

DESERT ISLAND TIMES

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*A MISCELLANY OF
CONTRIBUTIONS
FROM OUR MEMBERS*

A Time of Remembrance

The Poppy on our front cover is a symbol with which we are all familiar.

However, the whole period from 1st November through to Remembrance Day (11th November) or the Sunday nearest to this date if it is later, is one of remembrance. The first two days are actually religious festivals, but, like many that were devised by an emerging Church, they have, over time, been adopted more widely in society and their original intent can certainly be as appropriate to those who do not practise a religion as those who do.

All Saints Day (also known as All Hallows Day) falls on 1st November. We could no doubt all produce a list of Christian saints, if only by referring to the Anglican churches around the city, most of which are dedicated to a specific saint. However, the term “saint” has a much broader meaning and refers to anyone, widely known or little-known, who has done good works for fellow human beings. It does not refer to someone who spent most of the day in prayer or the oft-glamourised images seen in stained glass windows! The former would have no time left to do good works for anybody and the latter has never existed at all! In recent years the term has been applied to St Teresa of Calcutta (any doubts about what she achieved? Look at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mother_Teresa). I’m sure, though, that the current pandemic has produced a whole raft of unnamed saints, particularly in our NHS and Social Care services.

All Souls Day is a lesser religious festival nowadays and celebrates the lives of all who have died, but they might not have achieved fame for good works during their lifetimes. In particular it is traditional to remember those family members and other loved ones who have died, and that makes this festival of remembrance more personal and intimate than the greater All Saints Day which it follows.

And so we come to the major Festival of Remembrance which falls on 11th November annually. This date is of course significant, as it was on this day in 1918 that the Armistice was signed and World War I came to its end after four years; during which huge numbers of people, military and civilians, lost their lives. Few families can have escaped without the loss of at least one member – three of my great uncles were killed in action – but it must also be remembered that the war produced huge numbers of casualties who suffered in varying degrees. My maternal grandfather and two more great uncles were badly gassed in the trenches – something which had a lasting impact on their lives, shortening them quite dramatically. Of course, since 1918, we have had the major conflict of 1939 – 1945 and other lesser conflicts through to the present century. We now remember all of those who have lost their lives in the conflicts and use the occasion to raise funds to assist those who survived the conflicts, but whose lives have been irrevocably changed as a result of their service in any of the armed forces.

The Remembrance Poppy is an artificial flower sold by veterans' associations to raise money for these servicemen and servicewomen and their families.

The modern Remembrance Poppy has been trademarked by these associations in many countries, particularly in the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth nations, where sales fund the associations' services. Small Remembrance Poppies are usually worn on lapels in the period leading up to the Remembrance commemorations, traditionally held on the Sunday nearest to 11th November, when that day is not a Sunday. Services and Festivals of Remembrance are held, and wreaths of poppies are laid, at cenotaphs and war memorials

But why the poppy?

The poppy's origin as a popular symbol of remembrance lies in the landscapes of the First World War. Poppies were a common sight, especially on the Western Front. They flourished in the soil churned up by the fighting and shelling. The flower provided Canadian Doctor John McCrae with inspiration for his poem 'In Flanders Fields', which he wrote whilst serving in Ypres in 1915. It was first published in *Punch*, having been rejected by *The Spectator*. In 1918, in response to McCrae's poem, American humanitarian Moina Michael wrote 'And now the Torch and Poppy Red, we wear in honour of our dead...'. She campaigned to make the poppy a symbol of remembrance of those who had died in the war.

Artificial poppies were first sold in Britain in 1921 to raise money for the Earl Haig Fund in support of ex-servicemen and the families of those who had died in the conflict. They were supplied by Anna Guérin, who had been manufacturing the flowers in France to raise money for war orphans. Following the ending of the war the French government formed "La Ligue des Enfants de France et d'Amérique" (The Children's League of France and America), a charity which used a poppy as its emblem. In the UK, selling poppies proved so popular that in 1922 the British Legion founded a factory - staffed by disabled ex-servicemen - to produce its own. It continues to do so today.

This year, of course, is very different from what we are used to. In previous years it has been possible to purchase poppies (and therefore donate to the Royal British Legion) in many different places. Veterans "manned" stalls in shopping centres, supermarkets and other large venues, raising around £50m each year. We cannot do this in 2020, but it is still possible to donate to the Legion online, using the link:

https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/poppy-appeal?=&msclid=f95f4712cdfc19af4a7718b34e1368af&utm_source=bing&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=CR%20-%20Bing%20-%20Individual%20Giving%20-%20Poppy%20Appeal%20-%20Generic%20-%20Traffic&utm_term=poppy%20day%20appeal&utm_content=Poppy%20Appeal_Exact&gclid=f95f4712cdfc19af4a7718b34e1368af&gclsrc=3p.ds

In return for a donation you will receive a link from which you can download a poppy poster to display in a window if you so wish.

Zoom and Newport SE Wales U3A

You will be aware that some groups are holding meetings using Zoom – meetings that any interested members can join as long as they have internet access. In the main, convenors have used the free system which allows for only 40 minutes per session. We have, however, now obtained a paid-for licence for general U3A use which allows for longer sessions. As it is only possible to run one session at a time we will have to implement a revised timetable to cater for all groups wishing to participate, but the benefit is that sessions can literally be scheduled for any day of the week and at any reasonable time! It does mean that evening meetings are possible – you will not be leaving your homes. That was cited by a number of members who responded to last year's members' survey, as the reason why they would not attend any evening meetings at Shaftesbury Street.

The groups who have booked slots so far are:

French Intermediate (Pam Cocchiara) – Wednesday 10am

French Debs (Barbara Phillips) – Wednesday 2.15pm

Welsh (Marilyn Gregory) – Wednesday 3.30pm

French Lit. (Chris John) – Friday 9.45am

Choir (Stephen Berry) – Thursday 10am

History (Rob Wilkinson) – Thursday 2pm

Craft (Ros Lee) – Friday 11.30am

Creative Writing (Pam Cocchiara) – Friday 1pm

Interested in **Italian**? Contact Jerome O'Brien. Interested in **Cryptic Crosswords**? Contact Angela Robins.

Please visit our website (<https://u3asites.org.uk/newportsewales/groups>), select the group, and click on "Contact" to send a message to the Convenor. Watch for future developments!

Bryce Canyon, Utah, USA by Julie Fry (with technical support from Alan!)

If you were to ask me to name my favourite national park in the Rocky Mountains of the USA I would not hesitate to say Yellowstone. Perhaps you are familiar with its variety of wildlife and beautiful physical features from the frequently shown films on TV. It is also famous as the first national park, being established in 1872.

When I read the recent Third Age Matters, I was reminded of a much lesser known national park. Ann Pocklington's article on page 55 shows one small photograph and refers to a walk in the "Queens Garden" but the park is not named. I recognised this as Bryce Canyon, as we had visited it in 2005. It lies in a particularly remote part of Utah and was not designated as a national park until 1928. However, I now read that visitor numbers have doubled to 2 million since we were there, so it's not as remote as it used to be.

While most national parks exist because of their many wonderful mountains, valleys, lakes, waterfalls etc, Bryce is different because it has the highest concentration in the world of just one geological feature - its Hoodoos. These are tall thin spires of sandstone rock formed from the repeated action of weathering and erosion. They have a layer of harder rock sitting on top like a cap. This is more noticeable when the cap rock is a different colour from the rest of the column (photo 1). Arches are sometimes formed in the process (photo 2).

Bryce is not actually a canyon but a series of about a dozen natural amphitheatres, eroded out of the Colorado Plateau (photo 3). It is simply pillars of rock, and more rock as far as the eye can see, and visitors are enthralled by the colour and the shapes that stretch to the horizon (photos 4/5). You find your imagination taking over as you gaze at it all. I particularly remember thinking that from Sunset Point I could see the palaces of the Forbidden City in Peking in the far distance.

