a familiar theme in Hitchcock films, for example 'North by North West' and 'Saboteur.' Hitchcock fans will also spot the director himself in two scenes. His trademark was to include himself in a cameo role. He is seen twice, once waiting for a bus and later in a crowd scene.

Some episodes have been exaggerated for humour. One of my favourite scenes is where Hannay wearing a handcuff finds himself mistaken for the guest speaker at a political meeting. He does not even know the name of the candidate, perhaps a reflection of the confusion of politicians who sounded the same, but had so few real ideas that an outsider could win over an audience with a rousing impromptu speech.

Hannay is played by Robert Donat, a suave handsome actor with a worldly charm. The character of Pamela, played by Madeleine Carroll, is a new character to introduce some romance into the story. Like all Hitchcock heroines she is blond, elusive and mysterious. At different times she too could easily be a betrayer or an ally.

There are some typical Hitchcock tricks. The fleeing man does not know who he will encounter. In 'Saboteur' it is a circus freak show that gives refuge to Robert Cummings. It can equally be an enemy, such as he encounters in the first part of the film. Therein lie the risk and the suspense.

For me it is the small slightly humorous touches that give extra flavour to the chance encounter. As Hannay is being chased along the train a waiter is coming from the opposite direction. He casually steps aside balancing his tray, then does the same again when the pursuers run towards him, as if it was all perfectly normal.

Later the camera moves to show Hannay as part of a crowd following a religious procession led by a brass band, almost as if the viewer is part of the crowd following in Hannay's footsteps. Again, another chance encounter and an unlikely situation, which leads then to his being mistaken for the speaker at an election meeting.

In the book Hannay stays at the home of a crofter. The film turns this into a sinister scene which could end in betrayal or escape. John Laurie, best remembered as Fraser in 'Dad's Army,' is the crofter suspicious of the attention his much younger wife is giving Hannay. Driven by the prospect of a reward he betrays Hannay. His wife gives Hannay his overcoat to aid his escape. When Hannay is shot it is the crofter's prayer book that stops the bullet.

There is the familiar Hitchcock device of watching people speak without being able to hear their words, inviting the audience to follow the story by reading facial expressions. This is a technique he would have discovered as a silent movie director. John Laurie is watching through a window, imagining a conspiracy as the outsider in his own home, watching Hannay and his wife in a lively conversation to which we are spectators, not witnesses.

Naturally, in the end Hannay manages to prevent the secrets going overseas. The Theatre Memory Man is the device to hide the secrets and pass them to the enemy.

Many consider the book and film of the 'The Thirty-Nine Steps' as masterpieces that set a pattern for thrillers in literature and cinema.

The remakes of Hitchcock films do not impress me one bit. The 'Thirty-Nine Steps' was remade with Kenneth Moore. For me it is a shabby effort. The political meeting scene is recreated as a talk to a school botany group. It had no punch and the humour is misplaced.

'The Lady Vanishes' was remade with Elliott Gould and Cybill Shepherd. Again, I am not impressed. The chance encounter that create the suspense in the book and the film are almost frivolous. The television adaptation with Robert Powell is probably closer to the book and quite watchable. It led to a TV series which is sometimes repeated on Talking Pictures TV. It is slightly dated, but still quite enjoyable. For me it is the original book and film that will endure. Long may the British public continue to enjoy them.

## Doctor Watson Is Very Worried by John Williams

I became aware of her wheelchair when it ran over my left foot. Her eyes caught mine then slid away, and I saw that she had well-chewed nails. She had the body of a field athlete, and the opening chords of ' Out of Time ' sounded in my head.

" I'm sorry, but he's rubbish. He failed his driving test seven times," she said jerking a diamond-encrusted finger at her small, red-faced husband who sat on the opposite seat.

A sigh parted the hairs of his full moustache, which seemed too dark for his years and contrasted markedly with his shiny, bald head. Their lack of communication either by word or look saddened me. Perhaps I'd been lucky when my darling Susan died before we ran out of words and love.

"That's great. I love having my foot crushed, " I smiled.

She nodded, and a semblance of a smile flitted across her pale lips but never quite reached her grey eyes.

I looked down at my crossword. The rocking motion of the bus made writing difficult as the cryptic clues danced before my eyes. I looked up for inspiration and found the woman's sun-shaded eyes on me.

She looked away, but her eyes were not cast down. Her fingers kept touching her mouth as if she wanted to say something but dare not.

