

DESERT ISLAND TIMES

Sharing fellowship in
NEWPORT SE WALES U3A

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What we have enjoyed during the fine weather! Part of Stephen and Gill's garden

*A MISCELLANY OF
CONTRIBUTIONS
FROM OUR MEMBERS*

HAPPY 100th BIRTHDAY TO COLONEL TOM MOORE – A REAL HERO!

The first two "Traveller's Tales" appeared in DIT 1 and 2 respectively and were fairly local. For the third article in this series Ann takes us across the world to the Indian sub-continent.

Traveller's Tale 3 - A visit to Hyderabad, India by Ann Anderson

My eldest daughter, Karen and her family moved to India from Brisbane at the end of 2019. My son-in-law Craig works for IKEA and they had fallen in love with India on their second honeymoon (there 1st one had been a disaster having been caught up in the tsunami in Sri Lanka) so were looking forward to a 3 year contract in Hyderabad.

I had never heard of Hyderabad until last year and was not expecting the wealth of history and expanding whirlwind that greeted us when we visited at the end of January this year.

Hyderabad is the 5th largest city in India. It is the capital of the Indian state of Telengana. It was founded in 1591 by the sultan Muhammed Quli Qutub Shah. It was built around the Charminar which formed the centrepiece of the city. One popular theory suggests that its city is named after a dancing girl, named Bhagmati, whom the sultan had fallen in love with. She converted to Islam and adopted the title Hyder Mahal and the city was named in her honour. How romantic is that?

On the last day of our stay, towards the end of February, we visited the Charminar. Although it was our last visit of the holiday, I will start my story here, as this is where Hyderabad began.

In 1580 Hyderabad was established on the River Musi to overcome severe water shortages in the area. The city has been expanding ever since. In 1724 Asaf Jah established the dynasty that would rule until India's independence from Britain. The Nizams or kings would expand around the city for the next 2 hundred years or more. It became known as the City of Pearls as once it was the only global centre for trade of large diamonds, emeralds and natural pearls. The 7th and last Nizam had immense wealth and a large jewel collection and in 1937 he was named as the richest man in the world. Even today there are over 8000 millionaires and 7 billionaires living in Hyderabad.

The Charminar was amazing. It is right in the middle of the old town of Hyderabad surrounded by street markets and old shops where you can purchase anything from a priceless pearl to a coconut drink in its shell and barter for its price too.

We went to visit early in the morning as the Charminar becomes very busy later on in the day. Shops in Hyderabad do not open until about 11am as people keep late hours here and most places do not close until after 9 p.m. The roads also are manic at all times of the day due to the amount of motorbikes, scooters, tuc-tucs and cars and it can take up to anything between 1 and 2 hours to reach your destination.

The Charminar has four minarets in the form of an exquisitely carved Taji'ah. We had good views from the balconies of the city markets. It was a fitting end to our visit to India to visit where this great city began. Parts of the city that is still expanding is called Cyberabad as it is now the technology hub of India and many call centres are located here. I hope to be able to tell you more about this exciting city and the historic places we were lucky enough to experience and I hope some of my photographs will give you a taste of India.



Two Poems for our Times

The Tree stands secure in silent wisdom
Its age-old trunk scarred with years long spent
The boughs spread wide as if to say
"This is my kingdom, I am content"

Will I stand firm and wise as that old tree
Recalling times that slowly came and swiftly went
Can I accept today and what is to be
And say "This is my kingdom, I am content"?

Written many years ago by **Pansy Swatridge**, Neil Pritchard's mother-in-law

Kind words and actions are everything to us
They shine through like a beacon
Lighting up our lives in times of darkness
Cascading into are consciousness and never leaving

As we enter what seems an endless tunnel
We take solace from those who reach out
They bind us together in a communal embrace
Bringing fresh hope for our future.

Written by **Neil Pritchard**

Easypeasy Cryptic Crossword Clues No 6 – Angela Robins

There are a dozen types of Cryptic Crossword Clues and here is a taster of the Pure Cryptic Clue. The key to solving these is to use your reasoning processes and to think out of the box, because the whole clue is the definition of the answer but described in an obtuse way. The solver needs to discover what each clue really means by removing the veil of deception.

There is no word play, although a small hint that it is a Pure Cryptic Clue is that it usually ends with an exclamation or question mark - e.g. Hairstyle with comb? (7) Answer = Beehive

Try these - the answers are page 18.

1. A lot of money for parts of the body! (2,3,3,1,3).
2. A late bloomer? (7,8).
3. Bar food? (9).
4. Poor opportunities for snooker players? (3,6)
5. Vehicle that delivers telegrams? (5,3).
6. How near David got to Goliath? (1,6,5).
7. Amundsen's forwarding address! (4).
8. It's said to work wonders! (11).
9. Coach bridesmaids hold up? (5).
10. Battleship contest? (3,2,3).
11. Sands of time through this have trickled? (4,5)
12. What the nest thief had for breakfast! (7,3)
13. The result of its closure is a lack of vision? (6).
14. Where Greece beat Persia in the long run? (8).
15. A good description of the FT's contents? (2,3,4).
16. State that might be baked? (6).
17. Knocking back a whiskey in Whitehall street! (7).
18. One of the marine hangers on! (6).
19. It's usually taken in water? (4).
20. Knot seamen should avoid! (4).

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

Mixed-up Stars - submitted by Janet Morgan (answers on page 18)

The following are anagrams of a famous star, or stars, of the silver screen. Can you unravel them?

