

DESERT ISLAND TIMES

Sharing fellowship in

NEWPORT SE WALES U3A

No.35

1st June 2021



Black Mountains, Carmarthenshire

*A MISCELLANY OF
CONTRIBUTIONS
FROM OUR MEMBERS*

Some Progress at Last!

As you know, your Committee has been actively trying to find ways of reopening our U3A and providing organised activities in accordance with Welsh COVID Regulations. The relevant requirements for those attending any activity are summarised below.

No one with Covid or covid symptoms may attend any activity for 10 full days from the date of test or symptoms started

No one to attend meeting who has been in contact with anyone who has covid or has symptoms or covid for 10 full days from date of contact

Up to 50 people will be able to gather from a mix of households as long as they remain outdoors during these activities.

If the activity is taking place indoors, the maximum number of people that can take part, from a mix of households, is 30. The activity must not take place in private homes, including in gardens or grounds. Music groups are permitted to rehearse indoors with up to 30 members under these rules.

Although the organiser must take all reasonable measures to minimise the risk of exposure to coronavirus, individual members have their part to play and must themselves take all necessary precaution to ensure their own safety.

For Track-and-Trace purposes, a full attendance record of every event MUST be kept; it must contain the name, address and telephone number of each member present AT ANY TIME DURING THE SESSION. It is also required that any attendee MUST be a current member of Newport U3A.

We propose to start WEEKLY OUTDOOR SOCIAL MEETINGS in the café area at Belle Vue Park on Monday 7th June, subject to weather. You must bring sanitiser and a protective mask; you will also need to bring a chair or blanket to sit on. Should the numbers exceed 50 it will be necessary to form additional groups to ensure social-distancing is maintained.

OUTDOOR GROUPS can meet if they would like to. Please contact your Convenor to ask about arrangements.

INDOOR GROUPS are more difficult to organise because of social-distancing requirements. Due to the limited room sizes restarting groups indoors at Shaftesbury Street is not currently possible. We are negotiating the hire of indoor premises though it is unlikely that we will be able to obtain enough space for all groups to meet to our normal timetable. We hope to be able to resume some groups later in June – more details will follow when these are finalised. Zoom meetings are proving successful for a number of groups and these will continue; more slots are available on Mondays and Tuesdays if needed.

PLEASE let your convenor(s) know whether you would be prepared to attend indoor meetings (subject to full risk assessment of premises and all safety measures being put into place) so that we can gauge the level of interest and have an idea of the size of the premises that will be appropriate for your group(s).

DON'T FORGET – YOU MUST HAVE PAID YOUR CURRENT SUBSCRIPTION BEFORE YOU ATTEND ANY ORGANISED EVENT OF NEWPORT SE WALES U3A., though potential new members are welcome to join us at Belle Vue Park for a cuppa and a chat!

Please submit any material for the 1st July edition of Desert Island Times by 21st June. Items should be emailed to me at stephenberry249@gmail.com and in Word format if at all possible, please.

Wordsearches submitted by Barbara Phillips

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

Can you find the **13 WORDS ASSOCIATED WITH BUTTERFLIES** in the grid below?

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

Can you find the **13 WORDS ASSOCIATED WITH CRICKET** in the grid below?

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

Answers are on page 9

Lockdown Holidays by Stephen Berry

The past fifteen months have proved very trying to all of us in that our usual trips and holidays have been postponed or even cancelled. As one who loves to travel I decided quite early on that if I couldn't go away to visit some of the world's beauty spots – and particularly my favourite places in the British Isles and Europe – I could at least visualise a number of them through listening to some of my favourite music.

I have selected a number of these pieces and provided YouTube links to recordings of them in the hope that you too might derive enjoyment from them. They cover a large variety of places and a number of these are represented by pieces composed by natives of that particular country; however, this is by no means the case and against each composer's name (except for Vaughan Williams) countries or places are included in the order of the pieces themselves. Vaughan Williams has great diversity in his places and these pieces cover a large number of years – around 50 years in all. His phenomenal seventh symphony conveys the Antarctic atmosphere in a unique way and used his previously composed music for the soundtrack of the film "Scott of the Antarctic". VW was in his late 70s when the film music was composed – and 81 when the symphony was first performed!

Delius was born in Yorkshire, spent time in Florida and lived his later life in France, all of these places being inspirational in his composition; however, he loved Norway and this comes through also. Elgar too was a great traveller, though a native of Worcester and later a resident of London. The shape of the first main theme of the first movement of his cello concerto is thought to have been inspired by his beloved Malvern Hills where he spent much time walking.

Ireland and Scotland are well represented, though I feel that Scotland fares particularly well. The music of each has a definite sound that pinpoints its country without doubt. Music about Scotland seems to have a warmth and richness which other music does not – if you do not already know it, I would recommend listening to Bruch's Scottish Fantasia, a piece of which I never tire. All of the Scottish pieces are excellent, though, from the famous Hebrides Overture (Mendelssohn) to the Keltic Suite (Foulds).

Having touched on the warmth of Scottish music we now turn to the comparative cold of Finnish music, particularly in the music of the greatest master of Finnish music, Sibelius. I have made the difficult choice of a small number of his compositions. There are many others but those I have listed are my absolute favourites and show great variety. Finlandia is by no means typical – it was a nationalistic piece, almost in the "Land of Hope and Glory" mould – but made Sibelius famous and enabled him to develop his talents. The first symphony and the violin concerto are not pictures of Finland as such but are particularly atmospheric and, although there is warmth in both, they still manage to convey the loneliness and vastness of the bleak northern landscape. Tapiola, however, his last major composition, has no warmth whatever – except possibly in the final few bars of music – and it conjures up a picture of the absolute desolation of the many miles of vast, tract-less pine forests that cover much of the country. Such a landscape is the perfect breeding ground for myths and legends and the spirits of the forests weave their way through the piece. A mighty Arctic storm makes its appearance towards the end but dies away to nothingness. It is a most powerful piece.

For real warmth, of course, it is necessary to visit the Mediterranean and this we can do with a selection of music about Italy. The easiest listening is probably Tchaikovsky, but don't overlook the Respighi suites, particularly the Fountains of Rome, though the less well-known Pines of Rome has many fine moments also. The Elgar "In the South" is a must, though.

I could lavish praise on every piece of music I have listed (even the Britten, who is not a composer I have any time for in the main), but I would urge you to try them for yourself. If you like what you hear there are plenty of other pieces (not necessarily with geographical themes!) to explore – just enter the composer's name in the YouTube search bar to get a menu. It is free and you could find some real gems!