Bryce is also different because there is one dominant colour, RED, in all the shades from pink to orange to bright red. This is due to the presence of iron when the rocks were formed. It only takes a small amount to make a lot of red rock (photo 6).

Bryce Canyon glows. That is why it is so attractive.

Because it lies between 6,000 feet and over 9,000 feet above sea level, it has lying snow for many months. As we were there in September, we missed that. The internet has dozens of photographs, however.

I hope this article has whetted your appetite to find out more. Did you know that Utah has 4 other national parks and that's without wandering south into Arizona where you find the Grand Canyon?

Happy "armchair travelling".

For details of the geology of Bryce Canyon click on this link:

<https://www.nps.gov/brca/learn/nature/hoodoos.htm>



1



2



3



4



5



6

Cryptic Word Ladder submitted by Angela Robins

Your task is to climb from FISH to POND by solving the Cryptic Clues, changing just one letter at a time and without disturbing the order of the remaining letters.

Most cryptic clues include a definition of the answer, as in straight crossword clues, so anyone can complete this puzzle. Can you climb the ladder successfully?

Contact me at valdemos2@gmail.com if you would like to receive my group's easy weekly crossword with hints and answers.

Answers are on Page 8.

? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

		POND
Form a relationship with a spy.	(Double Definition)	_____
No show in Hubbard's cupboard?	(Pure Cryptic)	_____
Noel becomes the Ranger.	(Anagram)	_____
Poor sole is unsuccessful.	(Anagram)	_____
Posse loses bearing to prepare for a shot.	(A-Z Abbrev/Pt Word)	_____
Stop! Rebuild that pillar.	(Anagram)	_____
Good person following dad is late.	(A-Z Abbreviations)	_____
Don't eat quickly.	(Double Definition)	_____
Bunch of fives full of dollars?	(Cryptic)	_____
		FISH

Quiz - The Visual Arts submitted by Pam Cocchiara

1. Which striking building stands near Sydney Harbour Bridge?
2. Which artist made his name with paintings of soup cans and coca-cola bottles?
3. In which sphere of the visual arts was Richard Avedon famous?
4. Which British artist painted 'Rain, Steam and Speed'?
5. Which painting technique uses water-based paint on wet plaster?
6. Which English architect's masterpiece is the Banqueting Hall in Whitehall, London.
7. Which painter was given his nickname because his father was a dyer?
8. Which artist, more famous for his sculpture, made drawings of people in London's air raid shelters during WW2?
9. Which famous children's stories are illustrated by E H Shepard?
10. Which American National Park was the subject of many of Ansel Adams' greatest photographs?

Answers are on Page 8.

A Twist in the Tail by Monty Dart

There is a new cat on the block. She has been around for about 3 months. She was initially nervous but became friendly. She - (we called her 'she' as it wasn't appropriate to check her nether regions on a first date!) - can't have arrived with new neighbours as no one has moved for months. We contemplated that we had a stray on our hands. She used to sleep in one of my window boxes on hot days. Needless to say I didn't plant that box up!

There is an app called Nextdoor (<https://nextdoor.com>) which is quite useful; people post all sorts of local information on it and you can choose how many people see the post.

So a couple of days ago, Lucy (no. 29) and I decided to post said moggie on Nextdoor. I was overwhelmed with people looking for lost kitties but at that point we hadn't managed to get a photo. I tried from the terrace, but Lucy managed to take a photo in her garden. As she rolled over (the cat, not Lucy), we could see that she was partially ginger as well, so my 'silver tabby' post was a bit inaccurate, but that photo gave a better view of her colouring.

Someone contacted me and said 'Can I come and look at the cat, it might be mine?' Well, there was relentless drizzle. The cat wouldn't turn up. It liked basking in the sun. I got the cat basket down but Lucy and I were sure it wouldn't put in an appearance.

Eve, who owned the cat, walked out in the drizzle, calling 'Bambi, Bambi' She was on a hiding to no-where. We saw her coming up from the garden after just a minute. Obviously she hadn't found the cat.

Yes, you know the ending. As Eve burst through the garden door with a very happy Bambi in her arms, we couldn't believe it.

Bambi had been missing 6 months ago from Barrack Hill (where a friend of Eve was looking after her). The lovely Bambi had been sleeping rough since then. In fact it was 'the friend' that spotted it on my Nextdoor post.

We all burst into girlie tears, whilst Bambi moaned about being in the cat box, so that's my end of a happy tail.

Answers to Cryptic Word Ladder (page 7)

(From bottom to top!) FISH - FIST - FAST - PAST - POST - POSE - LOSE - LONE - BONE - BOND - POND.

Answers to The Visual Arts (page 7)

1. Sydney Opera House
2. Andy Warhol
3. Photography
4. J M W Turner
5. Fresco
6. Inigo Jones
7. Tintoretto
8. Henry Moore
9. Winnie the Pooh stories by A A Milne
10. Yosemite

When Insults Had Class submitted by Ian Lumley

These glorious insults are from an era "before" the English language got boiled down to 4-letter words.

A member of Parliament to Disraeli: "Sir, you will either die on the gallows or of some unspeakable disease." "That depends, Sir," said Disraeli, "whether I embrace your policies or your mistress."

"He had delusions of adequacy." Walter Kerr

"He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire." Winston Churchill

"I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure." Clarence Darrow

"He has never been known to use a word that might send a reader to the dictionary." William Faulkner (about Ernest Hemingway)

"Thank you for sending me a copy of your book; I'll waste no time reading it." Moses Hadas

"I didn't attend the funeral, but I sent a nice letter saying I approved of it." Mark Twain

"He has no enemies but is intensely disliked by his friends." Oscar Wilde

"I am enclosing two tickets to the first night of my new play; bring a friend, if you have one." George Bernard Shaw to Winston Churchill. "Cannot possibly attend first night, will attend second... if there is one." Winston Churchill, in response

"I feel so miserable without you; it's almost like having you here." Stephen Bishop

"He is a self-made man and worships his creator." John Bright

"I've just learned about his illness. Let's hope it's nothing trivial." Irvin S. Cobb

"He is not only dull himself; he is the cause of dullness in others." Samuel Johnson

"He is simply a shiver looking for a spine to run up." Paul Keating

"In order to avoid being called a flirt, she always yielded easily." Charles, Count Talleyrand

"He loves nature in spite of what it did to him." Forrest Tucker

"Why do you sit there looking like an envelope without any address on it?" Mark Twain

"His mother should have thrown him away and kept the stork." Mae West

"Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, whenever they go." Oscar Wilde

"He uses statistics as a drunken man uses lamp-posts...for support rather than illumination." Andrew Lang

"He has Van Gogh's ear for music." Billy Wilder

"I've had a perfectly wonderful evening. But I'm afraid this wasn't it." Groucho Marx

The Falling Leaves – Music for Autumn (part 2) by Neil Pritchard

I think you may be familiar with this next Autumnal piece I've chosen, although you may not know the composer. It's "September Song" song by Kurt Weill.

One of the most versatile and influential composers of the musical theatre in the twentieth century, Kurt Weill was born in Dessau, Germany in 1900. He had two important careers, one in Germany in the 1920s, the other from his emigration to the United States in 1935, until his death. The third of four children born to a cantor in the Jewish quarter of Dessau, Weill began piano lessons at the age of twelve and soon began to write songs, mostly to the verse of serious poets. He studied piano, composition, theory and conducting. At eighteen he went to Berlin to music college, and wrote his first string quartet under the guidance of Engelbert Humperdinck (composer of Hansel and Gretel). That eminent Wagnerian apparently had little time for him, and when Weill learned that his family had fallen on hard times, he returned to Dessau. He joined the staff of the local theatre as a rehearsal pianist.