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------|----|------------------|
| 1 | MICRO SUET | 14 | RENOWN DAIRY |
| 2 | FIND LIFE RACE LAD | 15 | RENAME MAN FROG |
| 3 | DISLOCATE TOWN | 16 | GRINDING AMBER |
| 4 | RAJAH NOT VOLT | 17 | NYLON DAHLIAS |
| 5 | CHEETAHS PROWL RINK | 18 | MASTER WAS JET |
| 6 | CHINCHILLA REAP | 19 | THY LEAKIER KING |
| 7 | A HERALD LAUNDRY | 20 | SYPHON INTO KHAN |
| 8 | NO BARMAN LORD | 21 | CLEARLY KEG |
| 9 | REALLY HERB | 22 | WILL USE CRIB |
| 10 | OCEANIC GALS | 23 | WANTS A MEMO |
| 11 | DO ON BALLROOM | 24 | MERRY WARDROBE |
| 12 | NIL NACHOS JOCK | 25 | FINDS A HORROR |
| 13 | HOT HAMBURG PREY | | |

Desert Island Challenge - Films, Music and Books chosen by Rob Wilkinson

FILMS

- 1 Don't Look Now set in Venice, spooky!
- 2 Shakespeare in Love excellent cast
- 3 The Producers v.funny. The earlier version with Z. Mostel and G. Wilder is better
- 4 Dead Poets' Society with the amazing Robin Williams
- 5 When Harry met Sally with Billy Crystal and Meg Ryan
- 6 A Fish called Wanda starring J. Cleese
- 7 Forrest Gump with Tom Hanks
- 8 Deliverance with Bert Reynolds and Jon Voight, a little violent but powerful.

MUSIC

- 1 Jean Sibelius The Swan of Tuonela
- 2 Joan Armatrading Dry Land played at our wedding when it poured down! ** Youtube
- 3 Clifford T Ward A Day to Myself ** available on Youtube
- 4 Ralph Vaughan Williams The Lark Ascending
- 5 The Beach Boys Good Vibrations
- 6 Ocean Colour Scene The Riverboat Song, one of my son's favourites
- 7 Fairport Convention Fotheringay ** Youtube
- 8 Samuel Barber Adagio for strings so sad, but beautiful

BOOKS

- 1 Love in the Time of Cholera Gabriel Garcia Marquez
- 2 Three Men in a boat Jerome K Jerome
- 3 The History of Love Nicola Krausse
- 4 The Magus John Fowles
- 5 Beyond the Wall Colin Thubron (Life in China)
- 6 Jane Eyre Charlotte Bronte
- 7 Regeneration Pat Barker
- 8 Wild Swans by Jung Chang

Music for and about Children - Addition

Neil's recent two-part article on this subject gave an excellent background to something that many music listeners would perhaps not have considered.

With Neil's permission I am adding three further pieces to his excellent lists – two being compilations of children's tunes but in a wholly adult way and the third a piece which, because it was used by Walt Disney in *Fantasia*, has become a favourite for discerning children!

Quilter: Children's Overture (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mT2xmQ4Lb1c>)

Williams: Fantasia on Welsh Nursery Tunes (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2OSAg_a63uE)

Dukas: Sorcerer's Apprentice (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GxH-nY3iq7g>)

I have fond memories as a small child of the last of these as we had a recording of it on a 78 conducted by Toscanini. It certainly left a good impression on me!

Stephen Berry

Just William – Gerald Lee

The teacher I remember most from my primary school days is Miss McCandless.

She was a fearsome woman who terrified all her pupils. Normally in a small school like Woodvale Primary when you moved up a class you had a new teacher. For some reason she was my teacher for three years.

You certainly did not dare to contradict or oppose her. One day she decided the whole class should join the library. She wanted to be able to boast to the school inspector that the whole class belonged to the library. So join we did.

Not only did she make us join the library. She wanted to know what books we had borrowed.

In the course, of browsing the shelves of Shankill Road Library I discovered a section of books dedicated to a young adventurer, William Brown. He lived in a village surrounded by many characters whose lives he made more difficult. With his friends they formed a gang, 'The Outlaws.' Perpetually in search of adventure he encountered many interesting characters. Perhaps it is a sign of different times that the most threatening character he might expect to encounter was a German spy.

Like any younger brother he was a torment to his brother Robert and sister Ethel.

Even after all these years many of his escapades still bring a smile, such as pretending to be a pensioner in the Post Office to receive an old age pension, waylaying a guest speaker to a completely different meeting where he was mistaken for a comedian.

He was never an academic, but through guile managed to avoid the punishment of lessons over the holidays when he rescued an elderly lady who had become lost, largely because of William, and won her praise and that of his father .

Of course, to an eleven-year-old boy, girls were a nuisance. Violet Elizabeth Bott wanted to be an Outlaw.

If she was not allowed to join their games there was the threat, 'I'll scream and scream until I am sick, I have done it before.' You knew she had. But not all girls. In one story he does develop a crush on Joan, with the excuse she was not a typical girl. On another occasion he is upset when a real girl does not realize he has a crush on her. When an adult who detects his repressed feelings accuses him of being a 'lady killer' he is still naïve enough to take the word literally. He replies he would never kill a lady.

Until the last story was published in 1970 for generations of children the William stories were an introduction to reading. John Lennon was an avid reader of all kinds of literature. It was his love of the William stories that first encouraged him to read.

Dirk Bogarde's first ventures into acting were based round re-enacting some of the 'William' stories.

As Miss McCandless did her round of the class, she was less than impressed when I told her I was reading 'William.' Yet from that I became an avid reader myself. If only for a few minutes before the light goes out, I always have a book on hand.

You could even say there is always a bit of mischief in us all, just like William Brown trying to understand an adult world with its stereotype characters.

