

Yesterday
Remembered

14 PAGES
OF READERS'
REAL LIFE
STORIES

BEST OF BRITISH

PAGE



REMEMBERING
KIRSTY MACCOLL

THE TRIPODS

Classic British
science fiction

RACING TO GOLD

Olympic athlete
Ann Packer

THE HAMMER YEARS

Film director Roy
Ward Baker

ART DECO FLYING

Onboard a DH Rapide

Derby & Moan

Where Dracula came to life



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EVERY DAY'S A SCHOOL DAY

Like the BBC of old, the purpose of this magazine is to inform, educate and entertain, although not necessarily in the right order.

Working on BoB has taught me a thing or two, and while much of this knowledge learned from reading your letters and articles, or through my own research, is of little use in everyday life, it has helped me to ace it in pub quizzes or at least shout at quiz shows on the television with confidence.

These little bits of trivia have taught me why a popular football game was named Subbuteo, and, by the same token, what the scientific name for the Eurasian hobby is. Other discoveries have included the fact that Gary Oldman is 13 days younger than Gary Numan, and that vodka, whisky and gin are pretty much the same spirit



until they are bottled, barrelled or infused with botanicals.

And while it didn't come as much of a surprise to discover that Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased)'s Mike Pratt had a

hand in writing one of the first British rock'n'roll hits, I initially said "No-no-no-no..." when I learnt that The Vicar of Dibley's Trevor Peacock had written the Herman's Hermits chart topper Mrs Brown, You've Got a Lovely Daughter.

And as for where St Edmund is buried, well, you couldn't make it up.

Next month, this magazine will be celebrating its 30th anniversary. I can't begin to think how many pieces of trivia we must have featured over the years but I'm sure that many of you have a favourite fact or anecdote that you've gleaned from the pages. Perhaps you've even been able to put this knowledge to good use?

If so, why not write in and let us know more?

Simon Stabler

RED ROUTE

Cardinal Cox tries not to get himself shot

One day I'll tell you about the sights I've seen on the local bus. My partner lives over the other side of the city but it is all one bus route. All being well, I don't have to change buses, and it takes about 50 minutes.

I like to sit on the upper deck overlooking the door. One night, two years ago, when we pulled into the bus station that is the hallway point, a couple of security guards from the adjacent shopping centre came to the door to chat with the bus driver. It is unusual to see the guards unless the last bus has been delayed and they want to chuck you out.

The security guards went off and the bus just sat there. Sometimes it stops

there for five minutes but this night it was 10, then 15 minutes.

The bus driver got off the bus (perhaps to look for the security guards). There were mutterings from the passengers. We had been sat there now for 20 minutes.

One guy downstairs uses the emergency button to open the doors and goes to look for the driver. People who have turned up early for the next bus get on. We've now been here for 25 minutes.

Other people get off the bus. An old fellow two seats in front of me starts moaning: "My dinner is waiting for me. If my dinner gets burnt, I want compensation. I need to get home. I need to get my dinner."

However, the thing that shut him up was the sudden arrival of six heavily

armed members of the local police tactical firearms squad.

My first thought was that statistically middle-aged white guys aren't shot in these situations unless they are the active shooter. Even so, I put my hands up.

They then started to handcuff two black lads. Until they realised one had a plaster cast on his wrist. They got on the radio to check the description and these lads were clearly not who they were looking for.

The squad leader explained that they were there because they'd had a report of someone with a gun on the bus and had we seen anyone in a red shirt?

Rest assured, after almost 30 minutes of sitting on a bus that was going nowhere, we were all seeing red.

Next issue: Spangles



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Best of British,
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Monday-Friday 8:30am - 5pm

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DESIGN

Druck Media Pvt. Ltd

NEWSTRADE DISTRIBUTION

Seymour Distribution Ltd,
2 East Poultry Avenue, London EC1A 9PT

PRINTING

Acorn Web Offset Ltd,
Normanton, West Yorkshire

FIND US ON



www.twitter.com/bestofbritishuk
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Cover: Christopher Lee as Count Dracula in Dracula: Prince of Darkness (1966), the third film in Hammer's Dracula series.