Each time, I glanced in her direction; her eyes shuffled away. I saw that she wore no makeup, and her thin lips formed a line which turned down at either end. Then, her eyes swung away again. I couldn't understand why such a woman looked so nervous.

I looked down at my crossword and scrawled in another word. I felt the woman's eyes on me again. I feared that her grey hair stretching back so tightly, into a bun, would cause her eyes to pop out. The image of my first headmistress, Miss I C Frost, came to me but this woman always looked away from me and toward the exit and not through me.

We seemed to be playing the peekaboo game that I used to play with my two children. However, this game lacked any fun. I sensed the poor woman was looking to me for some help, but what about her husband? He seemed harmless enough despite his luxuriant moustache.

The bus rattled over the old town bridge and as we neared the Newport terminus; her eyes grew whiter.

I sat on while her husband heaved her chair out of the vehicle. Her white hands balled into fists. Her large silver earrings swung to and fro and contrasted with the sober style of her tweed twin set with its calf-length skirt.

Outside, I felt a tap on my shoulder. I looked up at her moustachioed husband.

"Excuse me, Sir, but the wife noticed your flies are wide open; your underpants soiled and you are wearing odd socks."

" Wow! Holmes, you are a marvel," I replied.



"Elementary, my dear Watson. I'm so sorry, but she's writing a book on disability access, and I got roped in as per usual. Writers have such an eye for detail, don't they?" he cackled.

" Oh, yes, I know. I write too," I replied.

I watched from the cafe as they meandered through the bus station. The woman's wheelchair struck every possible obstacle causing her round head to bob around like a balloon on a stick, her lips parted into a grimace under a furrowed brow, and her eyes wild with horror.

Then the dark alley between Marks & Spencer and Debenhams swallowed them up.

It was much later that I realised why she looked so anxious as I recalled Dr Crippin looked harmless and hid behind a large moustache too. Then the horror of her being in the care of someone who hated her and not being able to move, hit me like a ten-ton truck.

**Wordsearch – submitted by Barbara Phillips**

Can you find the 11 percussion instruments in the grid below?

Answers are on page 27

E	D	U	P	Y	M	U	R	D
K	L	W	E	O	E	S	T	C
D	I	G	N	S	L	O	A	R
M	C	E	N	A	H	S	B	E
A	U	O	B	A	T	R	O	K
R	G	M	W	A	I	I	R	A
A	Y	N	N	B	E	R	L	H
C	N	E	O	S	E	O	T	S
A	T	T	P	G	E	L	D	R
S	E	M	I	H	C	I	L	N
S	T	I	M	P	A	N	I	E

## Touring and Camping in France - A Holiday of Firsts by Julie Fry

We were children of the 1940s and 1950s when proper “stay away” holidays were a rarity. We were more familiar with the day trip, by train to Porthcawl or Barry Island when the whole street went with you. Then came the swinging sixties, not sure it came to our towns though. By the 1970s we had the package tour and more affordable air travel. Spain via Cardiff airport was our very first holiday abroad. We were able to enjoy this twice until our son`s 12<sup>th</sup> birthday, when a full price ticket was necessary. This was an economic step too far.

What to do? We now had a taste for foreign travel. Then a colleague of Alan suggested CAMPING, something we had never thought of. No equipment? No problem, he would lend us his tent together with all we needed. We could then try camping to see if we liked it. France, our nearest neighbour across the Channel, beckoned.

So, erring on the cautious side, via an ad in a National Sunday paper, we booked a gîte in the DORDOGNE. This was owned by an English lady from Dorset. It was only available for the last week in August, but we could plan our camping around this. So one Friday in the middle of August we set out from SOUTHAMPTON to CHERBOURG, courtesy of Townsend Thoresen, remember them?



Our plan was to stay the first night in a hotel in Bayeux. The sun was shining brightly as we approached the hotel of our choice in the centre of town by mid-afternoon. At this point I should mention we had not booked ahead. You`ve guessed it, there were no vacancies, not there or anywhere in Bayeux. The camp site was also full. If I mention the date, August 15<sup>th</sup>, regular visitors to France will realise the significance. It was patiently explained to us that it was a major Religious Holiday in France and that the whole of Normandy was full of Parisians celebrating The Feast of the Assumption.