When William takes the vicar's sermon literally and says exactly what he thinks even if it upsets Violet Elizabeth's mother, he thinks he is doing the right thing.

There is even a hint of 'Just William' in the series 'Last of the Summer Wine.'

As the readers were usually children, Richmal Crompton herself rarely receives personal attention. In truth, her own creation overshadowed her life. She was a supporter of Woman's Suffrage and must have felt very bitter that her other writing received so little attention.

She wrote 41 adult novels and nine collections of short stories. She also tried to create other childhood characters. Patricia was for young girls and Jimmy for younger boys, both completely forgotten.

After an attack of polio she lost the use of her right leg and had to abandon her teaching career. The success of the William books allowed her to buy a house with her mother. She was perhaps the maiden aunt or god mother, a comforting character to a child trying to understand an adult world.

Now, what happened to Miss McCandless? She became headmistress of the school so did not take me for my Eleven Plus year. I remember the much less intimidating Mr Glass with more affection.

It was a small school in a working-class area. After we left, we were expected to return with our first school report from the grammar school. I last spoke to her when she recognized me in the town centre one day. Even then I still felt intimidated.

When I was at university, I once spotted her on the Shankill Road. She was a frail old lady then. I think she recognized me. I knew very little about her personal life but did hear she had lived with her brother who was a police sergeant. He died in the early days of the Troubles.

The stories live on in TV and radio series. I never miss Martin Jarvis giving a reading on Radio 4.

On television Denis Waterman was an early William. Bill Fraser and Diana Dors were the perfect Mr and Mrs Bott. Bonnie Langford played a totally horrible Violet Elizabeth. Of course, we cannot remain eleven years old for ever.

I am grateful to Steve for creating and producing the Newsletter. For many of us it is opportunity to revisit days long gone and the influences that shaped us.

Note from SJB

Many thanks to Gerald – (a) for his kind comments and (b) for this article. I still have (and still occasionally read) the full set of William books – I think I appreciate their humour far more as an adult than I did as a child! Now which bookcase are they stored in?!

Something for the Oldies – submitted by Jan Howell

I'm normally a social girl, I love to meet my mates,
But lately, with the virus here, we can't go out the gates.

You see, we are the 'oldies' now, we need to stay inside.
If they haven't seen us for a while they'll think we've upped and died.

They'll never know the things we did before we got this old.
There wasn't any Facebook so not everything was told!

We may seem sweet old ladies who would never been uncouth,
But we grew up in the 60s – if only you knew the truth!

There was sex and drugs and rock'n roll, the pill and miniskirts.
We smoke, we drank, we partied and were quite outrageous flirts.

Then we settled down, got married and turned into someone's mum,
Somebody's wife, then nanna, who on earth did we become?

We didn't mind the change of pace because our lives were full,
Buy to bury us before we're dead is like a red rag to a bull!

So here you find me stuck inside for four weeks, maybe more,
I finally found myself again then I had to close the door!

It didn't really bother me, I'd while away the hour.
I'd bake for all the family but I've got no bloody flour!

Now Netflix is just wonderful, I like a gutsy thriller,
I'm swooning over Idris or some random sexy killer.

At least I've got a stash of booze for when I'm being idle.
There's wine and whisky, even gin, if I'm feeling suicidal!

So let's all drink to lockdown, to recovery and health,
And hope this bloody virus doesn't decimate our health.

We'll all get through the crisis and be back to join our mates.
Just hoping I'm not far too wide to fit through the flaming gates!

An ABC – Hilary Lester

A burning candle dimly emitting flickering golden high images. Jesus kneeling, likewise Mary.
Outside people quietly raising song. Things ultimately very wrong. Xenophobic young zealots.

A simple thought, uttered in few words. There is something unusual about this short paragraph, though. Work out what it is – and see if you can produce something similar! [Ed]

Some Actors in the Family – Stephen Berry

Without a doubt, Gill has the monopoly of actors in her family! Her father, Frank Platts, was well-known in and around Newport, partly because of his vocation which took him to the heights of Principal Lecturer in Drama at Caerleon Teacher Training College, which later became part of the University of Newport; partly because of his acting roles in so many of the productions of Newport Playgoers; and because of his frequent appearances as a lay preacher in many of the chapels of old Monmouthshire. He later became President of Newport Playgoers and his was the hand that designed the Dolman Theatre, which replaced the old Little Theatre when the site of the latter was required for the new Kingsway Centre.

Frank had only one brother, Stanley, who was training to be an actor at the outbreak of WW2. He had been called up for war service soon after and was taken a prisoner of war. He organised concerts and plays in the camp and also produced a camp newspaper – shades of DIT! He resumed his studies after the end of the war and started his acting career in much the same way as did many other actors at this time and he took the usual route of taking roles in short runs around the UK and pantomime at Christmas. He undertook some television work, appearing in *The Avengers* and *Crossroads*, and some less well known series.

There are no actors in my immediate family, nor have there ever been. However, one exceedingly distant cousin (somewhere around a seventh cousin three times removed) was a professional actor – and he was “a bit of a boy”. I would refer you to the first of my two articles on Wenglish in DIT 4, page 12, where I mention an interesting character on my family tree, Thomas George Warry, who was born and brought up in Bath. His father was George Warry, a butcher, who had been born near Yeovil in 1816 but who had relocated to Bath in the 1830s. Thomas was born in 1846 and obviously was not thought to be possessing of any particular talent in his early life, for in the 1861 Census we find him described as a Grocer’s apprentice. In 1869 he married Ellen Elizabeth Withers; one year later Tom Davey Warry was born and, some 15 months later, another son, Harry Alfred Francis Warry came along. We know that, on 2nd April 1871, Thomas was in Leeds where he appears on the Census as a Theatrical performer. Ellen and Tom were staying with George and his wife above the butchery.