Weill met actress and singer Lotte Lenya in the summer of 1924. They were married in 1926, divorced in 1933, and married again in the United States in 1937. Their's was an "open" marriage that lasted until Weill's death in 1950. Lenya subsequently established the Kurt Weill Foundation for the management and promotion of his legacy. Weill first sought a collaboration with the writer and playwright Bertolt Brecht in 1927, in the creation of a cabaret-scaled "Songspiel"- Mahagonny. It's scandalous success encouraged them to expand the work to opera length, and as *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*, it premiered in Leipzig in March 1930. In the three years between, Brecht and Weill worked together on numerous theatrical projects, among them the wildly popular *Threepenny Opera*. All this time, workaholic Weill was writing critical reviews by the hundreds, for the German Radio programme guides. The last collaboration with Brecht was the sung ballet *The Seven Deadly Sins* in 1933, produced in Paris (and starring Lotte Lenya) after both Brecht and Weill had fled the Nazis' rise to power.

In September 1935 Weill and Lenya (now divorced) travelled to New York. In the city Weill pursued the foremost playwrights of the day as his collaborators: Maxwell Anderson (*Knickerbocker Holiday* 1938, with Weill's first standard hit "September Song"). Moss Hart (*Lady in the Dark* 1940, with lyrics by Ira Gershwin), and S.J. Perelman (*One Touch of Venus* 1943, with another timeless hit, "Speak Low," lyrics by Ogden Nash). In 1947 the Playwrights Producing Company, to which he had been elected as its only musician, brought Weill's opera "Street Scene" to Broadway. The temperament of "Street Scene" is a far cry from that of Mahagonny; one would hardly guess it was by the same composer. Weill had become a US citizen in 1943, and avoided using the German language again, except to write to his parents who had escaped to Israel. He had also traded the brittle, confrontational style of his Weimar compositions, for a more lyrical approach when he turned to the American theatre. Weill believed his German works had been destroyed. Weill died of a heart attack (still working overtime) at the early age of 50. And so to September Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Toei68xELNo>

The Russian countryside had a particular appeal for many of the composers, and they often celebrated it in their music, as was the case with Alexander Glazunov. He, in the spirit of Vivaldi and Haydn, gave us a wonderfully romantic version of the seasons. He was born in Saint Petersburg in 1866, son of a wealthy publisher. He began studying piano at the age of nine and began composing at 11. The composer Balakirev recognised Glazunov's talent and brought his work to the attention of his fellow composer Rimsky-Korsakov. "Casually Balakirev once brought me the composition of a fourteen year old high-school student, Alexander Glazunov", Rimsky-Korsakov remembered. "It was an orchestral score written in childish fashion. The boy's talent was indubitably clear." Balakirev introduced him to Rimsky-Korsakov shortly afterwards in December 1879. Rimsky-Korsakov premiered this work in 1882, when Glazunov was 16. Borodin, among others, lavishly praised both the work and its composer. Rimsky-Korsakov taught

Glazunov as a private student "His musical development progressed not by the day, but literally by the hour", Rimsky-Korsakov wrote. The nature of their relationship also changed. By the spring of 1881, Rimsky-Korsakov considered Glazunov more of a junior colleague than a student. While part of this development may have been from Rimsky-Korsakov's need to find a spiritual replacement for the composer, Modest Mussorgsky, who had died that March, it may have also been from observing his progress on the first of Glazunov's eight completed symphonies.

More important than this praise was that, among the work's admirers, was a wealthy timber merchant and amateur musician, Mitrofan Belyayev. Belyayev took Glazunov on a trip to Western Europe in 1884 where he met Liszt in Weimar. It was here where Glazunov's First Symphony was performed. Belyayev decided the following season to give a public concert of works by Glazunov and other composers. Glazunov soon enjoyed international acclaim and during the 1890s he wrote three symphonies, two string quartets and a ballet. When he was elected director of the Saint Petersburg Conservatory in 1905, he was at the height of his creative powers. This was also the time of his greatest international acclaim. Glazunov made his conducting debut in 1888 and he was appointed conductor for the Russian Symphony Concerts in 1896. In 1899, Glazunov became a professor at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory. In the wake of the 1905 Russian Revolution, Glazunov became the Director of the Conservatory. After the end of World War I, he was instrumental in the reorganisation of the Conservatory. This may, in fact, have been the main reason he waited so long to go into exile. During his tenure he worked tirelessly to improve the curriculum, raise the standards for students and staff, as well as defending the institute's dignity and autonomy. Among his achievements were an opera studio and a students' Philharmonic Orchestra.

Glazunov showed great concern for the welfare of needy students, such as Dmitri Shostakovich. He also personally examined hundreds of students at the end of each academic year, writing brief comments on each. Because of his reputation, the Conservatory received special status among institutions of higher learning, in the aftermath of the October 1917 Revolution. Glazunov established a sound working relationship with the Bolshevik regime. Nevertheless, Glazunov's conservatism was attacked within the Conservatory. Increasingly, professors demanded more progressive methods, and students wanted greater rights. Glazunov saw these demands as both destructive and unjust. Tired of the Conservatory, he took advantage of the opportunity to go abroad in 1928 for the Schubert centenary celebrations in Vienna. He didn't return. He toured Europe and the United States in 1928, and settled in Paris by 1929. He always claimed that the reason for his continued absence from Russia was "ill health"; this enabled him to remain a respected composer in the Soviet Union. In 1929 he conducted an orchestra of Parisian musicians in the first complete electrical recording of his most popular work *The Seasons*. Glazunov died in Neuilly-sur-Seine (near Paris) at the age of 70 in 1936. *The Seasons* is a very charming ballet score, his orchestration is very colourful, and his style is very much from the Russian tradition of Tchaikovsky. Each season is divided into scenes whose dancing characters represent frost, ice and snow for winter, Zephyr, birds and flowers for spring, cornflowers, poppies and fauns for summer and falling leaves and stars glittering in the heavens for autumn, so the ballet music is very descriptive. The most famous scene of the ballet is the "Petit Adagio" of autumn: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dum-2EKDBtY>

The transition from autumn to winter was inspiration for the English composer Arnold Bax in composing his work *November Woods*. Bax is one of those neglected composers who at one time, in the 1920s and 1930s was considered to be one of the finest composers of his day. He was born in Streatham, London, to a Victorian upper-middle-class family, of Dutch descent. He grew up in Ivy Back, a mansion on top of Haverstock Hill, Hampstead. Because of the family's affluence, Bax never had to take a paid position, and was free to pursue most of his interests. Bax displayed at an early stage, a powerful intellect and a great musical talent, especially at the keyboard. He was taught at home, but received his first formal musical education at age 16 at the Hampstead Conservatory. He was then accepted into the Royal Academy of Music in 1900 where he remained until 1905. Arnold Bax had a sensitive and searching nature and drew inspiration from a wide range of sources. He was a voracious reader of literature, and in this way he

happened upon the poet William Butler Yeats' *The Wanderings of Oisín and Other Poems* in 1902. He developed an infatuation with Ireland, and began travelling extensively there. Bax visited the most isolated and secluded places, eventually discovering the little Donegal village Glencolumbkille, to which he returned annually for almost 30 years. Here, he drew inspiration from the landscape and the sea, and from the culture and life of the local Irish peasants, many of whom Bax regarded as close friends.