Alfven [Sweden]

Legend of the Skerries

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

Swedish Rhapsody No. 1

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iawwflw2ytY>

Symphony 4 (Outermost Skerries)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkpSdyLON5M>**Arnold [Sussex]**

Sussex Overture

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AcmFXrj9B_k**Balakirev [Russia]**

Russia

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=shiUeKoynQU>**Bantock [Outer Hebrides]**

Celtic Symphony, A

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MblvcHPe3Qc>**Bax [Cornwall]**

Tintagel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ixF5f2cqlKo>**Berlioz [Italy]**

Harold in Italy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hi3GzIMtUDc>**Binge [possibly Cromford Mill, Derbyshire]**

Watermill, The

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t_cAWMI1bQg**Borodin [Central Asian Plains – Russia and Mongolia]**

In the Steppes of Central Asia

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=00j8u7elu24>**Britten [Suffolk]**

Four Sea Interludes (Peter Grimes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VTd2aXLTA84>**Bruch [Scotland]**

Scottish Fantasy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3aVET-CDRWk>**Butterworth, George [Shropshire]**

Shropshire Lad, A – Rhapsody

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Kq8hHqtOh4>**Delius [USA / Lincolnshire / Norway / France]**

Appalachia

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FOCucJw7iT8>

Brigg Fair

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z_JUKXwHZz4

Florida Suite

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KfVSNKFq1cU>

Song of the High Hills, The

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzvxM_qUtmk

Summer Night on the River

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZEQxlwNQOq>**Dvořák [Czech Republic / USA]**

Symphony 1 (Bells of Zlonice)

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

Symphony 9 (New World)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pgkGQKiZi8k>**Elgar [Bavaria / Worcestershire / London / Italy / River Severn]**

Bavarian Dances

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rqrMg0nYI>

Cello Concerto (Malvern Hills)

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

Overture – Cockaigne (London)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lljr7jAZqbl>

Overture - In the South (Italy)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YkPMm9VMGHI>

Severn Suite

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qRkP_B90tM**Finzi [River Severn]**

Severn Rhapsody, A

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

Foulds [Scotland]

Keltic Suite

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BiK24TwJXpw>**German [Devon / Wales]**

Glorious Devon

Welsh Rhapsody

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NNK8JDVlpBI><https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M0fJnGBzKvE>**Grieg [Norway]**

Piano Concerto

Wedding Day at Troldhaugen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8uglsrxy-Q><https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C6TCN6pu93U>**Gurney [Gloucestershire]**

Gloucestershire Rhapsody

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eqxo0rV2AFY>**Harrison [Worcestershire]**

Worcestershire Suite

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTmPHcAillw>**Harty [Ireland]**

Irish Symphony, An

With the Wild Geese

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9dk-j54Tz0><https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SCPs5hGQn94>**Holst [Dorset]**

Egdon Heath

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2kDF3AG3Gp4>**Hope [Southern Ireland]**

Ring Of Kerry, The / Irish Legend

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B2hEh8RxBc8>**Ippolitov-Ivanov [Armenia]**

Armenian Rhapsody

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ou2vQcW8j8c>**Ireland [London / Dorset]**

London Overture

Mai-Dun

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3DtkUZ8yb8><https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G ml6U pZMo>**Johnstone [Lake District]**

Tarn Hows

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7TGX50jBu7o>**Kajanus [Finland]**

Finnish Rhapsody

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gB75KHQQLyM>**Lambert [Mexico]**

Rio Grande, The

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rGmIfkoZbZQ>**Luigini [Egypt]**

Ballet Egyptien

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jrAvE89NqKY>**MacCunn [Scotland]**

Land of the Mountain and Flood

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KjyTHvxodFU>**McEwen [Scotland]**

Solway Symphony, A

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C3Z0ZW6uKZc>

Mendelssohn [Hebrides / Scotland / Italy]

Overture - Hebrides (Fingal's Cave) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zcogD-hHEys>
Symphony 3, "Scottish" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=newJOqUYPBc&t=99s>
Symphony 4, "Italian" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i0vzs80tAxk>

Moeran [Ireland]

In the Mountain Country <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q9e8ruTzUXA>
Lonely Waters https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ebP_ehR6oLE

Respighi [Rome]

Fountains of Rome <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGZ9oslaeak>
Pines of Rome <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mdve48nptNk>

Rimsky-Korsakov [Russia]

Overture - Russian Easter Festival <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rXR0tloMmoo>

Sibelius [Finland]

Finlandia <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qOSaT6U4e-8>
Four Legends from the Kalevala <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pvVgU61clbs>
Karelia Overture <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFrqpMPsR7I>
Karelia Suite <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ryhN5kNFzc>
Symphony 1 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWE7_imNOzk
Tapiola https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yy0_zqEOp4A
Violin Concerto <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kDlvOIAJkPk>

Smetana [Bohemia]

Ma Vlast <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6jlhLUgER0>

Smyth, Ethel [Cornwall]

The Wreckers <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6ivyTaDqkc>

Strauss, Richard [The Alps]

Alpine Symphony <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y-gJGRb2OKg>

Tchaikovsky [Italy]

Capriccio Italien <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZcQsiZe5acY>

Tomlinson [Northumberland]

Kielder Water <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53OKUmtU7Pc>

Vaughan Williams [see each individual entry]

Burley Heath (Hampshire) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WVDQ_ypPzn4
Harnham Down (Wiltshire) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SE8X1z1NwaU>
In the Fen Country (Cambridgeshire) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7R9RA_BR_p0
Norfolk Rhapsody 1 (Norfolk) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5DeT3DkyXc8>
Solent, The (Hants. / Isle of Wight) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x_-5-fWopro
Symphony 2 (London) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4VilwBPuAA>
Symphony 3 (France) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bAi65Fmbn0A>
Symphony 7 (Antarctica) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mv6YBg7PLag>

A Walk in The Woods by Ian Lumley

(With apologies to Bill Bryson)

I still sometimes wish I hadn't been so inquisitive that afternoon. I recognise now that no-one would ever believe me, but I KNOW what I saw – I just wish I hadn't seen it in the first place.

It had been such a lovely afternoon to start with. The sun was shining, and there was a warmth in the air which made a walk in the nearby woods such an enticing prospect. I still put my old camouflage jacket on, in case it turned cold suddenly. That was another mistake, I now recognised. It meant that when I took a detour off the marked path, I was almost completely hidden from view, unless someone was looking for me.

I had moved off the path, to take a closer look at a plant I hadn't seen before. As I bent down to see it more clearly, I heard the voices. Just a few yards away, but almost invisible through the foliage, the couple walked by unaware of my presence. I couldn't make out what they were saying. In fact, I couldn't understand what they were saying at all – it seemed to be in some kind of almost foreign language.

I don't know what made me follow them, they looked just like any other couple. There was nevertheless something different. Maybe it was the way he looked around as they passed by so close, I could almost have reached out and touched them. There was something - almost a furtiveness - in the way he kept turning his head, as if he was making sure no-one else was around.