So far, this story has been fairly straightforward, but from here onwards it became something of a genealogical nightmare! I came in to this problem in the late 1970s when I was carrying out extensive research into the Warry family (my paternal grandmother’s family) and compiling the first edition of a whole-family tree. The family had originated in south Somerset and many relations still lived there; obviously there had been movements to many other parts of the country, though not many to old Monmouthshire. I was visiting my cousin in Crumlin when she surprised me by asking me if I knew about the Warry who lived just up the road from her! I didn’t, so, in good Welsh fashion, she took me straight up to see the lady, who was a daughter of Frederick Turpin Warry. I discovered that he had been born in Liverpool in 1875 and I bought a copy of his birth certificate. This is where the fun started – he was the son of Thomas George Warry, a comedian, and Jane Turpin. Two further children were born to this couple – Ida, born in Liverpool in 1877 and Mabel, born in Swansea in 1880. The superficial implication is therefore that Ellen had died and Thomas George had remarried. However, there was no death record for Ellen and no marriage record for Thomas and Jane anywhere in the UK or Southern Ireland. The assumption must therefore be that the couple simply set up a household and that Thomas had deserted Ellen. Moving forward, I hit a snag when trying to find the families on the 1881 Census. Ellen was living with her brother, William, in Bath and her daughter, Kate (who seems to have been born in 1873 but not registered), was living there as well.

Harry was living with an aunt and uncle (on his mother's side) in Taunton I can find no trace of Tom.

When it came to finding Thomas and Jane and their children, however, it was a real problem. The family had apparently disappeared from the face of the earth. However, the Ancestry website offers an excellent search tool – you can find a family by entering the first names of members without a surname. This facility wasn't available when I first started searching, but it bore fruit when it was included! The family was living in Hereford – but under the surname Garnett. I can only assume that this was Thomas's stage name. The census entry confirms his occupation as theatrical actor, and all first names are correct, as are places of birth so this is definitely the correct family.

Things now take another twist – Thomas marries a Maria Jane Watson in September 1885 at Chorlton, Lancashire. Shortly afterwards she gave birth to a daughter, who died in infancy.

By 1891 we find Thomas lodging in Whitehaven – again, no doubt, he was acting in a production there. From various reviews of provincial performances in *The Stage* of this time, Thomas was obviously spending most of his time in the north of England now. Ellen (remember her? The first and still only legitimate wife!) was a barmaid in Bath. Jane and Thomas's two daughters Ida and Mabel were now living in Rowley Regis in the West Midlands – with Horace Main, another actor. Jane was described as an actress and they all used the surname Main. Fred, still under the surname Garnett, had moved to Blaina where he was working as a tin catcher in the iron works. Neither Tom nor Harry can be found on that census; nor can Maria.

1901 finds Ellen living in Wellington, Somerset, where she is a servant. Fred is living in Blaina with his wife and daughter, but we have no trace of the rest of the family. As the two daughters by Jane marry in Belfast in 1905 and 1906 (both using Warry as their surname) there is just a possibility that Thomas was in Ireland at the time, but there is no evidence to support this.

It seems as though he was on the slippery slope downwards after this time. He certainly seems to have abandoned his somewhat Bohemian lifestyle – at least he hasn't been found in the marriage indexes and neither has any other birth been attributed to him, though of course that is nothing to go by! However, the final ignominy is that, in the 1911 census, he is found in the South Manchester Workhouse as an inmate. He died there in 1915.

Ellen survived him by nearly fourteen years, dying in Taunton in 1929, still Thomas's legal widow.

So we have a definite bigamist on the family tree – and it is just possible that Thomas was a trigamist – he certainly had three quite separate families and there were definitely two marriages. Surviving family members, all of whom descend from Fred, the lad from Liverpool and later Blaina, find the story of their Victorian ancestors highly hilarious and the story certainly sheds quite a lot of illumination on some of the antics that the Victorians got up to. One can only wonder just how much of the story reached the ears of Ellen's children, all of whom seemed to lead quite blameless lives by comparison. That is something we shall never know.

Gill has taken part in many Gilbert & Sullivan operettas at Christchurch between 1972 and 1986. I have only ever undertaken two stage roles – that of Doctor Daly, the village vicar, in "The Sorcerer" and the part of Box in Sullivan and Burnand's "Cox and Box", also at Christchurch. We are not the stars of this particular production, though – I think the star of this show is, without a doubt, the wicked Thomas George Warry, who must have been a superb actor to negotiate his way through the plots and schemes he obviously designed throughout his life!

Repair or Replace, that is the question? – Ian Lumley

We, that is U3A ages and above, are probably the last generation where the above question will have any meaning. Nowadays, our offspring look askance at questions such as, “Do you need a darning needle and some thread for that hole in Joshua's sock?” Our daughter goes into hysterics when my wife says, “I've got a variety of colours in my sewing bag, I'm sure one of them will be a close enough match.”

For this new breed of human, the lines of thought can be fairly summarised as sock - hole - bin - buy. For sock insert cardigan, trousers, shoes, shirt or indeed any item of clothing, and for hole insert anything from scuff mark to damned great tears, or even just 'out of fashion'.

I recently had the misfortune to have the thin plastic power handle on my electric lawnmower break in mid lawn. Son-in-Law said with a certain amount of glee, 'I told you it was a cheap one'. At £150 I couldn't quite agree. “Now you'll have to get a proper one”, he went on. That was enough for me. I would show this (expletive deleted) that my generation was made of sterner stuff!