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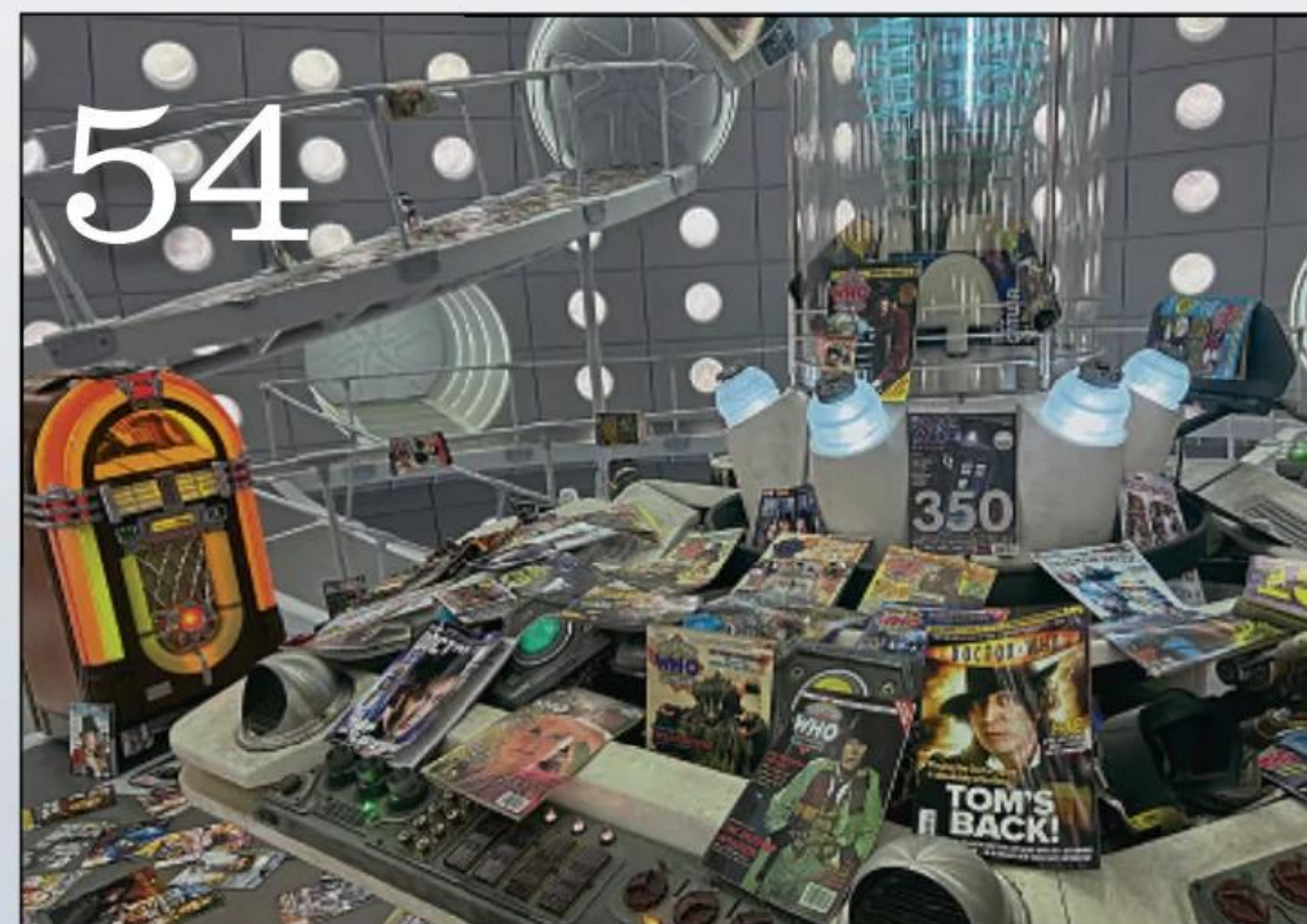
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Postbag

The Editor welcomes letters for this section. Pictures are appreciated. Letters may be edited so that we can include as many as possible

Jolly Fellows

Dear Simon,

My daughter asked me whether I had any photos of my parents she could take to a discussion group at her local WI. We found one in an old photo album. It's taken on a holiday with the Holiday Fellowship in 1953.

The Holiday Fellowship used to organise walks for guests staying at their homes. On this holiday, a walk took us to a local church. We went in and one of the guests immediately went over to the organ and started playing it. I was a little surprised but his wife, who referred to her husband rather formally as "Mr", said he liked to do that on his first visit to a church and they usually didn't mind. On this occasion, they did, and someone connected to the church went over to him and told him very firmly to get off the organ which, of course, he did.

In the photo, I am the young man at the end of the second row up wearing a windcheater. I liked that jacket because it was reversible (it had a special zip and was grey on one side and brown on the other). My younger brother is sitting in the front row just to the left of the Holiday Fellowship sign. My father is next but one



to me and my mother is the lady with glasses and dark hair, third row up, third from the left.

You may notice that one or two of us are wearing ties but most of the men have open neck shirts – the casual look in those days.

I had one more holiday with my parents before going away with people of my own age group. That last holiday

was a few months later when my mother announced that she was tired of cooking meals for everyone at Christmas and she wanted to go away somewhere. On that occasion, we were joined by my sister who is five years older than me and was no longer living at home.

Don Alcott

Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands

Light Reading

Dear Simon,

Another great BoB with the August issue. There was so much I could refer to.

The lamplighter story (Postbag: Pier and Now) took me back to the lamp-post that was down our road during the war. We only had one with no top, just the post. But there was quite a gathering when it lit up after the war. Believe it or not, it was quite an occasion for us children.

Also, the telegram boys' bikes being used in a film (Postbag: Hue and Slide)

reminded me of the time when we nearly rode on to a film set. We were all on our bikes on Chobham Common, Surrey. We did not know they were making a film but it starred Laurence Olivier and was called The Beggar's Opera. A man told us we could stay if we behaved.