In 1911 he married Elsie Sobrino, a childhood friend, and they settled in Rathgar, Dublin. He already had some of his poems and short stories published in Dublin, and in his circle he was simply known by his pseudonym Dermot O'Byrne. As the war years approached, Bax and his family returned to London. It was the loss of a blissful life. Bax avoided conscription because of a heart-condition and spent the war years composing profusely. Although World War I unleashed previously unimagined horrors upon the world, it was the Easter Rebellion and the destruction of Dublin that greatly disturbed Bax. As Bax's Ireland – a haven and a retreat – was lost to bitter conflict and civil war, he sought refuge in a liaison with the younger pianist Harriet Cohen. What had started out as a purely professional relationship - Harriet Cohen playing and championing Bax's piano music - developed into a passionate relationship. Ironically, but perhaps not unexpectedly, this difficult period in Bax's life led to the composition of several attractive tone-poems, including *Summer Music*, *Tintagel* and *November Woods* in 1917.

After the war British music was in demand as never before in England, and Bax won considerable fame with his works, which were widely performed. From 1928 onwards he ceased to travel to Ireland and instead began his annual migration during the winter months to Morar, in the western Scottish Highlands near Mallaig. He would sketch his compositions in London, and take them to the Station Hotel at Morar for the winter to orchestrate them. At this time, Bax found a new love in Mary Gleaves, and she accompanied him to Scotland. He lived in one room in the hotel for about 5 months of each year, and as well as composing he spent many hours walking in the locality, particularly on the local beach that overlooks the Isle of Syke. In the Morar period, which lasted until the outbreak of World War II, he discovered his interest in Norway and the Nordic countries, and found inspiration in the music of the Finnish composer Jean Sibelius

Bax received a knighthood in 1937 but he was not entirely prepared to enjoy this honour. He contended that there was a conflict between the knighthood and his profound affinity with Ireland, but accepted nonetheless. Also, he began to feel that his creative energies were being drained. He explained to his friends that he felt tired, restless and lonely. In 1942 he was appointed Master of the King's Music, a decision the British musical establishment was not altogether happy with. By many, Bax was considered an untypical English composer, some especially pointing to the 'Irishness' of his music. Of Bax's later works, only the film scores for *Malta* and *Oliver Twist* were really successful. Retreating from the public scene he lived quietly at The White Horse Hotel in Storrington, Sussex. He certainly loved his hotels. As performances of Bax's music grew increasingly rare in Britain, his music began to have wide appeal in Ireland. In 1946 Bax became external examiner with both University College Cork and University College Dublin, and he also gave individual tuition to young aspiring Irish composers. In 1953 he was further honoured by appointment as a Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order (KCVO), an honour within the Queen's personal gift. Bax died in 1953 from a complication of a heart-condition. *November Woods* is a fine example of the way his music conveyed the changing aspects of the natural world: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JuZJWkXk89k>

Poetry evoking the seasons has, alongside direct contact with the season's riches, appealed strongly to composers. In 1905 the German composer Richard Strauss's opera *Salome* premiered. The opera was so successful that he used his earnings to build a villa in the village of Garmisch-Partenkirchen in Upper Bavaria, Germany. It soon became his "home base" from where he would go on his concert tours to the surrounding music centres. Many of his famous works were composed at the Villa Strauss. Until his death in 1949, the village was considered his home. Today, the villa is privately owned by the descendants of

the composer and open to the public as the Richard Strauss Institute. He intentionally didn't want to build his new summer residence in Munich or another big city because he really needed to surround himself with nature in order to compose his music. This is an example of how composers found nature inspiring for their musical expression. Richard Strauss's Four Last Songs is an example of one of the most touchingly beautiful ways a composer can end his career, with poetry that resonates with the seasons.

Richard Strauss was born in 1865 and revolutionised orchestral music before the end of the 19th century in his tone-poems, such as *Also Sprach Zarathustra* (the film *2001: A Space Odyssey's* signature tune). He shocked and awed early 20th century audiences with his blood-drenched operatic settings of *Salome* and *Elektra*. At the end of his life, with his beloved Germany in ruins after the Second World War, he wrote some of the most devastatingly moving music ever composed: *Metamorphosen*, for strings, and the *Four Last Songs*. In these songs Strauss, at the end of a long and successful career, still had the power to move his audience with music of such sublime beauty that it takes your breath away. Richard Strauss was in his 80s and living in Switzerland at the end of World War II and, although he was increasingly feeble, he was still composing. Throughout his successful operatic and orchestral career he'd written songs – almost 200 of them, inspired by his wife Pauline. She was quite a character with a formidable reputation as the iron rod in that relationship – managing the money and giving her husband just enough to live on! But she was also a successful soprano who performed Strauss's songs to great acclaim.

Towards the end of 1946, Strauss read a poem by Eichendorff, 'Im Abendrot', in which an ageing couple at the end of their lives together, look at the setting sun and ask, 'Is that perhaps death'. The words matched the composer's feelings entirely, and became the inspiration for the start of a five-song cycle which he never completed. But he did compose four, although they weren't linked as a group until after his death, when Strauss's publisher named them as the 'Four Last Songs'. The Eichendorff poem which translates as 'At Sunset' is fittingly the last of the four, with the first three songs all settings of poems by Herman Hesse. Beginning with 'Spring', the second is 'September' followed by 'Going to Sleep' - each seems to be part of Strauss's preparations for death and it's hard to imagine a more conscious or deliberate farewell from this master of song. The words are all warm, wise and reflective with no hint of religious consolation as death approaches, but rather a deeply felt appreciation of the world, before leaving. This isn't some maudlin notion with the benefit of hindsight, although these songs do have a profound sense of longing and melancholy, but the overwhelming effect is one of a feeling of serene peace. It's also an example of how poetry in tandem with a love of nature, can lift composer's music to a new level. This is a translation of the movement:

September

The garden is in mourning. Cool rain seeps into the flowers. Summertime shudders, quietly awaiting his end.

Golden leaf after leaf falls from the tall acacia tree. Summer smiles, astonished and feeble, at his dying dream of a garden.

For just a while he tarries beside the roses, yearning for repose. Slowly he closes his weary eyes.

I'll end with the soprano Jessye Norman in a moving account of this wonderful song:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qtmEjXZx340>

Wordsearches submitted by Barbara Phillips

Words can run forwards, backwards, diagonally or vertically, but always in a straight line.

No. 1 Can you find 14 Welsh place names in this grid?

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

No. 2 Can you find 11 Devon place names in this grid?

H	R	D	A	W	L	I	S	H
T	N	O	T	I	D	E	R	C
U	H	P	O	B	W	Q	A	T
O	I	T	N	M	S	A	S	I
M	T	R	U	I	X	E	N	V
Y	A	O	S	O	N	E	E	E
L	D	A	R	T	M	O	O	R
P	R	I	O	Q	A	X	E	T
N	S	T	P	E	U	C	E	O
E	B	M	O	C	L	A	S	N
C	L	O	V	E	L	L	Y	D

Answers are on page 20

What We Were Doing . . . - Angela Robins

Four years ago, 50 of our members enjoyed the Visitor Experience at The Royal Mint, Llantrisant. They watched the minting process from a viewing window in the factory, as the metal blanks were struck into coins of the realm; not just our realm but also those of over 60 countries, making Llantrisant the world's leading export mint. Over 90 million coins are struck every week! In addition, official government seals are produced and medals have been made for significant international moments from the Battle of Waterloo to the Olympic Games.

Members learnt that the Mint started life behind the walls of the Tower of London, before moving to Tower Hill in the 17th century. The relocation to its present site in 1968 was brought about by the Rt Hon James Callaghan, then Chancellor of the Exchequer; as an MP for Cardiff and a Labour man through-and-through. He said the Mint had to come to Wales and be built in a Welsh Valley!!