Of course, because the offending handle is the most important part of the whole machine it is not only the most delicately made but is also mostly hidden well within the innards of the switching mechanism in the lawnmower. Nevertheless, in just over two hours and some twelve screws later, I had the poor broken handle exposed to the lights on my workbench (workbench - now there's another word which is slowly disappearing from the English language!). Another three quarters of an hour left me with some glue on my hand, which I'm still trying to get off, one wash at a time, and a little duct tape (well around three feet of it was necessary, but what's that among friends, eh?) - and a repaired switch and power handle. Twelve hours later (I had to wait for the special extra strong glue - at least that's what it said on the tube - to dry) I was ready to put it all back together again.

As always when I do things like this, I get an added bonus. I always - always - end up with one screw left on the workbench. One of these days, I'll find a use for all these extra screws. I've got quite a collection, by now. In fact I've even shown them to friends when they come to visit. You've no idea just how many different kinds of screws there are around. I'll show you sometime, if you like.

The important part though, the only really important part, is that the lawnmower works again! Yes, even minus the screw which used to be in there, somewhere. When I demonstrated my handiwork to my Son-in-Law he could barely control himself. He had to say something, of course and so he fell back on all that was left to complain about. “But it took you hours!”, he said with that sneering look I've come to recognise is how he reacts to defeat. “Yes, but I've saved £150 or more if I had bought the replacement you suggested” I said rather haughtily. As he drove off, I raised my fist to the heavens and said 'YES.' There is a God up there after all.

I discovered later that I could have bought a replacement switch on the internet for £4.99, but I've always forgotten to mention it to my beloved you know who. I'll try and remember the next time he comes down but, at my age, memory does fail me occasionally!

USUAL APPEAL!

As usual, I am appealing for more materials for future editions of Desert Island Times, please. I like to have a good supply of material so that I can try to put together a balanced and wide-ranging selection of material. Quizzes and brain-teasers are proving popular – dig them out and send them on, please!

Ulsterisms Part Three – Gerald Lee

The newsletter has been an opportunity for me to revisit some of my early years in Northern Ireland. Ulsterism is the equivalent of Wenglish and Cockney speech. You can still have a standard English, but it is good to think there is room for a little dialect in literature and music, and most of all in everyday speech.

The main source of these idioms has been my mother. She had many expressions, some even a bit crude, compared to the gentility she would try to display to the outside world. She worked mostly in shops and probably left school at 14. Had the opportunity existed she could have been a teacher or accountant. It saddens me when education is wasted by those who do not value it. U3A demonstrates knowledge is something to share and enjoy.

The 'Belfast Telegraph' on Saturdays published a section on Ulsterisms by a journalist, John Pepper. His books have reminded me of many turns of phrase, and the Ulster habit of mixing phrases to sound something daft, even if you can still grasp the meaning.

Sometimes in speaking we can say things that on reflexion are not quite right. My French teacher told us to be careful of literal translation from a dictionary. Once he said he saw, 'he stays' translated as 'il corset.' I hope you all understand the error.

At university a fellow student, not so aware of the difference between colloquial and 'proper' English wrote, 'The reforms of the emperor Hadrian were nothing ordinary.'

Many expressions are most obvious in expressing greetings or annoyance. George Bush used the greeting form of American Ivy League Universities to Tony Blair, 'Yo Blair.' Even if the greeting has allegedly of classical origin, it still sounded rather patronising. The Ulster equivalent would have been 'Bully Tony.' I think I might have preferred that.

There are various reactions to stupidity, such as 'Catch yourself on,' 'Away a' that,' or 'He's not wise.'

Another popular phrase is 'his head's cut.' It does not imply injury, just idiocy.

There are also two mythical characters, 'Joe Soap' and 'Andy Gump,' both a bit simple.

My father was labelled thus many times when my mother returned home to find his latest home improvement. It would often be accompanied by the description of his work as looking like 'a pig's behind.'

Someone not as stupid as he seemed would be described 'not as green as he is cabbage looking.' My mother would also say he was 'no dozer.'

The empty-headed staff in shops were 'dizzy dames,' perhaps a bit of French influence as she often used 'dame' as less respectful term in the context of poor service. Even less polite was to be called 'a dumb cluck.'

A popular phrase for someone quick to act would be to say he would do it 'as soon as he would look at you.' That might range from buying you a drink to doing something a bit shady.

'Taking a hand out of someone' means to have a joke at his expense. Ian Paisley's children said that at home he would enjoy a bit of such repartee. In private only, I would suggest.

Some expressions are usually associated with children. A baby would be a 'wee dote.' Jumping around and a pretending to hide 'was juking.'

Sometimes the meaning is there, if it is not how you would say it yourself. John Pepper collected many such expressions. Really it is just the way people think and speak. 'Whose coat is this jacket?' is universal. The hospitable invitation to have something to eat can sound a bit curious in the phrase, 'Put yourself on a bit of toast.'

A friend who worked in social services recalled a telephone call from a call box. The caller asked, 'Do you keep people?'

'Are you reading that paper you're sitting on?' is physically impossible, but you know someone wants to borrow your newspaper.

Some phrases are nonsense. My favourite is, 'I would not say she can't keep a secret. It is just them she tells don't know it.' Even when contradictory the meaning is there.

Medical problems are a rich source of many Ulsterisms. The tendency to use 'with' to identify the source of the complaint results in phrases such as 'My man's in bed with his kidneys.' 'Owl' is used in many expressions for things less than perfect, so the phrase, 'I have lived with this owl leg of mine for seven years.'