I was intrigued nonetheless, but somehow, I felt it was wise to stay well hidden. That at least was a good decision. I still don't know what might have happened if either of them has spotted me in the undergrowth, and I'm still glad I didn't find out.

I had to be very careful of course. I didn't want to make any noise which would have alerted them to the fact that someone was behind them. Luckily, I didn't have to do it for long. We had only gone a short distance like this when they stopped, and so did I. He had his back to me, but I could see him taking what looked like a mobile phone out of the jacket he was wearing, and he pulled some kind of antenna out of the top of it. He spoke a few words into whatever it was – words that I still couldn't understand – and then put it away again.

They stood together, but in silence, for what was no more than a minute or two. Then I heard it. A faint, high pitched whistle lasting no more than few seconds, followed by a rustling noise as the taller trees above us started to bend in the wind which seemed to have sprung up, out of nowhere.

The vehicle was smaller than many helicopters I have seen at shows and the like, but it didn't have anything like visible propellers the way helicopters did. It was almost silent in operation. When it touched down, they both walked slowly over towards it as the hatch opened underneath. I stood in amazement at that, which was my third mistake of the day. I must have made some kind of noise, because she (I think it was a she) turned and looked in my direction. She said something to the other (Man?), but he shook his head and they both went inside.

The vehicle left the ground as silently as it had arrived, with only the movement in the trees giving a sign that it had ever been there. I still can't get the feeling out of my head that she will somehow persuade him that someone was really there in the woods behind them, and saw them leaving.

Then they will come back.

Child's Song in Spring by Edith Nesbit – submitted by Angela Robins

Edith Nesbit was a poet and author of adventure stories including *The Railway Children*, but in this poem her inspiration comes from trees in spring.

The Silver Birch is a dainty lady,
She wears a satin gown;
The Elm Tree makes the old churchyard shady,
She will not live in a town.

The English Oak is a sturdy fellow,
He gets his green coat late:
The Willow is smart in a suit of yellow
While brown the Beech trees wait.

Such a gay green gown God gives the Larches
As green as he is good!
The Hazels hold up their arms for arches,
When spring rides through the wood.

The Chestnut's proud, and the Lilac's pretty,
The Poplar's gentle and tall,
But the Plane Tree's kind to the poor dull city
I love him best of all!



Wordsearches (page 3) – Answers

Butterflies

Skipper Egg Fritillary Pupa Monarch Grayling Insect Antennae Peacock Wings Chrysalis Comma Nectar

Cricket

Over Wicket Umpire Fielder Keeper Captain Boundary Bowler Eleven Ball Slip Bat Runs

Find the central word that connects with both the others – submitted by Pam Cocchiara

	e.g.	Dead	(Pan)	Fried
1.	Cabin	(.....)		Neck
2.	Shanty	(.....)		Hall
3.	Wheel	(.....)		Boy
4.	District	(.....)		Maid
5.	Cultured	(.....)		Barley
6.	Cotton	(.....)		Sack
7.	Roman	(.....)		Bleed
8.	Duty	(.....)		Range
9.	Real	(.....)		Agent
10.	Pass	(.....)		Wine
11.	For	(.....)		Green
12.	Full	(.....)		Light
13.	Under	(.....)		Hanger
14.	Human	(.....)		Course
15.	News	(.....)		Bag
16.	Foot	(.....)		Leaf
17.	Hang	(.....)		All
18.	Summer	(.....)		Share
19.	Take	(.....)		Home
20.	Business	(.....)		Box

Puzzles submitted by Mike Brown

NINER

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and enter the letters in the appropriate space to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

- 984 gives an animal
 - 9312789 gives a baby animal
 - 156332 gives a group of animals
- 1__ 2__ 3__ 4__ 5__ 6__ 7__ 8__ 9__

BLANKETY BLANK

Complete the blank spaces with three seven-lettered words that are anagrams of each other.
 The already _____ bull was further _____ by the exploding _____.

THINKING OUT OF THE BOX

1. How many birth days does the average person have?
2. A woman gives a beggar 50 pence; the woman is the beggar's sister, but the beggar is not the woman's brother. Why?
3. Why can't a person living in Scotland be buried in Wales?
4. Is it legal for a man in Ireland to marry his widow's sister? Why?
5. What was the Prime Minister's name in 1965?

Answers are on Page 14

Blown Away – Our Great Heritage of Brass Band Music (part 2) by Neil Pritchard

Brass bands enjoyed considerable growth during the 1850s, and while there was no set standard as to how bands were formed and sustained, three types can be identified:

1) Patronage Bands:

These were bands linked to a specific workplace or patron that was the significant benevolent source. Perhaps the most famous of the industrial patronage bands to be formed in the 1850s was one formed in the village of Queensbury in the West Riding of Yorkshire. John Foster, an amateur French horn player in the early part of the century, established a cotton mill on a stretch of land known as "Black Dyke". He established a brass band with what little was left of a village band, and provided instruments, a practice room, and uniforms, stipulating that it ever be known as the Black Dyke Mills Band. This was only one of several projects Foster undertook to expand the cultural base in the community around his mill projects which included a school, a library, and a modestly ornate "Victoria Hall". Little is known about any continuous musical activity in the village band that preceded the formation of the brass band, but soon after the advent of this famous ensemble they were playing transcriptions of Italian opera at major contests. Foster could never have imagined that one day his band would be more famous than the textiles manufactured in his mill. Here's an example of their fantastic playing in a video of 'Walking With Heroes' by Paul Lovatt-Cooper, dedicated to the memory of Captain Sir Tom Moore:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3utdUOvPg4>

2) Subscription Bands:

Second were the subscription bands whose support was drawn from a wider community such as mechanics' institutes or temperance societies. Interest in these bands often was the result of efforts as simple as posting a notice announcing a public meeting to encourage the formation of a band. The line of separation between these two types was often blurred in some instances since a band, sometimes identified with the name of a mill or factory, did not necessarily owe its origins to the owner. In fact, direct owner patronage was a factor in only a small percentage of bands, while a higher percentage of bands depended upon wealthy middle-class subscribers. Even with more affordable instruments it still was no small matter to outfit an entire band from scratch, especially if the band had no patron. In addition to the cost of instruments there was also the expense of heating and lighting a rehearsal room, and of providing uniforms, a salary for the leader, and music. Bands raised money through personal subscription of their members and through playing concerts and athletic events. The best bands could also rely on using the winnings from the various contests they entered. As bands came under contract to pay off debts for expenses, it was important that they maintain a high level of discipline so as to be successful. Written agreements between a band and its players became necessary to ensure proper use of all money acquired, as well as to establish rules of conduct to handle disciplinary action, whether it be provoked by misconduct or by not playing up to the standards of the band. While the democratic process was implemented to safeguard major abuse, most conductors were given musical authority over each band.