Also, I had been to one of the campsites mentioned in the feature The First in Their Field many times with local boys and girls from around the Staines area.

One night, when we didn't make it to our tents, we slept under the stars in three straw laden hollows. I must say that it was one of the best night's sleep I ever had, not to mention the smell of the air first thing in the morning.

Like Derek Hewson (Postbag: Bike in the Day), I also went to Pirbright on my bike, not a motorbike I might add, just my pushbike.

Bobby Knottley

Newthorpe Common, Nottinghamshire



Yul and I

Dear Simon,

In 1979, I got a job as a dresser at the London Palladium. While I was working on *The King and I*, my first musical, I found myself standing a few feet away from Hollywood actor and legend Yul Brynner.

The cast and crew had all been invited to a party that was given by Ross Taylor, the show's producer. This was held in the Cinderella bar where the public had drinks before and at the interval of every show. He came and greeted the cast.

I was surprised at him being 5ft 6ins, as I imagined him being over six feet as he had seemed so tall, his films gave him height and he was dressed head to toe in black with a thick chain of gold around his neck. I took a couple of steps, almost as if something was drawing me to him, some sort of magnetic pull I couldn't stop.

A voice behind me said: "Shall I take a photo?"

I turned and saw the speaker was one of the girls who played his wife in the show.

"I would love that if you think he won't mind."

She waved at him: "Yul, can this lady have a photo with you?"

"Sure, sure." He waved me over.

I stumbled up to him, in awe, speechless feeling like an idiot mumbling something that might have been thank you, but probably come out garbled. He put his arm around me, I savoured the softness of his arm in the silk jacket as he slid it around my waist, I held him with a firm grip, this was a good thing because I was feeling giddy and feeling as if I was in the stars.

I didn't want this to end, and it was over too quickly. As he turned to go and chat to other cast members, he gave me a lovely smile. I floated off and I wish I had been brave enough to say "Shall we dance?" then dance around the bar with him. A moment that I watched a thousand times from the wings.

Everyone was waiting to see if Yul was going to extend the run of this revival as



it was so popular. Yul had made the part his own and played the part differently each night and matinee. After the party, we heard that Yul Brynner was going to extend his time in London with the show.

With best wishes
Linda Soper

Following in the Family's Footsteps

Dear Simon,



I recently received the August issue of *Best of British*. When I reached The Francis Frith Collection pages (Window on the Past), I exclaimed to myself: "Oh, another picture of Steeple Aston." *Best of British*

was the reason I went to this Oxfordshire village and saw the grave of my great grandparents.

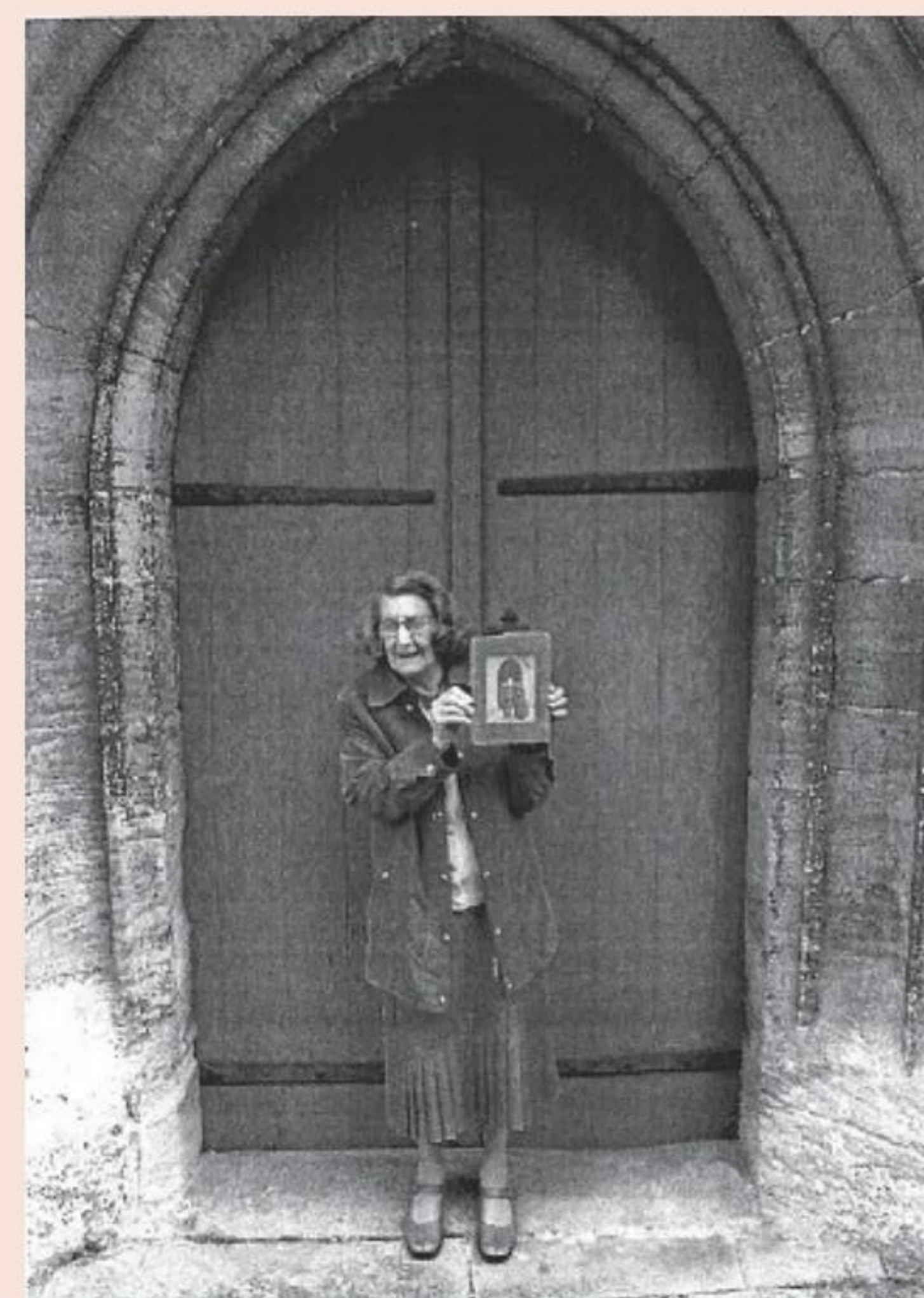
When I saw the picture in 2016, I wrote to BoB saying I believed my father's family had gone from there although I had never been. A little while later, a letter appeared in BoB from David Jarratt who was involved in covering the graves in Steeple Aston churchyard. They had found the graves of my great grandparents.