Ever wondered what a million pounds looks like? Pat Fackerell, Tony Mason and Jackie Kerr know! See below:



-----X-----

After a two-week criminal trial of a very high-profile case of a robbery at the Royal Mint, the judge asked the jury foreman, Euan, "Has the Jury reached a verdict in this case?"

"Yes, we have, your Honour," responded Euan, "We find the defendant - Not Guilty!" to which the family and friends of the defendant jumped for joy and hugged each other, as they shouted expressions of gratitude.

The man's lawyer turned to his client and asked, "What do you think of that?"

The bewildered defendant said, "I'm really confused. Does this mean I have to give all the money back?"

A New Start by Martyn Vaughan

I don't know what made me follow them.

From a distance they looked like any other couple.

I was sitting with a carafe of Chateau Neuf du Pape outside Andre's, when I saw them on the other side of the street.

It was a sunny day and the sky was the rich, deep blue you only get in Provence. The smell of the market was in the air, tantalising with its messages of ripe fruit and fresh meat, mixing promiscuously with the salty tang of the nearby harbour.

I had no intention of doing anything that day; just sitting there outside the café with my carafe of wine, indulging in one of my favourite activities, namely people-watching. And what better place to do that, than in Marseille? There you can see the whole gamut of people from around the great inland sea:—Italians, Arabs, Cypriots; even the occasional white-skinned Englishman, taking refuge from his eternal drizzle in the dazzling sunlight of the Mediterranean.

But back to my couple. As I said, they looked like any other pairing from where I sat, so there was no reason whatsoever to leave my carafe and my fruits-de-mer and start following them.

And so I was puzzled with myself. Why was I doing this? Had I turned into some kind of stalker? And yet, despite those doubts, I felt compelled to follow.

They stopped outside various shops, gazing longingly through the windows, and even went into one.

I waited on the other side of the street until they came out, and then, as they moved off, fell in closely behind them.

Now that I was closer to them, I could see that they looked strangely familiar, especially the woman. Where could I have met them? How did I know them? I had not been in Marseille long and I was still building up my social circle.

Finally, they stopped outside a café not far from the harbour and ordered coffee. It was not long in arriving and I could see that the man had a tall Americano and the woman a cappuccino. Now you may think that I was becoming a little obsessed with this couple, but those are exactly the coffees that my wife and I always order. Just a minor coincidence, you might say, but I felt a peculiar tension gradually take hold of me. I had to get a better look at them.

Pretending to look at the various fishing nets and lobster pots that festooned the shop fronts, I gradually moved closer, exuding I hoped, an air of complete indifference to everything but the sun-blessed scenery.

But as I passed them, the warm Provencal air seemed to be replaced by an Arctic blast; one that sent a stiletto of ice into my heart.

For I did know the couple: one of them was my wife, laughing as she sipped her coffee and occasionally raising her hand to shield her eyes from the dazzling reflections off the slow, green swell in the harbour. And the man? Yes, I knew him as well. Even better than the woman, you might say. For it was I.

I was sitting there with my wife in that sunny street by the fishing boats. I was rooted to the spot, almost standing over them, almost touching my wife's bare shoulders. But for some reason they did not notice me, nor wonder who was the owner of the shadow that had fallen over them.

With a great effort I moved away; my heart hammering.

Was this insanity? Had I suffered some devastating breakdown that had destroyed my mind?

I turned the corner of the street; no longer wishing to see that weird couple. I sat down outside a café on the very edge of the harbour, resting my head on my hands. Who was that man, and more importantly,

why was my wife associating with him; laughing at the things he said, smiling at him; reaching out to gently touch his hands as if she was with me? I would have to go back and confront them!

'Monsieur?' a man said, very near to me. It must be the waiter.

I raised my head. And then jumped up, sending my chair flying. For I knew the man who had spoken; the man standing next to me in his waiter's uniform, patiently waiting for my order. The man was me.

I stared at him for a few moments and he stared back at me, apparently unperturbed by looking at himself. Puzzlement grew on his features. 'Monsieur?' he said again, pointing to the menu in the window. I said nothing but moved quickly away, not knowing where I was going; not caring where I was going. Just away from the man.

But how could I escape from my madness?

One man who looked like me I could explain, even if it meant my wife was unfaithful. But two?

I walked along the sea front. Although the sun was beating down from near the zenith, I felt no warmth. It seemed I was alone on a great plain of ice and the raucous cries of the gulls had been replaced by the moans of a pitiless wind. I was so lost in my thoughts that I was unaware of my surroundings. I could have walked into the water and not realised it.

But in fact, I collided with a man walking briskly in the other direction. I turned to him, ready to offer my apologies - but the words died in my throat. The man I had walked into was - myself.

He glared at me but made no remarks on our apparent identity. 'Look where you're going, you idiot!' were his only words and then he marched away. I watched him go; the last shreds of belief in my sanity marching with him.

There could be no doubt now. I was insane. I knew not what to do; where to go; who to turn to for help. How could there be help for someone as mad as me?

As the day wore on, I saw myself, more and more frequently.

The men hauling boxes of fish off the boat. They were all me.

The man directing the traffic - it was me.

The man in the car, that I nearly stepped in front of, was me. He shook his fist at himself and then drove on.

The greasy beggar sitting on the pavement with his box of coins in front of him, was me. He clutched at my trouser leg as I passed, begging for money, but did not recognise me. I gave him nothing and walked on.

Eventually I just sat on the harbour wall and watched them all. At first there were still a few men who were not me, but as the sun began to decline, I could no longer see a single man who was not me.

I saw three policemen, who were all me, drag a protesting violent drunk, who was also me, into their car and drive away. Then I stopped looking.

There was nothing I could do. How can one escape from oneself?

I would just wait for this madhouse to come to an end in its own good time.

As I sat there on the harbour wall, my head in my hands, shivering in the sweltering heat, I became aware of a change. Normally the harbour at Marseille is not the place one would choose for a quiet afternoon. Normally it is a cacophony of sound as the crowds go about their business; some activities legal, others definitely illegal.

But all that had stopped.

There was no noise.

None whatsoever.

I slowly raised my head from my hands and looked around. Everywhere I looked I saw myself, carrying out every trade imaginable in a busy seaport. Or at least they had been, for now every motion had ceased. They were all completely motionless, as if the pause button had been pressed on a video. Feet were poised a few centimetres above the ground as the act of walking had not been completed; mouths were open in conversations, but lips were not moving.

And it was not just the people. Two of me were in the act of throwing and receiving a large fish and there it was, motionless in the air, halfway between them. Above them, seagulls were somehow nailed to the sky, their beaks open soundlessly. Every wave in the harbour was still, forming a surface of corrugated green glass.

I looked at the weird diorama emotionlessly. This must be the end, I thought. So be it.

But then my peripheral vision caught a movement, a single movement amidst stillness.

I turned and saw myself walking towards me. I shrugged and sat back down, turning to look at the still and silent water.

But he sat down beside me and gently touched my shoulder.

I started and swivelled to face him.

He was looking at me with a gentle, but somehow sad, smile.

‘Who are you?’ I said, my throat so dry I could hardly speak, ‘What has happened to me?’

He nodded and said, ‘I’m afraid we owe you an apology. None of this should have happened.’

‘And what has happened?’ I said.

He looked around and I followed his gaze, hoping to see something of vast importance.

But he looked back at me and said, ‘All of this, Marseille, the Mediterranean, Europe, your world—none of it is real.’

I stared at him and waited for him to continue.

‘This world, your whole existence: it is a simulation running on our computers. Your world is not three billion years old; we started the simulation about three years ago and we’ve been monitoring it ever since. I’m sorry if that comes a shock to you. It must be unsettling to learn that you are simply lines of code. I thought that the least I could do is explain it to you in person.’