3) Volunteer Bands:

The third type were those bands formed by the 1859 volunteer movement. Some volunteer bands received subscription money while others were funded by middle-class patronage. The volunteer movement was the result of international tension. During the 19th century French/British relations were often very tense. In 1859, fearing the threat of invasion, Secretary of War Jonathan Peel sent a circular letter to the Lords-Lieutenant of all counties instructing them to form a force of volunteers to be drilled and instructed in case of war. These volunteers, though exempted from the military nevertheless were

required to attend twenty-four drills per year. From the outset bands were considered to be of practical use at drills, as well as for adding a touch of ceremony during annual reviews. The band also served as a liaison between the volunteer corps and local communities. While no government money was set aside to fund bands specifically, money was frequently secreted from the funds to keep them afloat. As the practice became more expensive, this poorly kept secret drew heavy criticism as an inappropriate use of funds, suggesting the bands continue through efforts of private subscription by requiring an annual fee of all officers and/or by playing fundraising concerts. A number of volunteer bands also were merely established civilian bands in disguise. For example, the W. L. Marriner band also served as the Band of the 35th Rifle Volunteer Corps and the 1st West Yorkshire Volunteer Fire Brigade Guards was known a year earlier as the Flush Mills Band. Here are the Besses o' th' Barn band (based in Whitefield, Greater Manchester) taking part in the BBC2's Brass Band knock-out competition 'Champion Brass' with some pretty forthright comments from the judges at the end of their three selected pieces:

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

During the Victorian age the brass band movement never inspired original music of any lasting merit. Conversely, the brass band had provided tens of thousands of working-class people exposure to "classical" music, by performing transcriptions of the original music. This in itself was no small achievement. Audiences had heard selections from the great operas, and transcriptions of complete Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven symphonies, performances requiring considerable stamina on the part of the players. Virtuoso performers from these bands were of the same social class as the audiences. From this familiarity many of these performers became musical heroes in their own right, as they represented the best in working class achievement and potential. Not only did they receive a mention in brass band publications, some acquired principal positions in the leading professional orchestras of Britain. On the other hand, contests, which in so many ways were the heart and soul of the brass band, hindered the further development of the movement. On the plus side, contests had raised the standards of bands pursuing musical and technical excellence. But this inevitably led to the creation of a restricted musical stereotype as to playing style and virtuosity, this caused some composers to approach brass bands with reluctance. Trevor Herbert a writer on Brass Bands notes that "the notion of contests for brass bands, implied that there is a set of criteria that can be weighed up, measured and scored, which is an anathema to basic principles of high art." Contest scores and the ensuing friction between rival bands did little to perpetuate the "lofty" ideals of bands, or to put brass bands in a comparable light with orchestras, which were traditionally above that sort of thing.

The twentieth century revival of British music, coupled with the efforts of a few enlightened patrons changed the scene. Beginning in the 1920s and 1930s the elite of the British composers were commissioned to write test pieces for contests. As in earlier years these works were designed to fit certain contest criteria and would be performed by all competing bands. Most early test pieces were arrangements, initially emphasising Italian opera, but selections from musical comedy such as Gilbert and Sullivan were also popular. Gustav Holst wrote the early standard for the original brass band repertoire, the Moorside Suite in 1928. Written in three movements, the suite explores the extremes of mood and musical colours of which the brass band is capable. The third movement, March, is often performed separately. Other commissioned works from this period include the Downland Suite (1932) and "Comedy" Overture (1933) by John Ireland, The Severn Suite (1930) by Elgar, and Kenilworth (1936) by Sir Arthur Bliss. Test pieces and other compositions have offered new and varied pieces, much of which takes the brass band to the extremes of their playing technique. While works composed by first-rate composers such as Elgar and Holst were certainly a boost to the movement, most composers of notoriety were not inclined to submit more than one effort to the repertoire. This has changed in more recent years as composers such as Philip Sparke and Edward Gregson, and composers outside Britain have written several selections for the brass bands. One factor that has aided the trend has been the introduction of percussion. For many years percussion was forbidden in contests so as not to cover up weak playing. By 1976 bands in all sections of the Nationals were allowed to appear with percussion, paving the way for

more pieces written for bands. Before the next piece it's worth mentioning a relatively new development involving many bands working with young musician to produce performances of exceptional quality. This has been beneficial to both groups, and involved bands moving into the jazz and popular scene alongside the classical. It has also increased the profile of the bands with young people and their parents. What follows is an example of that with the Tredegar Town Band performing with students of Birmingham Conservatoire Brass Band, in a version of Mars from Holst's The Planets. Be prepared for a mind blowing performance: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mipi1oajk6g>

Another form of Brass Band with which we are all familiar is definitely worth a mention: The Salvation Army Band. There was a perception, in the mid 19th century, amongst some religious groups that the working class were spending too much time in public houses, and were involved in other activities of anti social behaviour. As a result abstinence groups became influential in promoting bands, and several bands can trace their beginning to such efforts. The Bramley Band, with a pledge to total abstinence in 1836, may have been the first temperance band. It was in the Salvation Army, however, that the bands became so prominent as to affect the very nature of the organisation for which they were founded. A builder and Wesleyan named Charles Fry formed the first Salvation Army band in 1878. The ensemble was a quartet made up of Fry and his three sons. General William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, was not unaware of the dangers of allowing open membership into these bands, a situation which would potentially cause the various bands to be Salvationist in name only. This had already happened to many of the temperance bands which were not true to their original calling. As a result he set directives in motion early in 1881 which separated the Salvationist bands from those of the contest band movement. This lasted for more than a hundred years. Among these was the directive requiring all members of the bands to be active members of the Salvation Army. In 1883 Booth set up the Salvation Army Music Department, followed a year later with the first issue of The Salvation Army Brass Band Journal.

In 1885, Bramwell Booth, the Chief of Staff of the "Sally Army", as they generally became known issued directives allowing no other music than that found in the Salvation Army General Band Book. In 1889 directives also included the manufacture, sale and repair of musical instruments. While steps to keep Salvationist brass bands separate from the brass band movement were remarkably successful, nevertheless some players participated in contest bands on their own. On the other hand, the Salvationist movement provided an opportunity rarely afforded in the other brass bands - the encouragement and active recruitment of women to play in their ensembles. Today, Salvation Army music has expanded globally with over 2,500 brass bands worldwide and over 427,000 music group members. Salvationist bandsmen and songsters across different countries continue to draw upon their own cultural background and create musical styles to accompany worship and attract new audiences. Music is still used as an aid to worship, whilst keeping the role of the band as a way of engaging people with the church. Music has evolved in The Salvation Army, since its inception, with groups such as community choirs, jazz bands, ukulele bands and rock bands. They see these activities as playing a part in bridging the gap between Church and its community. This is an example of The Salvation Army Territorial Youth Band playing Martin Corder's 'Jubilo! Jubilo!' during the Youth Makes Music concert in Poole in 2013:

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

Beat that! Wasn't that absolutely brilliant - it shows you what wonderful players there are in the band, and the obvious joy they get in playing that great little piece.