We were advised to head south and try any smaller towns on the way. By mid-evening we were resigned to spending the night in the car when we came across a very old looking country inn. A simple meal of cold meats (charcuterie) was the only food on offer so late in the evening. While gratefully enjoying this, we explained our situation to the proprietor who said he had a room at the back of the building where we could stay. He would show us. Our memory is that it was full of old furniture, more like a storeroom. But it was a roof over our heads.

Thus ended our very first night in France, Never to be forgotten.

Week one then went according to plan, a few days camping in the Loire Valley before driving south to Clermont Ferrand and then travelling down the Dordogne so that we arrived at our booked gîte for week no 2.

Thus began our introduction to the French countryside and the realisation that camping was a means of enjoying it.

Our gîte was one of a pair out in the countryside about 4 miles to the nearest village of St Astier. We enjoyed a few days exploring locally until our car, a Ford Cortina, started making worrying noises. The next morning we were able to drive into St Astier to the local garage where we left the car in the capable hands of M. Chauz. We then went to Perigueux by train and spent a pleasant afternoon in the SNCF swimming pool. That is a story for another time! It involves being Welsh and rugby fans.

We returned to the garage hoping to pick up a repaired car. It was not to be. Instead the scene that met us was a car with an open bonnet, engine in parts on the floor, and the cam shaft, tappets and push rods lined up neatly on a workbench. Now remember all this had to be explained in French. One of the cam shaft bearings had turned in its seating and in so doing had blocked the oil way which prevented the oil flowing around the moving parts. A new set of cam bearings were required (three). While it was repairable, it would involve obtaining the necessary parts from Britain via the RAC, which meant our car would not be able to make the ferry home at the end of the week. Our RAC insurance included recovery and repatriation but since the engine was already stripped down it was decided that the repair should continue.

That left the problem of getting us and our belongings home. We had not used suitcases, instead packing all our clothes, towels and sleeping bags in a large trunk carried on the roof rack. We could not hang around as we both had jobs to go to on to following Monday. We were already resigned to leaving the camping gear (borrowed, remember?) in the gîte.

While various scenarios were being discussed by telephone with the RAC in England, the son of the gîte owner came to the rescue. He had been living locally for nearly a year working a market stall. He needed to return his car to the UK, otherwise he would be obliged to renew tax and insurance under French law. If we could return the car to Bristol it would save him the expense as well as solving our dilemma. It was an old but large Vauxhall with a boot big enough to hold our trunk.

So, with all the necessary paperwork regarding ownership of the car and with one overnight stop we were able to travel to Cherbourg and catch the correct ferry. Trust was needed on both sides. It was only later that the thought did enter our minds, was there anything in the car we did not know about?

In mid-September we received a telegram from M. Chauz, "[Car not ready parts do not fit](#)". When this was finally sorted, it was early October before we were able to return to pick up our car. That involved one hectic weekend and was in itself another adventure

#### POSTSCRIPT

We continued camping and exploring France.

Our cars were always serviced before each holiday.

Over 25 years we had 3 other car breakdowns in France.

We were always insured.

We still love France.

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#### WORDSEARCH (Page 25) Answers

Drum; Maracas; Cowbell; Gong; Triangle; Chimes; Tabor; Shaker; Cymbals; Timpani; Castanets.

## My Milestone Moment by Ian Lumley

It had been a long day. Whenever we have our grandsons (seven and eight years old) down at the weekend, it becomes a long day. We love them beyond any measure, but between them, they keep us 'on the go' for 100% of the time. I had made it worse this time by suggesting that we visit the Mining Museum a few miles away. I had suggested that because I felt it would keep them interested for a bit longer than the usual five minutes before they wanted to try something else. 'What can we do now Grandad (or Nan)' was the oft heard plaintive cry as soon as they had finished their Lego/Painting/Bike ride. They both knew that my father as well as my father-in-law had been miners but, thankfully, the boys had no real idea what that meant beyond the fact that both our fathers had worked underground.

I suppose I knew somewhere deep inside that the day would bring back memories of talks I had had over the years with my dad about his life 'down the pit'. He had never talked much about his work, and when he did, I could sense that he was not telling me everything. I was only seven myself when Mum had been visited at our prefab by the Deputy Manager at the Pit to tell her that there had been a roof fall. I can still remember vividly the look of panic on her face as she heard the news, even though he said that Dad was OK, just being kept in hospital overnight 'for observation'. Dad only lost half of one finger on that occasion, taken off by a piece of coal as cleanly as any surgeon would have amputated it, but it took me some years more before I could see that there might have been a very different outcome.