To tell a schoolboy to be careful at sport is sensible, but would he understand 'Don't come running home with a broken leg?'

There is also the tendency to transfer the complaint, particularly between spouses, hence 'I am hoarse listening to my wife,' and 'I was up all night with Jack's toothache.'

Malapropisms are always a rich source of humour. An example is, 'Is the salmonella all right? I don't want my family down with semolina.'

Describing the condition might also be a problem. 'My arm's that stiff I can't bend it straight.'

Of course, if the expression 'he enjoyed bad health all his life' is widespread, would you expect to hear at a funeral, 'I could never have warmed to him, even if we were cremated together?'

What might a doctor have really said if the patient recorded it as 'I'll be all right in the morning provided I lay in bed till dinner time?'

Finally, a bit like my writing, a shopkeeper remarked 'There's days I sell nothing. Other days I could sell twice as much.' Some days the words and phrases just come flowing back.

When I started to write on Ulsterisms I was thinking of one article. That it is now Episode Three, I hope it will not be an even greater source of boredom than the current lock down.

If Stephen and the readers are agreeable, I might squeeze out another article. In the meantime, may I thank Stephen for his good work and let us hope it will not be too long before we meet again. Perhaps when our trip to the Titanic Exhibition takes place you might understand some of the vernacular.

The Case of the Dismembered Parts

by Arthur Comminto-the-Boil

Chapter 1

It was in the summer of '79 that I had the singular pleasure of working with my friend Sherlock Holmes, on one of the most unusual cases I have as yet placed on record.

There have been cases more bizarre certainly, such as that of the Giant Sumatran Vole or the Madagascan Tattooed Lady, not to mention the mystery surrounding the Clubfooted Midget, but those must remain forever secret from the public unless or indeed until Sherlock Holmes himself gives permission for the details to be divulged.

In the instance of which I now write, having received a request from Holmes to attend him at my earliest convenience, I set out for his lodgings after the completion of my day's list of visits. After the last of these, I dispensed with the hackney cab and proceeded on foot to 221b Baker Street, arriving shortly after dinner.

I was admitted by Mrs Hudson and found Holmes reclining at length upon the sofa in his usual effete manner. He fixed me with a glance from sharp and piercing eyes.

"Ah, Watson. I see you have come from seeing a patient."

"How on earth do you know that Holmes?" I asked.

"Why, Watson, you are still wearing your stethoscope around your neck."

I was amazed at his perspicacity and told him so. He gave an enigmatic smile and indicated an armchair with a careless wave of his sensitive-fingered hand.

"I want you to look at something" he said, "but first help yourself to tobacco."

He handed me the Persian slipper which he habitually used as a tobacco pouch but although I pushed my fingers down to the very toe it was quite empty.

"You need to refill the slipper, Holmes" I said and handed the pouch back to him. He felt for himself and then shook his head in a sorrowful fashion.

"Dash it all Watson, Mrs Hudson has been at my shag again. I rue the day that I first permitted her to take a pull of my Meerschaum. The poor creature has become quite addicted."

"No matter" I replied, "I'll help myself to one of your cigars if you have no objection."

He nodded and pointed vaguely in the direction of the humidor on a small whatnot next to my armchair and I lit up one of his Havanas with more than a modicum of enjoyment.

"I want you to look at those items which are on the table," he said "I'd value your opinion."

On the table a cloth covered a number of curious shapes. I lifted a corner and started to fold it back.

"The games afoot Watson" he said. "Quite literally" he added as I exposed a leg, more accurately part of a leg from below the knee to the toes of the foot.

"And you see what is in the kidney dish?" he questioned.

"Yes" I replied, "it is a kidney."

As I uncovered the rest of the objects, an eye, a second leg, (this time entire), a hand, a liver and finally an ear, I was conscious of a feeling akin to nausea. As a doctor with my military background,

I was accustomed to cadavers and amputated limbs but to see these items displayed in such a careless fashion on a table where one had previously dined was totally unsavoury.

“Does anything strike you?” asked Holmes.

“Two things,” I answered. “Firstly, they are all human parts, and secondly they are not fresh but they have been preserved. I smelt the formalin immediately I exposed them.”

“Well done!” Watson smiled. Then his face took on a grave expression.

Chapter 2.....

“These preserved parts were discovered here this morning, wrapped in a piece of sacking. I deduce that they have been taken from a hospital mortuary, the location of which is as yet unknown.”

“But who on earth would contemplate such a distasteful hoax?” I asked.

Holmes’ expression hardened. “This business has all the marks of Macaroni.”

“Macaroni?” I echoed. “You mean the man who has been called the Genghis Khan of crime?”

“The man himself. Macaroni has been at the heart of all serious crime world-wide for decades.”

“But what reason can he have for involving you in such a manner?” I asked.

“Ah, Watson, He sees me as his mortal enemy. I have been instrumental in foiling many of his criminal activities, the last one only recently. But our relationship goes back even further. Indeed, back to childhood. For a short period we attended the same school.”

“School?” I queried, raising my eyebrows.

“Elementary, my dear Watson. Palmerston Road Elementary to be precise. Even at such a tender age he exhibited vicious, bullying tendencies and on more than one occasion I had cause to go to the defence of some weaker boy. I believe that was the start of his enmity toward me.”

Suddenly, he sprang to his feet and I saw the febrile flush of excitement on his angular cheekbones.

“Watson” he cried, “tomorrow I intend to personally return these miserable remains to Macaroni

himself. Are you game for the adventure?”

“Of course, Holmes” I replied, “with all my heart.”

“Then return in the morning promptly at 8. By the way, do you still have your service revolver?”

“Certainly I do.”