Moving on to the 1930's we see the integration of women into the bands as regular members, and with the loss of men to the war effort, even more women were encouraged to fill the ranks, although they were never seen in great numbers. This came at a time when bands were having recruitment problems, so, in a sense, their acceptance paralleled a time when bands were not enjoying the popularity of earlier years. Women's admittance into the elite contesting bands met with resistance, since there was an abundance of male personnel eager to take a seat in these organisations. However today women play an

important role in bands, and as you can see from that last video they are to be seen in increasing numbers in youth bands - and a good thing too. Bear in mind that in orchestras women only became accepted in the 1960's, so this was not a purely band issue. However bands are having a major problem with funding. I'll illustrate the plight of bands by reference to the Grimethorpe Band. When Grimethorpe's colliery closed in 1993, its then owner Richard Budge of RJB Mining agreed to continue sponsoring the band, as did UK Coal and Powerfuel later. But when Powerfuel went into administration in 2010 the money stopped, and although the band continues to bring in cash from concerts it still faces a shortfall of around £30,000. This unfortunately is becoming fairly typical of today's bands.

An individual benefactor, who wished to remain anonymous, came forward at the end of last year to help with day-to-day costs that will safeguard the band's future for the next 12 months. "We're keeping our head above water, but you can't rely on one source of income because that can dry up." He says that, like many arts organisations up and down the country, brass bands are having their public funding squeezed and he's worried about the impact this will have. Of course the pandemic hasn't helped. "Music services are closing or being cut right, left and centre and children are now having to pay for the privilege of learning to play a brass instrument," he says. "What we want to do is get children involved from less well-off families, whose parents can't afford instruments and lessons. We believe in the power of music and that playing an instrument can enhance the lives of young people, but we need support and we need funding." I think we'd all endorse that statement.

Incidentally Brass Bands are viewed differently in other countries where there is often local and state subsidies. For example in places like Scandinavia and mainland Europe they don't distinguish between brass bands and symphony orchestras, but in the UK we take them for granted and don't really nurture them. One Bandmaster recently commented that; "I'd just come back from Switzerland where we were doing a concert, and I noticed the audience was much younger with a lot of teenagers and fewer older people. It's the same in Japan". Brass bands like the Cory Band Black Dyke Band and the Brighouse and Rastrick Band, as well as Grimethorpe, are household names they all need our support. The Bandmaster of Grimethorpe has said: "In Yorkshire, we are in the enviable position of having some of the finest brass bands in the country, but some of the bands I played with in the past no longer exist and without some sort of financial assistance others could vanish." I agree and believe that brass bands are worth fighting for. They are part of culture and heritage, we gave football to the world and we also gave brass bands to the world, so we can't let them die. By the way there are well over 30 countries with established Brass Bands. I'm ending with a performance by a Youth Band "very close to home", to illustrate how the emerging generation of band players are so vital to the future of the Brass Band movement. This is a very local performance recorded at Rougemont School (Newport) by the Gwent Youth Brass Band at their 60th Anniversary Concert in early 2020. Let the Queen be with you! Here's to a great future for the Brass Band movement. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68KkGMISRq4>

Puzzles (page 10) - Answers

CENTRAL WORD: 1 Crew 2 Town 3 Barrow 4 Nurse 5 Pearl 6 Wool 7 Nose 8 Free 9 Estate 10 Port 11 Ever 12. Moon 13 Coat 14 Race 15 Paper 16 Loose 17 Over 18 Time 19 Care 20 Lunch

NINER: **GNU** is an animal **GOSLING** is a baby animal **SCHOOL** is a group of animals.
SLOUCHING is the mystery word

BLANKETY BLANK: ENRAGED ANGERED GRENADE

THINKING OUT OF THE BOX

1. A person has only one birth day. 2. The beggar is the woman's sister. 3. Because they are still alive.
4. No - because he is dead if he has a widow. 5. Boris Johnson - Born 1964.

Sudoku

Each row and each column must 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

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

2. Medium

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

3. Hard

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

4. Evil

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

What We Were Doing . . . by Angela Robins

. . . five years ago the Out and About Group spent a few days in the Lincoln area. En-route we stopped for a quick brunch at Tamworth Garden Centre where some members found time to purchase a few unwieldy plants which filled the coach. Not far from our destination of Lincoln we spent a couple of hours in the idyllic Pure Lands Garden with its footpaths winding through pagodas, lanterns, bridges and carp ponds which left us with a sense of peace and a connection with nature. It was conceived in 1973 by Zen Monk Maltreya as a place for the teaching of meditation. He personally served us fruit teas and homemade scones. We later arrived at our hotel in the heart of Lincoln City overlooking the scenic, trendy waterfront and marina.

The next morning our coach driver dropped us off at the top of the hilly city for a day at leisure. The Norman Cathedral is considered to be the finest Gothic building in Europe and is adjacent to the Medieval Bishop's Palace. Close by is the imposing castle built from 1068 by William the Conqueror. A walk along its walls afforded views of 'Poppies: Wave.' The sculpture, a sweeping arch of bright red poppy heads was first seen at the Tower of London. Heading downwards via Steep Hill and passing several historic buildings we came to The Strait where the 12th century Jew's Court and Jew's House is home to the oldest synagogue in Britain. Then into the pedestrianised High Street, which is on the Roman Ermine Street, where some took a break at the half-timbered 16th century High Bridge Cafe which sits on top of the oldest bridge in the county. After the evening meal we had a quiz.

Before returning home on the final day, we were driven through the beautiful countryside of the Peak District and visited the picturesque village of Youlgrave to marvel at the Well Dressings. Colourful pictures are painstakingly made by volunteers by pressing seeds, petals and other natural materials into wooden frames filled with mud. They celebrate the gift of natural pure water. At Bakewell there were more of these to see whilst partaking of its famous pudding in one of the tea rooms or a local brew in one of the inns.

----- X X X -----

Euan and **Juanita** were having an early-afternoon guided tour of Lincoln Castle. The guide showed them one of only four original manuscripts of the Magna Carta and when asked when it was signed, the guide replied "1215." "Dew!" said Euan "We missed it by just half an hour! "





Behind the Scenes by Ian Lumley

As outlined elsewhere, I have worked in the personnel environment for over twenty years. While other stories highlight what happened in some interviews I took part in, they do not tell the full story. The incidents below have never seen the light of day – until now.

In my early days in Personnel, I began to realise the enormous amount of mundane, but vital work which went on. Annual Appraisals for all staff were carried out. Blank forms had to be checked to ensure basic details were entered correctly and sent out to managers. These all had to be checked as they were returned – sometimes months later! – to make sure all the boxes and comment areas were completed. As each one was a ‘confidential’ document and would be used throughout the year for any number of personnel decisions, it was all a very important, but time-consuming task.