My son took me to see it. I had in my possession a photo of my great grandparents taken in the doorway of the same church. I had a lovely day, and David and his colleague in the archives hall made us very welcome. I am enclosing photographs of my great grandparents Alfred and Mary Belcher and one my son took of me in the church doorway.

(Incidentally, I would be interested to know about the photographers James and Son of Stowe House Studio, Bicester, Oxfordshire.)

Thank you for helping me with my family history.

Maisie Dance
Purley, Surrey





Every Picture Tells a Story

Dear Simon,

I sympathise with Don Alcott (Postbag: Maintaining Tradition, August) when he writes about those vanished postcards which used to be key to any holiday – even if they never made it to the post.

As anyone who's seen them will know, postcard views are often superior to anything we amateurs can produce. Not all of us who just want a souvenir of the visit are capable of producing fancy photoshopped numbers and, besides, by comparison, images on a computer screen are just no fun.

To begin with, there's the problem of perspective. In my innocence, I once attempted to photograph interesting rooftop features in a nearby town in northern Spain (my father always taught me to look up). Of course, taken from ground

level, these all loomed alarmingly, as if the photographer had been at the Sangria.

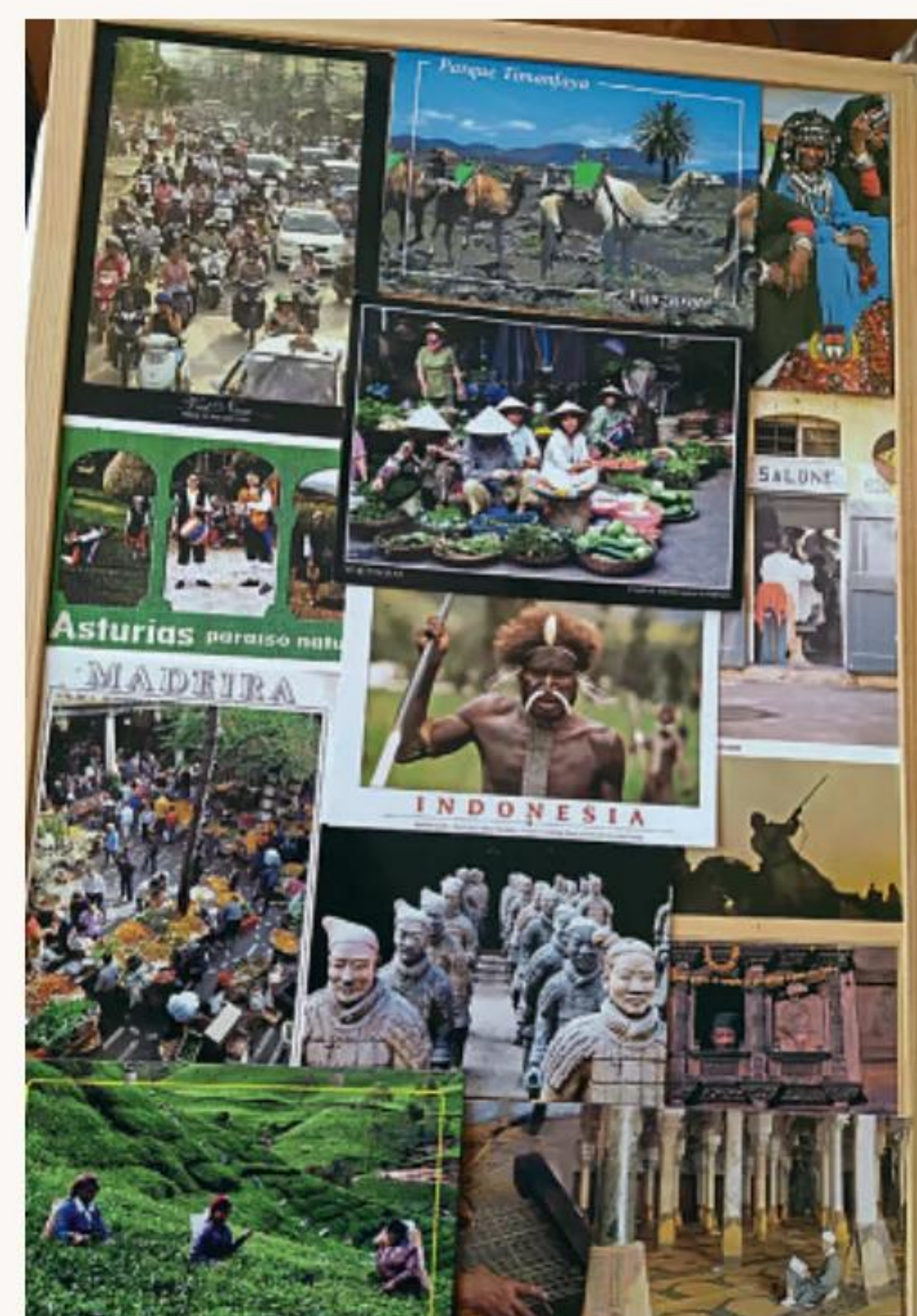
As a teacher of English, I encouraged my students to send me postcards when they went on their travels. Now I have a handsome collection of hundreds of these from all over the world and they still make a good talking point in classes.

Although today's students share their digital photos with me, these can't compare with the tingling excitement I feel when I open my "postcard box" and we start talking about Icelandic sands or the terracotta army, châteaux on the Loire or the Cutty Sark.

Every picture, truly, tells a story.

With best wishes,

Susan Batten
Spain



"Don't you mean Suzette?"

Dear Simon,

I enjoyed reading Susan Batten's letter (Postbag: The Name Game, July), which got me into thinking of the origin of my name, Suzette.

I have done some research, which tells me that Suzette is a feminine name of French origin and comes from the Hebrew name Susanna and translates to Lily or Rose. It is a diminutive form of the name Susan. Variations are Lisette, Lunette and Muzette.