I stared at him. ‘Then you are...’

‘One of the programmers, yes I am,’ he finished for me, ‘I don’t look anything like this, of course. The real world is nothing like the world you thought you grew up in. I can’t explain it to you—we have no common points of reference.’

I stood up. ‘Why did you do this! Why did you create thinking beings who believe that they are real but are nothing more than software? Why?’

‘We have been a little thoughtless,’ the other me said, ‘I’m afraid we underestimated the ability of our emulations to become sentient beings. We run this simulation and many others purely for research; studies in social psychology, if you like. We create problems and see how our software beings deal with them. A few months ago, we created a pandemic to see how long it would take you to adjust to it. The next challenge would have been an asteroid collision. We never intended for anyone to actually suffer. I am sorry to learn that you do suffer. We hadn’t foreseen that.’

I glared at him, feeling the desire to take him by the throat and shake him out of his god-like calm. But I knew it was pointless; he too must simply be an avatar; a software construct.

‘And why all this duplication?’ I snarled, waving at the silent surroundings, ‘Why all these “me”s?’

‘I’m afraid that there is a flaw in the software. It creates all the human beings that you see around you but for some reason it has started duplicating one particular model - you. Obviously, a society consisting of just one or two people is of no value for our studies, so we have to correct the flaw.’

‘And how will you do that?’

‘We will take the system down. I believe you are familiar with the method: you call it switching off and on. However, we will also take the opportunity to check the coding.’

‘And will that restore things? Will I get my old life back, even though I am merely a simulation?’

His smile became sadder. ‘I’m afraid we can’t guarantee that. If we have to adjust the coding, we will probably start again. Which means that you won’t be in the new version.’

‘How long before you take it down?’

His eyes were filled with pity, pity for me, pity for a thing of shadows and moonbeams.

‘In a few minutes time. Once again, I’m sorry.’

But then something occurred to me.

‘Thank you for your concern,’ I said, ‘But tell me one thing: how certain are you that you and your people, with all your cleverness, are not also simulations?’

His smile vanished.

A Little Brain Teaser (DIT24, page 22)

I had two responses to the railway ticket I illustrated in DIT24. Julie and Alan Fry suggested that it was the last ticket issued at Hafodyrynys, and Dave Woolven spotted that it was a journey over the famous Crumlin Viaduct. It was the last ticket issued from Crumlin High Level to Hafodyrynys, as 13th June 1964 was the last day of services across the viaduct. I had a cousin who lived just below the station and I arranged with her and her husband to buy this ticket just before the train left and, as the booking clerk was a friend of theirs, he was happy to ensure that it was the last ticket issued! It was then posted to me, the postage costing about the same as the price of the ticket – 3d!

And what about this one?



Although excursion tickets from Bristol Temple Meads to London Paddington have probably been on almost continuous issue for over 150 years, there are a few interesting things about this particular ticket. Any thoughts on this one? What time of day would the passenger have had to travel?

Things don't look too good but

And one thing we have learned

NOT EVERYTHING IS CANCELLED

Sunshine is not cancelled
Moonlight is not cancelled
Love is not cancelled
Relationships are not cancelled
Reading is not cancelled
Naps are not cancelled
Devotion is not cancelled
Music is not cancelled
Dancing is not cancelled
Imagination is not cancelled
Kindness is not cancelled
Conversation is not cancelled
Walks are not cancelled
Life is not cancelled
And HOPE is not cancelled
Enjoy what we have and don't dwell on
those things which ARE cancelled

NEVER TAKE THINGS FOR GRANTED

May we never take things for granted
Evenings with friends and family
Birthday celebrations
The roar of a crowd
Mornings at the gym
Enjoying theatre or a movie
Sharing a joke
Listening to stories
Coffee with a friend
Happy hour
A hug
Life itself

Answers to Wordsearches (page 14)

14 Welsh Place Names

Usk Tenby Cardiff Cardigan Newport Bangor Beaumaris Conwy Mold Swansea Bala
Rhyl Barry Brecon

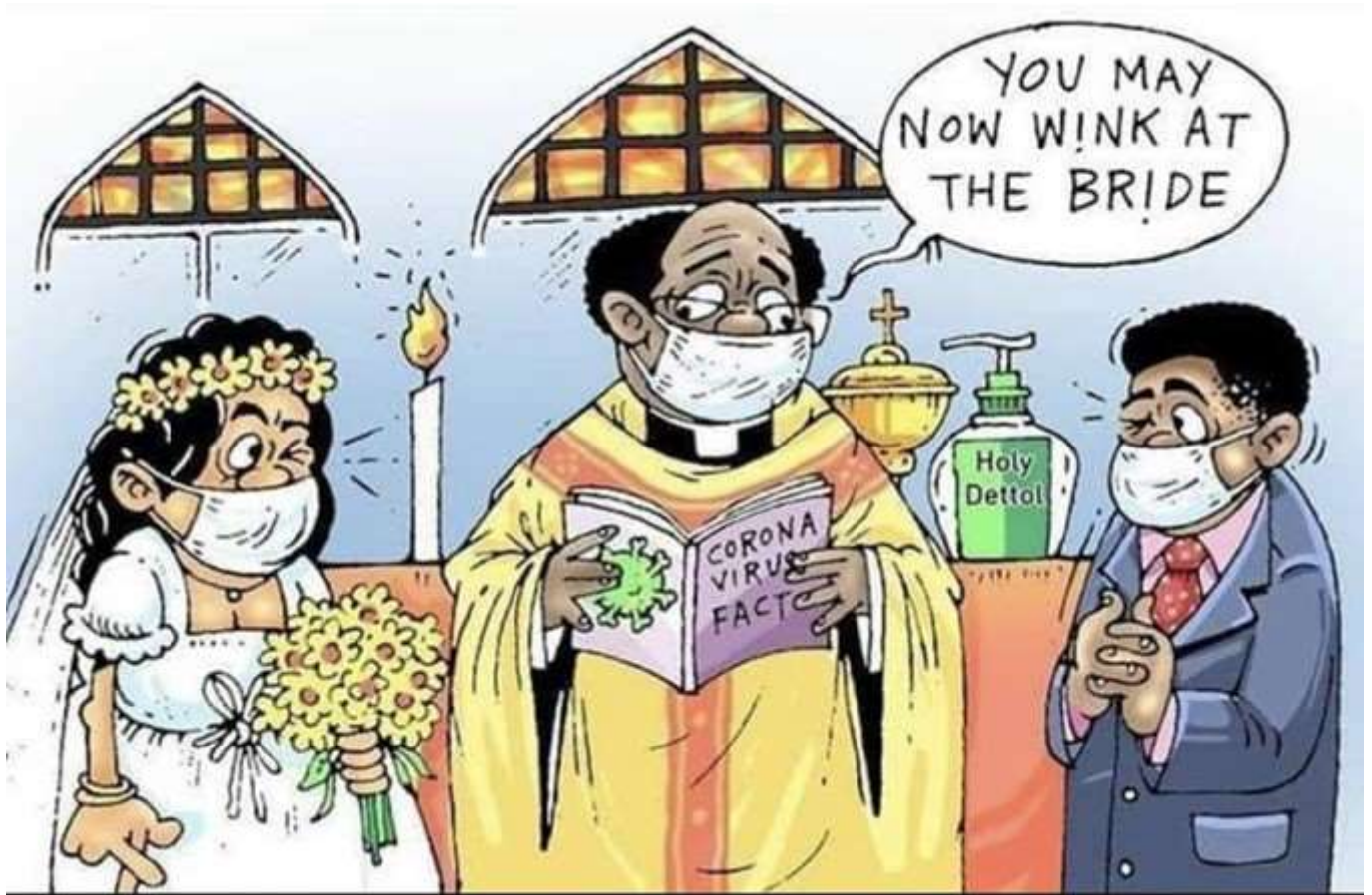
11 Devon Place Names

Dawlish Plymouth Dartmoor Salcombe Clovelly Tiverton Exmoor Exmouth Totnes
Torquay Crediton

Secretarial Confusion – Rob Wilkinson admits that

I seem to have confused these people and given them the wrong countries. They are either famous for music or sport. Rearrange them correctly. The correct answers are on page 27.