Each form had a full-page blank to enable a manager to write a ‘pen picture’ of the individual – in an effort to amplify the individual ratings and give a more ‘rounded’ picture of the individual concerned. To try and make it more interesting for my own staff, I set up a competition for them one year. I offered a prize to the member of staff who came up with the most original, succinct and illuminating pen picture they read. I hoped this would help to ensure that their own scrutiny was more detailed and accurate than might otherwise have been the case.

It did seem to do the trick. Several contenders were brought to my attention as the forms were being returned. The one in the lead as we entered the final straight was ‘How can I best describe this individual? He goes through life pulling doors marked Push’. Then the last batch appeared. One of the women involved came running into the room waving a form above her head. ‘This has to be the winner’ she said. When I read it, I had to agree. It said ‘Is good, but thinks he’s better’. You really can’t describe an individual in less than six words, can you?

Whilst in the Personnel Division of the Forestry Commission, I acted as general factotum as well as a member of the interview panel for a wide variety of posts. One of these was to select basic grade Foresters for what, to many, would become their first step on the management ladder. Most would find their way into our research work as part of their overall training and so we always had a research specialist as part of the interview team. He, along with the chairman and the other member of the board, asked the bulk of the questions and I came in at the end, to ask a few supplementaries – mainly around ‘staff management’ issues - and also ‘sweep up’ anything that had not been dealt with by others.

On one panel, we were in the third day of interviews (numbers of staff involved often meant these interviews went on for two, or even three weeks!), when the scientist, who had been concentrating on technical aspects of weeding (chemicals, soil types etc.), suddenly started asking man management questions. This was the area I had been covering, and he was asking the exact question that I had been using! I just slipped into others which I had already prepared, and kept going. By the Friday afternoon, he was starting to ask these too! When the next candidate came in and my part was reached, I asked him about chemicals that could be used on deep unflushed peat and what difficulties he would need to think about if applying them elsewhere? He answered and, after a few follow-on questions with me probing his answers a little deeper on similar topics, we finished the interview.

After he left and we had done our individual scores, the scientist could contain himself no longer. What do you mean by asking scientific questions like that? I said that as he had stolen my questions, I felt it was OK to ask his! In any case we had to have a reasonably similar approach to all the candidates in the interest of fair play, and so someone should be asking these technical questions, ‘if he wasn’t going to do it, I would’. He was quite thunderstruck. I think he was really put out by someone else asking candidates

technical questions on his area of expertise! I noticed that from the next Monday onward he went back to asking 'his' questions!

It is nearly always a mistake to assume that others will see the world the same way that you do. I had made the assumption – fairly logically, I thought - about those attending promotion interviews - that they were interested in promotion. Not always the case. On one occasion, after a large promotion exercise, I was faced with trying to slot those successful candidates from the interviews into vacancies throughout the country. It was expected that there would be some who, for a variety of reasons, had particular preferences of location, but they were nearly always open to alternatives, if the reasons were explained to them. On one occasion, I had to admit defeat. The candidate refused (through his manager) the first offer of a post some distance from his present location. When I asked why, the manager explained that his wife wanted to remain close to her parents. OK, I thought let's see what I can find that would be nearer. Eventually, after pulling a few strings, I managed to clear a spot no more than thirty miles away from his present location. When this was put to him, he refused again. I asked the manager where the parents were, just in case it gave me a window where I could meet his needs. This promotion, for him, would have been perhaps the most difficult in his career, and I was anxious not to see it missed – for his sake. The answer astounded me then (still does). His wife's parents were in the local cemetery. He did not achieve that promotion - or any other afterwards!

The Research Division was split into two main centres, with outlying units reporting to one or the other. As always in these kinds of arrangements, there was a degree of friction between the two major centres as they tried to gain ascendancy over each other whenever they could. I had always had a good relationship with the Chief Research Officer (CRO) in the north, and so was quite looking forward to a recruitment exercise there for a Senior Statistician. The CRO, his Head of Statistics, and I, would be on the panel, along with a member of the Civil Service Commission. The Commission licensed us yearly to conduct interviews on their behalf and checked from time to time to be sure we were operating at the highest level of competence before they would renew the licence. My experiences had already shown that Scientists can sometimes have a peculiar view of questioning, and I would need to be more than alert – just in case. My job was to be a little harder than I had anticipated!

The morning session with four candidates passed by without a hitch, as did the first interview of the afternoon. I was beginning to relax a little, when the next candidate (a lady of around twenty-nine) came in. Her professional qualifications were quite exceptional, so on paper, she was a strong candidate. To this day I do not know why, but the chairman's second question for her was 'at your age, why should I employ you when you're likely to leave within a couple of years and start a family?' I could barely believe my ears! The Civil Service Commissioner nearly dropped his pen! Almost in a nano-second my mind raced through what I could or should do! Did I stop it there and then – this would alert the candidate to the fact that something serious had happened, when she perhaps was not sufficiently aware? What would the Commissioner think if I did nothing? How could I get the chairman and the Forestry Commission out of the large hole he had just dug?

Before I could decide, the candidate resolved the issue herself. Looking straight at him, she said 'I don't think that is any business of yours'. Amazingly, the chairman merely mumbled something inaudible and went on to another topic altogether! I kept quiet – at least until after the interview was finished. As soon as the candidate left, I got in first. 'Please make your marks for this candidate in silence and then put your pens down before a word is said'. When this had been done, I again took over. Addressing the CRO, (but being very aware of the Civil Service Commissioner sitting at the other end of the panel), I said 'if that ever happens again, I will stop the interview immediately. What you did was not just wrong, it was illegal. If you felt that question was appropriate then it should have been capable of being asked of everyone, men and women. If it happens again, I will stop you and make sure you never interview for us again'. He went

red in the face, of course, but more importantly, I noticed out of the corner of my eye the Civil Service Commissioner nodding furiously and making notes on his paper.

Our licence was renewed that year. Oh, and the lady candidate was selected for the position – on her merits. I don't think the chairman dared voice any criticisms of her!

Research Division spanned a number of widely varying disciplines. Entomology all the way through to Statistics were needed and, occasionally recruits were needed due to promotions or just a change in emphasis as problems came and went. In the mid 1980s Acid Rain and its consequences became the 'flavour of the month' and we needed extra staff to cover the increased activity. In particular it was decided that we needed an articulate, qualified senior scientist who could present our case to politicians not only in the UK but also throughout Europe. After all the preliminary work had been done (setting criteria for the post, getting applications, sifting out the unfortunates etc) I found myself on an interview panel with the Head of Branch where the work was to be based (Site Studies), the Director Research and also the Chief Research Officer (South).