“Then kindly leave it at home” he said sternly. “My right earlobe has not yet entirely healed.”

I admit to feeling slightly peeved at Holmes’ reference to the unfortunate incident in question, after all one cannot be held responsible for the results of an accidental ricochet, and it was with a certain amount of stiffness that I bade him goodnight. He appeared not to notice my coldness however.

“Until the morning then. Goodnight, Watson. Ah, hand me my violin before you leave, there’s a good fellow. I shall end the evening with some soothing music before my usual nightcap – a 7% solution of cocoa.”

(Unfortunately this is all that remains of the written notes.

We shall never know how the story continued. Ed.)

Submitted by Pam Cocchiara

ALL THAT JAZZsome more jazz videos for you....Mike Brown

TRAD AND MORE TRAD - This selection focuses entirely on what is commonly known as Traditional Jazz.

When jazz enthusiasts talk of the soprano saxophone, the name often on their lips is that of Sidney Bechet - the undisputed king. It is the only instrument in jazz on which one man reigns supreme. The Creole Bechet family settled in New Orleans in the late 19th century and Sidney was born in May 1897. Growing up in a musical family, Sidney soon showed it was inevitable that he was going to be something special in this field. Here's 4 videos to try. Sidney had a huge hit with "Petite Fleur" in the 50's

"Petite Fleur" <http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=REYLNs0rh-g>

"What Is This Thing Called Love" <http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=zz9Aiubppvs>

"After You've Gone" <http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=5ZmaovxHzJo>

"Mood Indigo" <http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=rpw4pFD6RHQ>

Humphrey Lyttelton was unquestionably one of Britain's most important and beloved jazz musicians, with a voice known to millions through his work as a broadcaster on BBC radio as the host of the UK's most successful and longest running jazz programme "The Best of Jazz". Listen to Vintage British jazz represented on the next 4 videos.

"Bad Penny Blues" <http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=N1-pQziWiKk>

"Basin St Blues" <http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=rqfE3HGpUAs&list=PL>>

"Marcand de Poissons" <http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=Bv8Mzt83R3Q&listPL>

"Christopher Columbus" <http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=q2Rv5rZJHxM>

Louisiana and French speaking jazz trombonist and band leader Edward "Kid" Ory was acclaimed as the greatest trombone player in the early years of jazz. From 1912 to 1919 Ory led one of the most popular bands in New Orleans, featuring many of the great musicians who would go on to define the "Hot Jazz" style. Listen to "Savoy Blues" <http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=Uz-rEfmSOps>

James McPartland, born in Chicago in 1907 was a Dixieland cornetist with his own distinctive lyrical sound. He worked with many of the great jazz musicians, often leading his own bands. The following number was a huge hit in 1922 and has remained a standard for Traditional Jazz bands.

"China Boy" <http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=PFqA5OZJDEc>

Jazz guitarist Eddie Condon took extremely few solos in his career, did not sing after the 1920's and only wrote a couple of songs & arrangements. But what he did do, was to become one of the most important figures in jazz due to his talents as an organiser, musical choreographer and publicist. This he did for the music that he loved. Condon helped form & formalise what came to be known as Dixieland Jazz. Hear Eddie & his band.

"Jazz Me Blues" <http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=OZnHaXgVFJY>.

An American trumpeter, composer, vocalist and actor who was among the most influential figures in jazz; his career spanned 5 decades from the 1920's to the 1960's and different eras in the history of jazz. Who can this be? Louis Daniel Armstrong of course. We've all heard of Satchmo; Satch or Pops, to use his nicknames. One of his famous tracks is "Do You Know What It Means To Miss New Orleans". http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=YS5MNK0_X_Q

I Don't Do Metric – Pam Cocchiara

It's been a few years in the UK
Since metrification began,
To make us agree on all things European,
At least I think that was the plan.

But it's all a bit of a mish-mash,
At least from what I can see.
I think you'll concur some things stayed as they were;
Neither one thing nor t'other to me.

The motorway signs, for example,
Show in miles how far your destination,
And then, as a rule, for consumption of fuel,
Miles per gallon for your calculation.

You can buy eggs by the half dozen,
It's a pint for lager and beer,
And all the racecourses are furlongs, and horses
Still auctioned in guineas, I hear.

Now I've always used imperial
For measuring things, big or small,
So something in metres, in grams or in litres,
Means little or nothing at all.

See, if I'm told something's twelve inches,
I see it there clear in my brain,
But I can't visualise the decimal size,
I have to decode it again.

Words used in the imperial system
Were first based on things all around us,
A typical guide being length of your stride,
Not metrical names that confound us.

And there's history in our words - like a bushel,
A butte or a fathom, a score.
No imagination in metrification,
So few words it's really a bore.

I can see how metric was started,
After all we've ten fingers, ten toes
But better by far is the avoirdupois,
And that's what in Britain we chose.

And the things that we learnt as youngsters
Are not easy to change, they're profound.
So, for all things I measure it's imperial I'll treasure
'Til they put me six feet underground.

The Truth of Grace – Alastair Steadman

But this I say to all who hear:
Do not go gently into that dark dusk,
For what we have we take on trust,
But in the gloom of that good night
We'll lose for ever what was our sight.
So, take to arms, in this bright day,
The beauty and the love that comes your way.
And do not question or look for wrong
In those we love and sought so long.
For if they love us too then beauty is their song,
Their shield is faith, their spear is sacrifice.
And in the rays of today's bright sun,
Why look for more, or seek to run?
'Tis folly of the greatest kind
To turn your back on love that's blind.
And remember this, when day is done
And rays of dying sun fall into the night
The moon has spun, the race is better run
With two made one,
Than lost in the pointless passion
Of a soulless one.