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| 1. Abba | Holland |
| 2. Lulu | Germany |
| 3. Enya | Serbia |
| 4. D. Roussos | South Africa |
| 5. Aha | Russia |
| 6. Golden Earring | Spain |
| 7. Iga Swiatek | Belgium |
| 8. D. Thiem | Greece |
| 9. Alex Zverev | Portugal |
| 10. Ernie Els | Ireland |
| 11. N. Djokavic | Austria |
| 12. M. Sharapova | Scotland |
| 13. C. Ronaldo | Poland |



An Amusing Romp Through the Family History by Dave Woolven

We all have ancestors, and this includes you and all of us otherwise you wouldn't be reading this. You are standing on the shoulders of ancestors going back into the mists of time, people who lived, laughed, cried and survived everything the cruel world could throw at them, to live long enough to have a child, and that child to have descendants and so on to you. You owe those distant and nameless ancestors your very existence. If you had a time machine, you could go back and see your earliest ancestor wriggling about in some primeval ocean – the line stretches unbroken to you. More and more are now asking “Who am I?”

Unless your ancestor was one of William the Conqueror's bully boys in 1066, there's not much mention of individuals until the 1300s and they were mostly those who owned land and who rented it, but a few were beginning to write wills. Those who ask, “What's the use of old wills?” have never seen what could be in them. The testator (the person making the will) often mentioned his immediate family, sons, daughters and who they married, where they lived, their children, in-laws, nephews, cousins, what property they owned – a whole potted family history. Some wills air the dirty washing! Notice I said ‘his’ because women couldn't own property; women were the property of their husbands. If a widow remarried, anything she owned automatically became the property of her new husband.

The early days of family history research weren't easy – no internet, you had to travel to churches or record offices to see the original documents. Volunteers helped where they could. The hobby grew and family history societies sprang up – then businesses realised that this was an opportunity to sell information – and can they charge!! So, what's my angle in all this? I knew nothing, what did my unusual name mean? Where did my people live, where did they come from? I joined a local society. At one meeting a guest speaker brought a small suitcase of booklets, one of which was a register of individuals researching one name – one was a Midlands lady who was doing Woolven. She told me that she'd searched all the UK phone books and contacted all the Woolvens (few replied – typical) but checking her records, she found that she'd missed one phone book – guess which one! She sent me my tree on 8 x A3 sheets. Now I knew my lot were illegal immigrants – they were Saxons who came here between 600AD and 800AD, their ‘passport’ was a very sharp sword. There was no way I could go to Sussex (the land of the South Saxons) but I felt I'd like to help others the way I was helped, so I joined the graveyard recording team. I quickly found that all they were doing was nattering on that someone should do it – but not them. So I decided I'd do it on my own – I enjoyed the peace, quiet and solitude of the churchyards. Some of the stones were very personal and touching. Coming home from work on my push bike I got knocked off. Being stuck at home and bored I started transcribing parish registers. Unfortunately, things went sour between the society and me, so I left and continued my way.

Then I started transcribing my ancestors' wills. Once I'd mastered which end of the pencil made the marks, it was a ‘seat of the pants’ learning curve. Lots of family historians buy copies of old documents but can't read them, so they send them to me. I give no guarantee other than to do my best. I have discovered that I'm in line for the throne of England – there are only 70 million and next door's cat in front of me! As an aside – we are all star children, we came from the stars (no – I've not been on the giggle water nor have I little green men at the bottom of my garden). Billions of years ago a star had used all its hydrogen converting it into all the elements – carbon, iron, oxygen etc., then it died in a super-nova. The gas cloud formed a new solar system – ours – with all these elements – we are made from these elements. Stars are going super-nova all the time. One day our Sun will die, if it's big enough it will go super-nova and the cycle will repeat.

Are there aliens? Yes – just walk through High Street at chucking out time – and some of them are green (after beer and a curry).



1



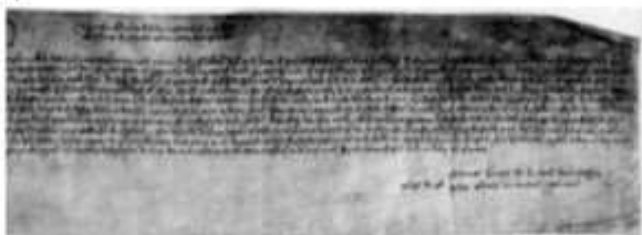
2



3



4



5

(1) An elderly relative gave me the wreck of a grandfather clock which had been in the family since the late 1700s. It had been dumped in a barn, the carcass was filthy and full of worm, the works had been lying face down on damp sacking since the end of WW2, the face was black, the hands and other bits had rotted away. My wife refused to have it in the house. I had the case pressure-gas treated, then cleaned it, then made the missing bits of the works and got it going – at which point my wife told me where it was to go in the lounge.

(2) The clock again

(3) There is something odd about this dial – can you spot it?

(4) This is a will, the sort of thing that people send. This dates from 1617, the bottom part is in Latin

(5) This is a legal document dating from the 1300s, an appeal to the Fader in God, the Lord Bysshop. This was written on parchment which was the bag that stopped some animal falling to bits, the ink was little more than soot and water and the pen had been keeping the nether regions of a duck warm. All of which deteriorates over time.

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.

The four puzzles get progressively more difficult.

No 1 is "Easy", No 2 is "Medium", No 3 is "Hard" and No 4 is "Evil". Good luck!

1. Easy

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

2. Medium

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

3. Hard

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

4. Evil

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

Nonsense! by Gerald Lee

My father used to recite two poems, that we would now call 'nonsense verse.' The crux of such writing is that it should sound as if it might make sense. I do not know where he first heard them, but I thought I might share them with you. The two I remember are:

Ladies and Gentlemen,
I stand before you to stand behind you, to tell you something I know nothing about.
In the Ulster Hall there will be a meeting,
Cushioned seats, sit on the floor, admission free, pay at the door,
There you see a big elephant stuffed with straw, eating cooked potatoes raw.

The other went:

I jumped upon a tramcar in the middle of the rain,
I asked the conductor to punch my ticket, he said he'd punch my brain.
I met an Irish lady, I sang her an Irish dance,
She said she lived in Tipperary, a few miles out of France.
Her husband was a bricklayer who worked in a jeweller's shop,
He went up the ladder to build some bricks and fell from bottom to top.

Another rhyme that combines a Limerick and a pun that I must have heard as a child is:

There was a young fellow called Mark,
Who wouldn't climb trees in the park,
When his pals said 'Poor Mite,
Do you think they will bite?'
'No', said he, but I am scared of their bark.

John Lennon was a big fan of the poets Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear and published some nonsense poetry himself. 'I am the Walrus' shows the Lewis Carroll influence.

At school my favourite nonsense verse was Lewis Carroll's poem, 'You are old Father William.'

'You are old Father William the young man said,
And your hair has become very white,
And yet you incessantly stand on your head,
Do you think at your age it is right?
'In my youth,' Father William replied to his son,
I feared I might injure my brain,
But now I know that I'm perfectly sure I have none,
Why, I do it again and again.'