The younger grandson is, by far, the more inquisitive of the two. Joshua has always just wanted to get his hands dirty, while Oliver always wants to question why? or 'What if...'. I promised on one occasion that I would start to call him 'What if' instead of Oliver if he kept it up. It was no surprise, therefore, that I had to field a number of 'what ifs' and 'whys' while we were on the tour. What was a surprise was that I found myself, quite unconsciously, evading a straight answer to some of them. I've always made it a bit of a homespun mantra that I 'tell it like it is' and had followed that throughout my working life where, if someone couldn't handle the truth, then they would just have to learn. Suddenly, when faced with an innocent seven-year old's questions, that approach didn't seem quite so clever. I was just coming to terms with the realisation that they were perhaps still a bit young to grasp all that they were seeing, when we turned a corner in one of the internal roadways where coal trucks (known as bogies) would have been used to ferry their loads to the bottom of the pit shaft in readiness for their final trip out of the darkness.

Oliver asked about a pair of railway tracks running under a brick wall. 'Why are those rails going in there Grandad?' the little voice said. As I turned to look to where he was pointing, the memory of another occasion when I had seen another set of tracks running underneath another brick wall hit me like a sledgehammer. I quickly mumbled something about it being old workings, and hurried them both on to the next stage in the tour.

After they had gone home later, and Ann had poured herself a glass of wine before settling down to watch her favourite reality programme on the TV, I poured myself a glass of Scotch. Scotch is a tippie for company and not normally to be drunk alone, and so she looked a little askance at my glass. I said I was going to watch the football in the other room. There, I knew, I would have to revisit the memory which Oliver had unwittingly released earlier. Until I had done that - again - as I had done in the past, I knew it would nag at me like some toothache. I had to exorcise that memory or I would get no sleep that night.

Switching on the football, which tonight was always going to be just a noise in the background, I took my first sip of the fiery liquid; sank into the armchair, and let my mind wander back over thirty years.

Towards the end of his working life, Dad decided that he would let his next generation see a little of the kind of conditions he had worked in. He had arranged for three sons-in-law and his two sons to come underground and see where he spent his working life. The Pit was properly called the 'Frances' but everyone in the area referred to it as the 'dubbe'. Most of the coal seams were nearly two thousand feet underground and two miles or so out under the Firth of Forth. This led to large numbers of pools of dirty

black water collecting along all the walkways. The local name for these were dubs and so the 'dubbe' was born.

The next two hours or so were a salutary experience for the younger generation. Towards the end Dad pointed out the conveyor belt that carried the coal back up the seam in readiness for its journey up the lift shaft. 'The men often use that as an easy way to get back up the slope at the end of their shift' he said. 'but management have said it's not considered safe and so we are not allowed to use it'. When his back was turned, I got on. A few minutes later I got off at the top to find another miner, probably in his mid-fifties, waiting there for the cage to come down and collect him at the end of his shift.

He was a small man, as many miners were. A relic from the days before coal cutting machines were introduced, when men had to work, either lying on their backs or, if they were lucky, on their knees, with a pick and shovel in seams of coal sometimes no more than two or three feet high. The safety helmet with the light and the large battery he carried on his hip seemed too large for his slight frame. He turned and said 'are you with the visiting party?' I said I was. We sat in silence for a while and then, in an attempt at filling the growing vacuum between us, I said, 'this has been quite an eye opener for us to see what it's like working down here'.

He turned and, pointing across the dimly lit staging area, he said 'do you see those rail tracks going under the bricked-up wall opposite? When I was a young miner, before Nationalisation, there was a seam open into that area. One morning there was an explosion somewhere deep inside. Some of us came running up to see if we could help, just as the mine owner appeared. He didn't take long to make a decision. 'The men in there will probably be dead from the fumes. Just brick it up and leave it. It's far too expensive to do anything else.' To this day, those miner's families don't know where their men lie or how they died.'

I'm not often lost for words, but there was nothing I could say that would help heal the hurt the man had so obviously carried with him all those years. His eyes glistened with emotion as he said 'now when I'm asked if I'll go out on strike, I do it for those men and their families, I always have and I always will.'

I never knew the old miner's name, but his words have never left me.

A coal fire has never looked quite the same to me since.