I remember my late parents telling me that they were quite sure Mum was expecting a boy but going past the birth date, my first-time mum was getting quite anxious, so my dad took her to see a movie. One of the actresses in that film was named Suzette. They looked at one another and agreed that should their baby be a girl, I would be named Suzette as they quite simply loved the name.

Although my paternal grandparents liked my name, they were sure I would be called Sue but, as the story goes, my dad said: "Our daughter is going to be named and christened Suzette, and she will be called and known as Suzette." That was until I became a teenager, when quite often my friends would phone me and ask for Sue. If my dad answered the phone, he would say: "Don't you mean Suzette?"

I don't ever remember my dad calling me Sue, but sometimes my mum would call me Suki, followed by a frown from Dad. Often my husband, Roger, and my brothers will call me Sue, which is OK but when my husband is cross with me for whatever reason, he will call me Suzette.

I am of the opinion that those of us who have a name that can be shortened is a sign of love, friendship and affection.

My brother and his wife have two children, their first, a boy named Charles, is known to us all as Charlie, their second, a girl named Isabelle is known to us all as Izzy. She'll be marrying her boyfriend, Samuel, next year and he is known to our family as Sam.

I hope you won't think it rude of me, Simon, when I ask you are you known as Simon to your family, friends and work colleagues or are you known as Si?

I am now 76 years of age and throughout my life I have met only three ladies with the name Suzette.

Thank you, Simon, and all your colleagues at BoB for a great magazine.

Yours sincerely
Suzette Mizen
Colchester, Essex

Life Imitating Art

Dear Simon,

Following on from Arthur Reeder's take on a new post box (Postbag, Royal Box, August), life imitated art just a few days ago with the first real letterbox with King Charles' cypher on it, which was installed on High Street, Great Cambourne, Cambridgeshire.

I have visited Arthur's wonderful collection on the Isle of Wight (01983 825193, postalmuseum.co.uk), I think it's time I returned.

Best wishes
Nick Gillett





Death Train

Dear Simon,

Several scenes in the 1970 story Doctor Who and the Silurians, which starred Jon Pertwee as the Doctor, were shot at London Marylebone station (A Hard Day's Night, July). The scenes saw an infected man (Geoffrey Palmer) getting off the train, moments later, the ticket collector and others collapsed on the concourse. Due to a faulty film, they had to do a retake 12 days later and used BBC staff as extras.