© Alastair Steadman (14 March 02)

Crossword Clues (page 4) – answers

1.An Arm and a Leg, 2.Evening Primrose, 3.Chocolate, 4.Bad Breaks, 5.Cable Car, 6.A Stone's Throw, 7.Mush, 8.Abracadabra, 9.Train, 10.Tug of War, 11.Hour Glass, 12.Poached Egg, 13.Eyelid, 14.Marathon, 15.In the Pink, 16.Alaska, 17.Downing, 18.Limpet, 19.Bath, 20.Reef.

Mixed-up Stars (page 4) – answers

1	TOM CRUISE	14	WINONA RYDER
2	DANIEL RADCLIFFE	15	MORGAN FREEMAN
3	CLINT EASTWOOD	16	INGRID BERGMAN
4	JOHN TRAVOLTA	17	LINDSAY LOHAN
5	CHRISTOPHER WALKEN	18	JAMES STEWART
6	CHARLIE CHAPLIN	19	KEIRA KNIGHTLEY
7	LAUREL AND HARDY	20	ANTHONY HOPKINS
8	MARLON BRANDO	21	GRACE KELLY
9	HALLE BERRY	22	BRUCE WILLIS
10	NICOLAS CAGE	23	EMMA WATSON
11	ORLANDO BLOOM	24	DREW BARRYMORE
12	JACK NICHOLSON	25	HARRISON FORD
13	HUMPHREY BOGART		

THE SOUND - Martyn Vaughan

Janet gave herself the luxury of a self-satisfied smile as she sipped her G & T. Her daughter's 11th birthday party had gone like clockwork thanks to her meticulous planning. She glanced at the paraphernalia and impedimenta of a successful kids' party still strewn over her spacious lawns: half-eaten bits of cake mingled with little paint pots for face painting, wizard wands and capes and ...

She stopped congratulating herself in mid sip. As she had leaned back in her chair she had heard the sound again. The first time she had heard it she had put it down to the tinnitus that she was increasingly prone to but this time she could deny it – the noise was from outside her body, not within. It was a faint, high-pitched hiss just on the threshold of hearing, a sibilant sound that her subconscious seemed to think was somehow sinister, something she should be worried about.

Her mind went into overdrive. Their new house in the country was the tonic they had needed to escape the rat race and crowded streets of London that they had known all their lives but they were now surrounded by rolling fields and ancient woods and she had read that the English countryside was full of unpleasant creatures: stoats, weasels, foxes, frogs, toads and – her mind hesitated for a moment before forming the dread word – snakes. The weather for the last few weeks had been hot and dry, just the weather for snakes, as that straw-haired yokel had gleefully told her when he had bumped into her in the local shop. There could be – what did they call them? – adders out there and possibly vipers as well. She had a momentary vision of her new house surrounded by a crawling, slithering, slimy mass of serpents determined to sink their fangs into female flesh.

Now thoroughly convinced, she leapt out of the chair. Where could the loathsome thing be hiding? She picked up the only weapon to hand – yesterday's Daily Telegraph – and rolled it into a tight cylinder. Was it under the chair? With a now pounding heart she glanced under it. No, it was not there. Under the sofa? She got down on hands and knees, feeling a cold sweat on her brow but with courage she had not realised that she possessed until now, she forced herself to look under the sofa, visualising a fanged monstrosity leaping out, burying its fangs in her soft throat. No – it was not there. Where could the dreadful thing be? Janet turned her head from side to side, trying to locate the hiss, knowing that her life could depend on what she did in the next few minutes. She must deal with this monster for the sake of her young daughter.

After a few anxious seconds she realised that the hiss was coming from just outside the patio doors, from somewhere on the lawn. She envisaged the headlines in the local rag: "Mother sacrifices herself to save daughter in epic battle with viper." Now resolute with a determination like granite she pushed the patio doors wide open and like an Amazon warrior strode out. And there it was just outside. She went momentarily weak from the shock of seeing the cause of the sinister hiss.

It was the birthday party bouncy castle slowly deflating.

THE CAR NUMBER PLATE GAME – Rob Wilkinson’s challenge!

1	BRD	dermabrasion	6	DRM	dematerialise
2	CRD	dextrocardia	7	DLT	deleteriously
3	CRT	contrariwise	8	FRM	formulations
4	BLT	blacklighting	9	GRD	regurgitated
5	DRN	randomisation	10	SLM	lamplighters

This is an extremely impressive entry from **David Jenkins!** I suspect that a pharmaceutical background has perhaps helped in one or two of these answers, but that is perfectly acceptable. David gets the free copy of Desert Island Times this week!

Now for another series to test your brains! The same rules apply as last week (DIT 6, p.14)

1	DTX	2	KDW	3	LBY	4	CFN
5	SJC	6	RJS	7	WPY	8	PRL
9	NTC	10	SWL				

KEEP YOUR SPIRITS UP - ROSALIND LEE

Corona, Corona, you’ve got us on the run,
To stay in every day, really isn’t fun.
We do our best and exercise to keep us all fit.
Some of us even sew to make scrub kits.

Keep your distance and obey the instructions.
It’s for our safety, keeping us from destruction.
Look on the bright side, de-junk and clean.
Every room will be fresh with a gleam.

When it’s time to show our faces
Our houses and flats will be sparkling places
The pubs and parks will be there for you.
A walk, a meal, meeting your friends too.

Until then, we must all keep to the rules.
Keeping children at home, to school.
One day, we can be free and roam around.
So, stay safe, exercise, don’t get down.



From Kath Upton