'You are old,' said the youth and your jaws too weak for anything tougher than suet,
Yet you finished the goose with the bones and the beak,
Pray, how do you manage to do it?
In my youth, said his father, 'I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife,
And the muscular strength it gave to my jaw,
Has lasted the rest of my life.'

I thought perhaps some members might have their own stories or verse to share.

Do you remember any nonsense rhymes or Limericks? If so, please send them in to share them with all of our readers.

Talking Points (started by Stephen Berry!) – responses to DIT 24

Dave Woolven has come up with the correct solution regarding the location of the first of the photographs, which shows the main entrance to St Woolos Hospital – it is, in fact, little changed today, though not always apparent amongst extensions to the building, and difficult to see if you are driving past as that is not the easiest stretch of road to negotiate!

It was established as the Newport Poor House (or Workhouse) under the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 which established “Unions” of parishes for the administration of the Poor Laws and, from 1st July 1837, but under different legislation, the registration of births, marriages and deaths within the Union. For many years it was known as Woolaston House – indeed, my maternal grandmother, who died in 1970, always referred to it either as that or as the Workhouse.

It was requisitioned by the military in 1915 as an extension to Cardiff's third Western General Hospital. By the end of the war, St Woolos Hospital had treated 20,000 soldiers, often arriving in Newport by the trainload.

From 1929, when Workhouses were effectively abolished, it became a general hospital, working in tandem with the Royal Gwent Hospital in many ways. Finally, in 1997, the two became fully integrated and now function as one unit.

The second photograph defeated everyone! It is a view that is impossible to replicate as it is one area of Newport which really has changed beyond recognition, with only a few landmarks (none in the photograph) remaining. The nearest one could get would be to stand on the pavement outside the petrol station at the beginning of Malpas Road – looking towards the Vanilla Spice through the pillars of the A4042 flyover. The photograph was taken from the start of Shaftesbury Street looking towards Vanilla Spice – then the Rising Sun. There was a previous bridge in this location, carrying the railway line from Cwmbran to Newport Docks. In fact, one thing that gives this away in the photograph is the telegraph post that seems to be springing from a house chimney just right of centre! It was, of course, on the railway embankment which was behind the houses.

... and this edition's challenges!



The first is part of a street which is still with us. It has undergone a number of changes. Do you know which street and can you share some memories of the changes? The second is more difficult – again! Where is it and what is going on? Any memories of this building to share with us?

Fire and Fury by Nigel Speedy

Every minute 150 babies are born on our planet, that is 220,000 a day, or about 80 million a year.

All this was about to change.

The lone starling flew across Arlington Cemetery and headed directly to a predetermined upper window-sill of the Pentagon, where it settled and gazed at the group of heavily decorated uniformed men around the table.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff didn't even notice it as he called the meeting to order for the President, who got to his feet.

"Gentlemen" said Trump, "Obviously 'fire and fury' wasn't enough. Their foreign minister likened it to a dog barking. I want to teach Rocket Man a lesson! Suggestions please!"

The Commandant of the Marine Corp cleared his throat. "Mr. President, As I've said before, neither diplomacy nor sanctions seem likely to derail the North's nuclear program. Regime change seems the only answer"

"Can we do this?"

"Well, it would have to come from within".

"I asked, can we do this?"

"We've been through the whole scenario, and we believe there's a way", affirmed the Chief of Staff of the Army.

On the other side of the world a man wearing headphones pressed a button to alert his immediate superior, who listened for a moment before escalating the issue to his head of department, then chased those responsible for the video link.

An hour later, the Pentagon meeting closed, and as the starling headed across the Potomac to a rendezvous near the Jefferson Memorial, Kim Jong-un watched the proceedings while glancing down at his translation of the transcript.

Days before, he had been advised that the country's scientists had finally perfected a way to deliver the regime's potent sterility drug to the drinking water supplies of the United States.

It was time to deliver.

Secretary's Enlightenment – disentanglement for page 27's confusion!

ANSWERS

1 Abba / Sweden 2 Lulu / Scotland 3 Enya / Ireland 4 D. Roussos / Greece 5 Aha / Norway
6 Golden Earring / Holland 7 Iga Swiatek / Poland 8 D. Thiem / Austria 9 Alex Zverev / Germany
10 Ernie Els / South Africa 11 N. Djokovic / Serbia 12 M. Sharapova / Russia 13 C. Ronaldo / Portugal
14 R. Nadal / Spain 15 K. Clijsters / Belgium

An Autumn Visit to RHS Wisley – Kath Upton

Jackie had arranged a summer visit to RHS Wisley this year, but, like every other holiday in 2020, it had to be postponed. However, Kath was recently able to make an autumn visit and she (and her daughter!) have kindly forwarded a set of beautiful photographs of the experience.



**Wood sculpture
in the pinetum**

Naturalised cyclamen



Wishing you all a happy autumn- Kath Upton

LEARN LOCKDOWN LINGO submitted by Mike Brown, courtesy of Local Link Magazine

MAKE SURE YOUR PANDEMIC PARLANCE IS UP TO SCRATCH!

Around the world Coronavirus is changing how we speak and the words we use. Whilst there are elements of the last few months that we will gladly banish to the archives, the new words we've learned are almost certainly here to stay.

ANTI-SOCIAL DISTANCING - Using health precautions as an excuse for snubbing neighbours and generally ignoring people you find irritating.

COUGHIN' DODGER – Someone so alarmed by an innocuous splutter or throat-clear that they back away in terror.

CORONACOASTER - The ups and downs of your mood during the pandemic. You're loving the lockdown one minute but suddenly weepy with anxiety the next. It truly is an 'emotional coronacoaster.'

CORONADOSE – An overdose of bad news from consuming too much media during a time of crisis. It can result in a 'panicdemic!'

CORONIALS – As opposed to millennials, this refers to the future generation of babies conceived or born during Coronavirus quarantine. (I wonder how many will be named Corona or Covid)?

COVID-10 – The 10lbs in weight that many are gaining from comfort-eating and drinking. Also known as 'fattening the curve'.

ELEPHANT IN THE ZOOM – The glaring issue during a video conferencing call that nobody feels able to mention. E.g. one in particular has dramatically put on weight, suddenly sprouted terrible facial hair, or has a worryingly messy house visible in the background.

FURLOUGH MERLOT – Wine consumed in an attempt to relieve the frustration of not working or socialising. Also known as 'bored-eaux' or 'cabernet tedium'.

GOUTBREAK – The sudden fear that you've consumed so much wine, cheese, home-made cake and chocolate during lockdown, that your ankles are swelling up like a Tudor King's.

MASK-ARA – Extra make-up applied to 'make one's eyes pop' before venturing out in public wearing a face mask.

QUENTIN QUARANTINO – An attention-seeking individual using their time during lockdown to make amateur films which they're convinced are funnier and cleverer than they actually are.

COVIDIOT – One who ignores public health advice or behaves with reckless disregard for the safety of others, can be said to display 'covidioy' or be 'covidiotic'. Also can be called a 'Lock Clown'.

ZUMPING – For break-ups in the time of social distancing, zumping is a slang for dumping someone over Zoom or any video calling service.

QUARANTINIS – Experimental cocktails desperately mixed from whatever random ingredients you have left in the house. Southern Comfort and Ribena with a cherry, anyone? These are sipped at 'locktail hour', i.e. Wine o'clock during lockdown, which seems to be creeping earlier with each passing week. (As the song says; it's 5 O'Clock Somewhere!).

LE CREUSET WRIST – It's a continually aching arm after having taken one's best saucepan outside to bang during the weekly 'Clap For Carers.' It might have been heavy but you were keen to impress the neighbours with your high-quality kitchenware.



With colder weather on its way this seems quite apt!