I attach a 1959 London day trip leaflet; Nottingham Victoria was larger than Marylebone but Marylebone gave you access to Madam Tussauds and The Planetarium.

Trevor Wells

Nottingham, Nottinghamshire



Plague victims begin to collapse at London Marylebone station, in episode six of the 1970 story Doctor Who and the Silurians. The story is available to view on BBC iPlayer.

The Cheap Seats

Dear Simon,

I recently attended the thanksgiving service for the life of a friend who had passed away just short of her 90th birthday.

Delivering the eulogy, her son reduced everyone to helpless laughter with an anecdote from an outing to the cinema to watch Octopussy in 1983. After the party of four had settled into their seats, his mother delved into her bag and proceeded to produce a tub of ice-cream, four bowls and four spoons. She then served up four helpings of ice-cream as she wasn't prepared to pay cinema prices.

Jon Harris

WHITSUNTIDE HOLIDAYS - 1959			
CHEAP TRIP			
TO			
LONDON			
TUESDAY 19th MAY 1959			
FROM	TIMES OF DEPARTURE	RETURN FARES Second Class	ARRIVAL TIMES ON RETURN
NOTTINGHAM Victoria	8.0	18/5	12.0
LONDON Marylebone Central	11.20	16/3	12.21
GLIMING & WOODHOUSE	11.32	15/4	12.44
ROTHLEY	11.30	15/4	12.26
HILGANGE & BASTALL	11.40	14/5	12.20
LEICESTER Central	11.50	14/3	12.18
WHISTON	13.0	13/8	12.7
LUTTERWORTH	12.35	13/3	11.59
ROSBY Central	12.30	12/4	11.28
WOODFORD HALLE	12.55	12/-	11.18
BRACELEY Central	1.00	9/2	10.59
LONDON Marylebone arrive	2.46	Passenger return from 10.30	10.40

FOR DETAILS OF LATE 'BUSES AT NOTTINGHAM
—see overleaf

LONDON: MIDLAND

Can you help?

Requests for information on any subject, as well as friends and family searches and reunion announcements, can be included here free of charge

Does anyone remember being in Class 5X at Blackfen Girls' School on the Blackfen Road, Sidcup, Kent in 1962/63? We stayed on an extra year to do a secretarial course. I think there were 15 of us.

Mrs Marian Betts,
520 Old Bedford Road,
Luton LU2 7BY

Park Boys? This club was founded in 1950 and I would like to hear from anyone who has memories or information about this long lost, but not forgotten club ahead of what would be a 75th anniversary next year.

Rob Meyers, 123 Ashurst Drive, Barkingside, Ilford, Essex IG6 1HA

My wife and I are planning to visit London, Kesgrave, Ipswich, Banbury, Aberdeen, Turriff and Shetland in 2026. We would love to have Christian married couple penpals from those cities to go for a meal and learn more about those cities.

Pastor Joseph and Mrs Serene Culp, PO BOX 202, Pickerington, Ohio 43147-0202 US Email: joseph.captainscotland.culp@gmail.com

I am trying to trace S/Sgt "Les" Walker and W/Sgt Maggie Burt who were at 9 Signal Regiment, Cyprus in 1976 and 1976/77 respectively. Les was a member of the Blackhand Gang, Maggie was a PTI.

Geoff Thompson, 2 Rattenbury Court, Salford M6 7RU Tel: 07989 320291 Email: geoffthompson123@hotmail.co.uk

Nearly 50 years after his death, two statues have been erected in the memory of Sir George Dowty, founder of the world renowned Dowty engineering business. A booklet recording the unveiling of one of the statues is available from me, priced £5.

Martin Robins Email: martinrobins@btinternet.com

Has anyone any information/artefacts etc on Whimsical "Whimmy" Walker (1851-1934), my paternal great-grandfather? At present, I'm rewriting his biography, "warts, and all". As you can imagine, my search for additional material is like looking for the proverbial hen's teeth, in this day and age, especially as I'm in Australia. I thank you all in anticipation.

Robert William Dawson, Email: whimmy5751walker@outlook.com

Does anyone remember local football team Newbury

Requests for information, friends and family searches and reunion announcements can be included here free of charge. Send any requests, written as concisely as possible, to Can You Help?, Best of British, Mortons Media Group Ltd, Media Centre, Morton Way, Horncastle, Lincolnshire LN9 6JR or by email to info@bestofbritishmag.co.uk





In Full Flow

Dear Simon,

As ever, your September issue set the juices flowing.

The Wicksteed photo illustrating the project by Linden Groves to train for the marathon in historic spaces (Britain Now) brought back memories of cross-country running around the same park during my Kettering Grammar School years aged 12-13 (1960-2). I once tried to run in plimsolls which kept coming off in sucking mud and relegated me to sixth place – seemingly shameful at the time, as I was more used to coming in the first three.