There had been considerable interest in the position from the wider scientific community, so all the candidates we were to see were highly qualified and met those initial selection criteria easily. The choice was, to my mind, going to depend on their personal attributes and presentational qualities. After the final candidate had left, we started our final discussions. We quickly disposed of most candidates who, while good, had not shone particularly against their competitors. We were left with two to choose from. It soon became clear that I was in a minority – of one! – about who should be our final selection. The Chief Research Officer wanted the man who had been conducting some very 'interesting' work in his laboratory experiments. The Director wanted the same man – because he was not as arrogant as my preferred option. The Head of Branch stayed silent. I had to point out (quite forcefully) that we had agreed criteria in place that gave little weight to laboratory work for this post. We did NOT want a backroom boy, but someone who could deliver polished presentations of the work others in the Division were doing. I turned to the Director. 'Do you really want a 'yes-man' for this post?' I asked. 'The successful man will have to stand up to politicians around Europe some of whom will be sceptical of any results we produce and will be on occasion hostile to our plans. A little arrogance seems to me to be almost a pre-requisite for this post – even if it means he will be more difficult to manage'.

After a few more arguments, we eventually decided that 'my' preferred option was to be selected. As we left the room, the Head of Branch said 'that's the first time I've ever heard an administration head arguing with the Director – and winning'. It made me wonder what my predecessors had been like.

Incidents like this were not confined to Research Division! While I was still in Personnel, I took part in a selection panel for someone to work in our Secretariat Division in HQ. They needed someone who would be charged with writing up briefs for the Executive Board members when they met Ministers or other politicians. An ability to write concisely (like what I cannot do!) was needed as was an ability to read legalese and transfer it into plain English. The panel was to be chaired by an ex-member of Personnel, so I did not envisage any problems – was I really so naïve?

Five candidates were to be interviewed. All went well, although we were a little non-plussed when the third candidate shook hands with us all **before** he sat down. We merely looked at each other and smiled. After the last candidate had left, we got down to the serious business of making a decision. The chairman said almost straightaway that the third candidate would not be getting the position! I was amazed, because he should have known that we didn't make statements like that so early in the process, and I also felt that the particular candidate was a 'front runner'. I asked why. Because he had a very 'limp' handshake' he said! He and I had what could best be described as a 'very spirited' conversation then!

When we finally came out of the room, I had to write to the guy with the 'limp handshake' to ask when he could start work with us. Enough said?

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman - The Forgotten Prime Minister by Gerald Lee

The Liberal election victory of 1906 ushered in one of the greatest periods of reform in British history, yet the Liberal leader, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman is overshadowed by his two successors as PM, Asquith and Lloyd George. For those who love trivia many aspects of his term in office have unique features.

First of all, following Balfour's reorganisation of the Committee of Imperial Defence, as his successor, Campbell-Bannerman was the first to be recognized as holding the office of Prime Minister. Secondly, he was at 69 the oldest PM to assume the post for the first time, the same age as Ronald Reagan when he first became president. As PM he combined the post of PM and Leader of the House. Less seriously, at around 20 stone he was probably the heaviest PM. He was also the only serving PM to also be Father of the House.

He was born Henry Campbell on 7th September 1836. A condition of an inheritance from his uncle was that he should adopt the Bannerman name and so he adopted the name Henry Campbell-Bannerman. His wife kept the Campbell surname. He preferred just to be referred to as 'C-B.'

Not so common for a prime-minster he had a commercial background, in general wholesale and drapery. After university, like Stanley Baldwin, he joined the family business and became a partner. Whereas Baldwin's experience of business made him a tariff reformer, C-B was always a free trader. At the age of 31 on his second attempt he was elected MP for Stirling Boroughs, the only seat he ever represented.

He always had an interest in military matters as an officer in the militia. His first post was financial secretary to the War Office under the great reformer Cardwell. When Cardwell took a peerage C-B was effectively defence spokesman in the Commons. Among the major reforms was the introduction of the modern breech-loading Martini-Henry rifle and the abolition of the purchase of commissions.

He entered the cabinet in 1884 as Chief Secretary for Ireland. However, he served mostly at the War Office as Secretary of State under Gladstone and Roseberry. Like Baldwin he thought of applying to be Speaker but was told he was too valuable as a minister. He was a reforming minister preparing the way for that other great reformer Haldane, who was to serve under him in his 1905 government. One of his greatest successes was to persuade the Queen's cousin, the Duke of Cambridge, to stand down as Head of the Armed Forces. It was a delicate matter that he handled well and for which he received his knighthood.

He had a genuine interest in the welfare of the poorest and perhaps foresaw that Liberalism would need to change to embrace social reform. His own contribution was to introduce an eight hour day for munitions and clothing workers in the War Office. It was a censure motion of his which led to the fall of the Roseberry government, a rather misguided criticism over stores of cordite. In fact, reserves were adequate and being highly unstable it had to be stored in controlled amounts. The Liberals went into opposition under Harcourt. At this time Asquith could easily have claimed the leadership. He was a brilliant barrister and parliamentary performer. However, at that time he could not afford to sacrifice his legal career, so C-B became leader at the age of 63.

He was often underestimated. Over the Boer War he took a principled stand against military excesses. C-B co-operated with the Emily Hobhouse to expose the dreadful conditions in the concentration camps. His words still have a ring. 'When is a war not a war? When it is carried out by methods of barbarism in South Africa.' The war divided the country. Lloyd George had to be rescued from an angry mob in Birmingham. However, C-B managed to keep the Liberal Party united. The Liberals expected to lose the Khaki Election in 1900, but the result for the Conservatives was not as decisive as it might have been. Gradually the pendulum started to swing in favour of the Liberals. Lloyd George fought the Balfour Education Act clause by clause, mainly to galvanise the Nonconformist vote. The Liberals exposed the interest of the Chamberlain family in the Armaments Industry.

Moral indignation was raised over the so-called 'Chinese Slavery' and the conditions of indentured Chinese Labourers in South Africa. The biggest gift to the Liberals was the endorsement by Joseph Chamberlain of tariff reform. The Liberals accused the Unionists of taxing the working man's bread.

The young Winston Churchill crossed the floor and joined the Liberal Party. The Liberals' most effective spokesman on tariffs was Asquith. In debates C-B would say 'send for the sledgehammer.' Balfour resigned in 1905 expecting the Liberals would fail to form a government. C-B not only formed a government but led his party to its greatest parliamentary victory. The Liberals with 377 seats outnumbered all the other parties combined. Labour returned 63 and the Nationalists 83, the Conservatives were reduced to a mere 157.