### **PLEASE BE VIGILANT!**

I am sure that you are all now fully aware that fraudsters are trying to obtain your bank details and other information by any number of devious methods. The latest scams that seem to be raising their ugly heads are phone calls from individuals purporting to be BT, Microsoft, HMRC or some other well-known institution to inform you that your internet access is compromised, your computer has developed a fault, you are either entitled to a tax rebate or owe HMRC unpaid tax; and finally ones offering you "grants" because of COVID-19 or a dubious offer of protective equipment or hand sanitiser at advantageous prices. **Ignore them all** – simply replace the receiver or cut the call. None of these organisations will contact you by phone. Do not get drawn into conversation with any of these fraudsters.

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**Can I please remind you to send in some of your memories or "favourites"?** Gerald Lee's article on The Thirty Nine Steps brings back many memories of a well-known book and film and Julie Fry's Touring and Camping in France reminds us that holidays can have their downs as well as their ups! It would be great to have your view of things in the past – and we really want you to share them with us. Don't forget – these are only suggestions. Articles and stories on any subject are welcome, as are quizzes, jokes – and, indeed, anything I have left off this list!

## **NOT a typical day in the life of your Chairman .....**

Wednesday is the day when Desert Island Times is “put to bed”. I am up early, checking emails for members’ contributions and generally finishing everything off – it’s usually around 65% complete by Tuesday evening, but, apart from filling the remaining 35%, I have to check that Quiz answers are provided and appear on the pages indicated and check last-minute things like formatting. It is then ready to send off to Gwyn Havard, who, like Merlin of old, manages to perform the most wonderful magical spells that ensure that it is in a suitable state to email out to you all.

However, we’ve had such an eventful day today that my entire schedule has been scuppered. It all started at 9am when a ring at the doorbell brought me to a gentleman who thought that he had to deliver a bathroom to us. Professing ignorance (our bathroom was completely renewed three years ago) he told me the name and address - correct - and then the penny dropped. We had ordered two new wooden planters for the front garden. When he got back to his lorry (parked at the bus stop) and found our item it certainly looked more like two planters than an entire bathroom! There was a space outside the house which is where he proposed to leave the items (fixed to two pallets in an inverted T fashion). Before he got there the Tesco Home Delivery van arrived (at about 9:05) with our order, due between 10 and 11am. He also had deliveries to two of our neighbours, so the “bathroom” man was further delayed. The damn things were so heavy and cumbersome that I had to ring our eldest daughter to ask her and her husband if they could come up to help. They did – and all was well.

Then we had a phone call from our elder son, who was due to move to Newton Abbot until lockdown stopped building work on the house they were buying - just before they had paid over the deposit. They had never been able to see one of the houses “in the flesh”, and Redrow at Newton Abbot were not over-helpful. However, on Sunday just gone they had seen an identical property, but built four years ago, at Bideford. The website description and photographs portrayed it as a beautiful property finished to a high standard, so they rang the agents on Monday and arranged to view at 11am yesterday. They loved Bideford and the surrounding area and they duly went along at 11am to view. Richard’s words to me yesterday evening when he rang were “You would not have believed it was the same house”. It was dirty, in great need of redecoration and considerable repair through misuse and neglect and was altogether the worst example of Estate Agent’s downright lies. The one good thing that came out of it was that they realised that the layout and sizes were not really suitable for them. They set off for home, quite despondent, but as they were approaching Barnstaple they saw Redrow flags flying in the distance, They made their way to the development which was just coming towards completion, and found their ideal house - which they were able to inspect fully - which was both the last of its type on the development and already on offer already upgraded beyond basic. They reserved it and asked what else they could haggle over (virtually no sales for three months does tend to make builders a little more generous!) and he rang this morning to say that they had offered further upgrades and all but £500 towards stamp duty. Altogether a win-win!

Now I have a confession to make. Yesterday evening I somehow clicked on something I shouldn’t have clicked on and wiped out 116 records from one of our Admin lists. After a hasty consultation with our support team and a chat with Gwyneth Hawkes, our Administrator, we devised a quick fix and, working together, we had our system complete again. Time for a cuppa!

Within 30 minutes our youngest daughter and her husband and the two grandchildren arrived for a socially distanced visit, so by 2:45pm when they left I hadn’t even started today’s work on DIT! Thankfully the weather today was really too good to spend too long outside so we were back on schedule. I don’t think I could survive another day like this one, though! Still, all’s well that ends well .....