Inclusion of a Park Drive packet (Treasures in the Attic) reminds me that, in 1963, my dad asked for these at a hotel in Bournemouth and was told: “We have no call for cheap cigarettes here, sir!” as though there was some hidden virtue in risking lung cancer expensively. Later, I lived near a Park Drive in Leicester, but never looked to see whether numbers 10 and 20 were packet shaped.

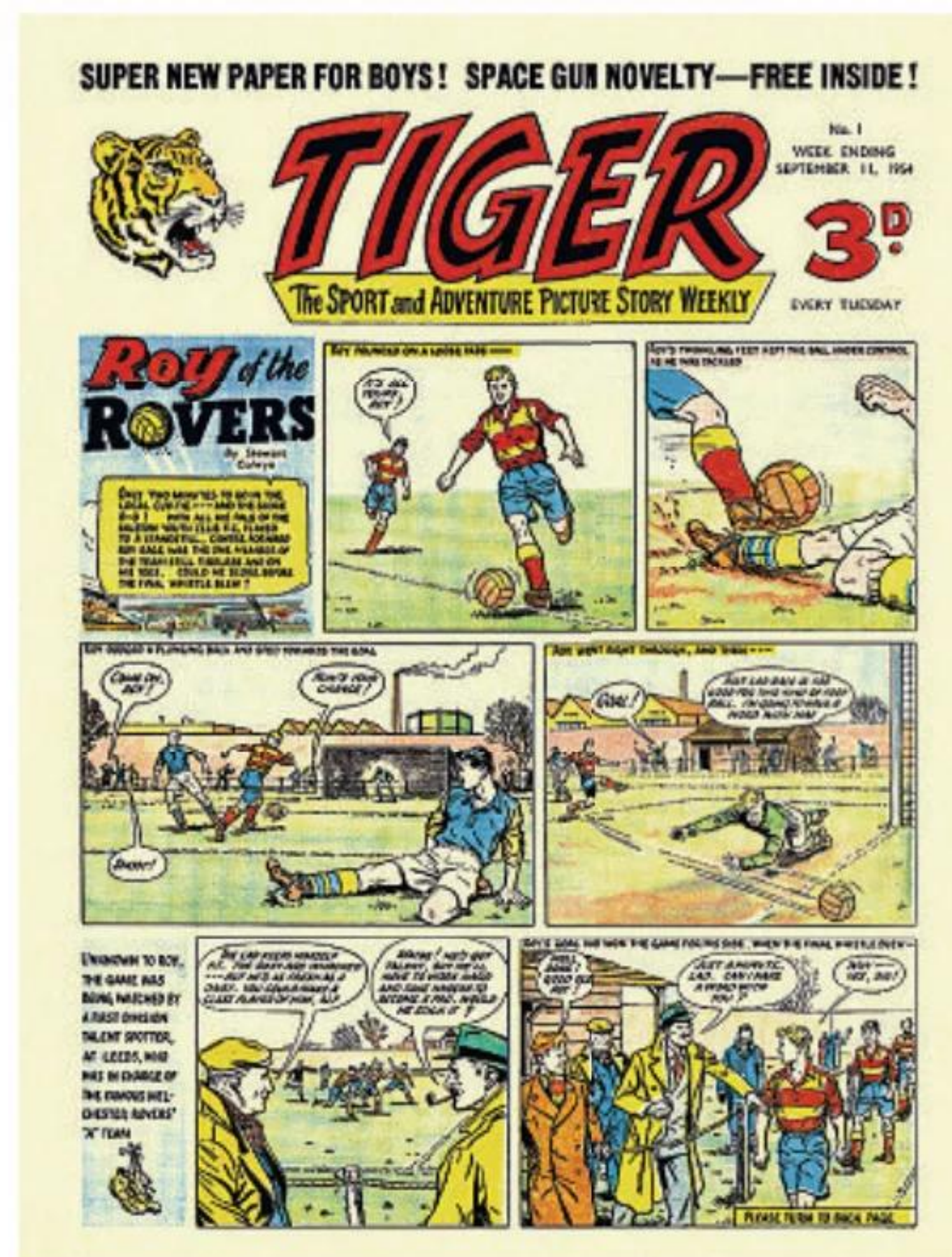
I read the Tiger comic and the Roy of the Rovers annuals (The Original Golden Balls) from around 1958 to 1962, loving artist Joe Colquhoun’s energetic line and flair which transcended real-life football of that period.

I’ve been itching to get to the Raymond Briggs exhibition at Ditchling (Out & About), but as a lifelong non-driver, I find the potential trip via public transport somewhat cumbersome. Britain lost RB in 2022 and – while I was pleased to see the appreciation of his work – I was somewhat saddened to see that so many printed images at the time were art taken from The Snowman animation, rather than Raymond’s own original book.

Then there is BB (Window on the Past). Born and bred in Northants, I have always been proud that Denys Watkins-Pitchford was based in the same county. At primary school, I can recall a teacher reading Brendon Chase and was so taken with the idea that I was tempted to run away from home.