C-B should have been on the crest of a wave. However, he faced a plot within his own party, the Relugas Pact, a conspiracy of Asquith, Grey and Haldane to persuade C-B to lead the government from the Lords, thus giving effective power to Asquith as Chancellor and Leader of the Commons. C-B did not acknowledge the plot and offered Asquith the post of Chancellor, which he accepted. Grey became Foreign Secretary and Haldane took the War office. The plot crumbled.

For the first time a Labour member became a minister. John Burns joined the cabinet as President of the Local Government Board. He boasted of his working-class origins, and that his mother was a washerwoman. C-B expected him to be overpowered by the announcement. To his surprise John Burns slapped him on the back, 'Bravo, Sir Henry,' he exclaimed, 'This is the most popular thing you have done.'

Balfour had lost his own seat and had to be found a quick vacancy to enable his return. On their first encounter C-B rose to the occasion, again surprising his critics. He retorted to Balfour's clever quips, 'Enough of the Tom Foolery. It might have answered well in the last parliament, but it is altogether out of place in this.' In office he showed an inclination to make a quick judgment, sometimes to the disapproval of his colleagues. To sustain their pact with Labour, the Liberals had to legislate to alter the judgment in the Taff Vale Case, which placed union funds in danger in industrial disputes. Liberalism is the party of lawyers. The legal officials, including Asquith, favoured a lawyer's style bill. C-B made a swift decision to accept the Labour Party draft bill without consultation. The Unionists did not oppose the bill, mainly to avoid losing working-class support. However, later generations of Conservatives found the Trades Disputes Act a barrier to Trade Union reform in the era of union militancy.

Another impetuous act showed C-B was in control and a radical reformer at home and abroad. At a meeting of the Interparliamentary Union, speaking in French, he criticised the Russian government for suspending the Duma, a limited form of parliament. He spoke the defiant words, 'La Douma est morte, vive La Douma.'

In such a short period in office C-B initiated many of the major reforms. He was a radical reformer in the Gladstonian mould. He supported Irish Home Rule, although he was candid in saying it would not happen in the first parliament. An act permitted local authorities to provide free school meals, and another empowered local authorities to buy agricultural land from private landlords. Other early Liberal measures included the 1906 Workmen's Compensation Act and a system of probation for offenders. The Liberals did not succeed in their reform of the Balfour Education Act and lost a Licensing Bill due to opposition from the House of Lords. However, C-B succeeded in bypassing parliament to grant self-government to the two Boer States, Transvaal and Orange Free State. This helped heal the wounds of the war and led to the creation of the Dominion of South Africa within the Empire, that sided with Britain in the First World War. On the non-party matter of female suffrage C-B was a supporter, whereas Asquith was not. His government legislated to allow women who were widows or single householders to stand as candidates for local councils, but support for female suffrage was a long way off. Lloyd George did not support the bill when it came to parliament, arguing for a full reform including the second vote and the franchise. Although he said he was in favour of female suffrage this made him a target for suffragette attack. His home near Dorking was bombed. C-B advised women to keep 'pestering.' He was a traditional Liberal Radical belonging to an earlier age, but still saw the Liberals would need to embrace social reform to survive.

Asquith's 1908 budget included a proposal to pay an old age pension from 1 January 1909, a move C-B had sponsored in cabinet committee. However, C-B did not live to witness the budget introducing this

measure. As Lloyd George had only recently been appointed Chancellor, Asquith delivered the 1908 budget he had prepared before his appointment as PM. In foreign affairs he was active in seeking an entente with France, along with Edward Grey at the Foreign Office. He spoke less successfully in favour of disarmament. The biggest battle he foresaw was with the House of Lords. As opposition leader Balfour used the veto to block major Liberal reforms. C-B retorted in his speech of 1907, saying, 'The present House of Commons was not elected to pass only such bills as commend themselves to the House of Lords. We do not intend to be a government on sufferance or to act as caretakers in the House of a party the country has rejected.'

During his term of office his wife's health began to deteriorate. She was most probably suffering from diabetes. Her death was a blow to him. This took a toll on his own health and after a series of heart attacks he asked the King's permission to resign. The King accepted his resignation as PM. He was still technically leader of the Liberal Party and an MP. The King did not wish to spoil his holiday in Biarritz, so Asquith was summoned to meet him and accept the appointment there, the only time a British PM has been appointed outside Britain.

C-B was too ill to be moved, so another unusual aspect to his life was that he was the only PM to die in Downing St. He officially resigned on 5 April 1908, and died 17 days later having served just 2 years, 122 days as PM. C-B was an honest man who adhered to his principles as a liberal radical in office as well as in opposition. He did not particularly care for office, but felt a sense of duty. It is perhaps not surprising that Clement Attlee was one of his admirers. Because of his short term of office, he is often overlooked, but he nevertheless played a major role in ushering in the Liberal reforms and turning his party towards social reform. Had he lived he might have used the Lords' opposition to Liberal measures as a basis for a full confrontation sooner than the Budget crisis. In tribute Asquith spoke thus, 'He was not ashamed even on verge of old age to see visions and dream dreams.'

Talking Points (started by Stephen Berry!) – Responses to DIT 34

Anyone living in Newport prior to the Old Green redevelopments of the early 1970s will recognise the first photograph as being of the top part of Dock Street and the answers came rolling in! The prominent buildings in the forefront of the photograph are the Old Green Hotel, on the corner of High Street, one of Fussell's sports shops on the left and, next to it, Carter's gents hairdresser and umbrella shop. Other shops you might remember in this block were Meesons (sweets), Bannister & Thatcher (chemists), Winter's (electrical goods and records) and finally the Wine Lodge. Roger Lewis remembers that the assistant in Winter's later became the postman in Clevedon Road. (This was Terence Nethercott – your editor's third cousin!) He guesses that the picture was taken in the very early 1950s - it appears there is an Austin A40 Somerset parked on the right of the street. The bus station came next, but it was never sufficiently large for the buses that served all parts of the expanding town, buses also using High Street and Cambrian Road as their termini. In the background are the Market and Town Hall and the upper part of the Olympia Cinema, its principal entrance in Skinner Street. What is apparent is the large number of people going about their business and making this a busier part of town than it is now. After the closure of the bus station when the new one was opened behind John Frost Square, the old bus station was used for car parking. More recent developments have again seen the area used as a bus station. Dave Woolven says that, behind the Old Green Hotel, were the stables belonging to the King's Head Hotel in High Street and dating from coaching days. In his mis-spent youth he and a friend (whose father kept the Old Green Hotel) used to walk along the roof beams of the stables to collect pigeon eggs! Dave also correctly identified the second photograph, which is of R E Hicks garage at the beginning of Bassaleg Road – the Handpost pub is just out of site to the right. The garage site is now occupied by more recently built flats, Grange Court.

... and this edition's challenges!

This edition's photographs are rather more equally balanced in difficulty. Both views are partially changed but some features remain. As always please let us have any memories you have of the buildings or the areas in which they are or were situated – and any other observations.