Though there are demerits in his writing, Denys had more than one talent. He was an above-average artist, developing scraperboard as a means of illustration, and he peppered his prose with authentic references to rural nature, clearly taken from personal experience and rooted in a lost 1950s world of hedges, ponds and woodland.

There is more I could say, but Pitchford really deserves an article of his own;



and he rates with Malcolm Saville, Eric Linklater and others of the mid-20th century who are comparatively forgotten alongside modern children’s authors.

Best wishes

David Robinson

Peterborough, Cambridgeshire

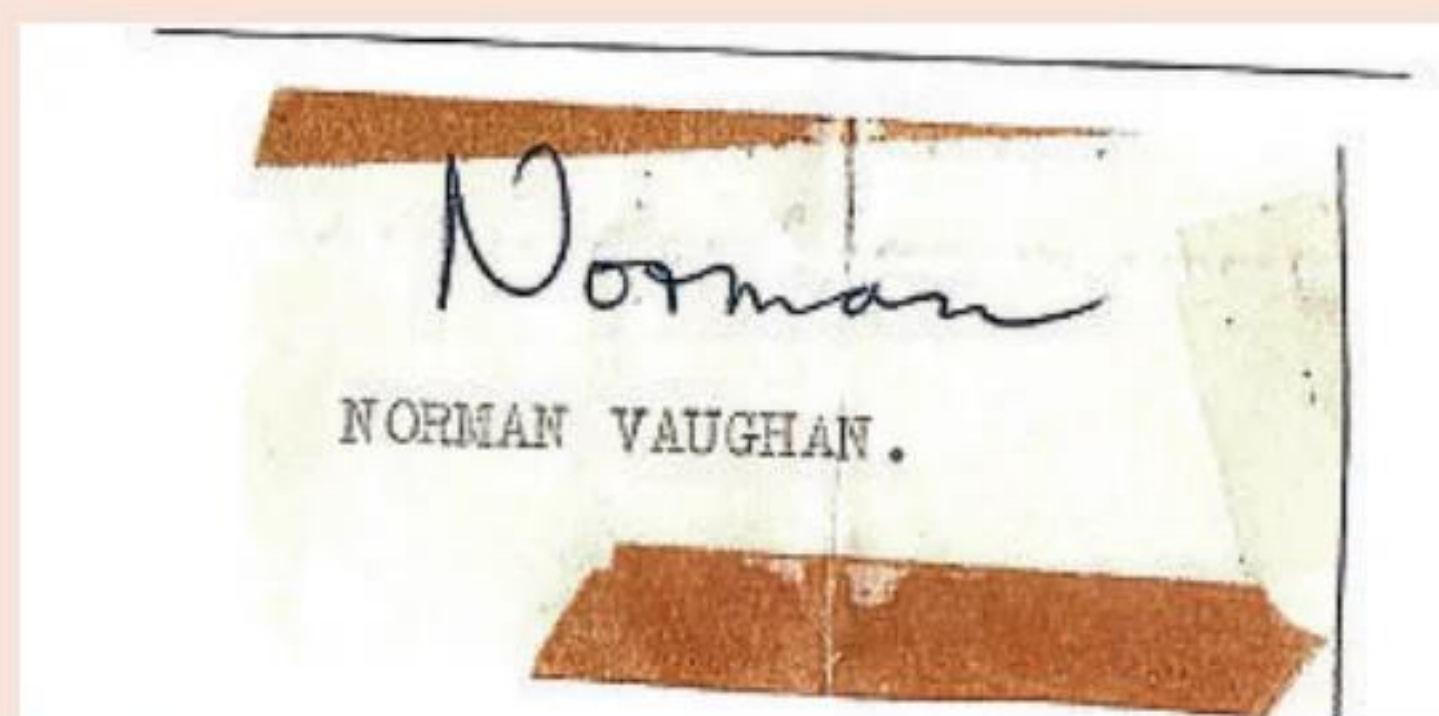
Every Little Helps

Dear Simon,

When the supermarket company that employed me in the 1960s and 70s asked me to perform relief management across all areas of London, it was hardly surprising I would meet people from all walks of life – including showbusiness.

This particular day, just before I entered my store, I recognised the person walking towards me. I could not believe my luck. I had been asked to address a group of people and give a talk about the developments of supermarkets in recent years. The chap walking towards me had made a very funny joke about supermarkets involving “two for the price of one” which I knew I could use but would need permission to do so.

It was comedian Norman Vaughan, who had become famous, due to his use of the catchphrases “swinging” (and thumb in the air when used) and alternatively “dodgy” (thumbs the other way up) if what was being referred to deserved it. So, here he was – Mr Swinging and Dodgy, Norman Vaughan.



I introduced myself and quickly explained why I wanted to use the “two for the price of one” joke. I was certainly not prepared for his instant reply. “No!” he said in a resounding voice, mumbling something about copyright. Taken aback, I recovered and asked if he could let me have his autograph. He turned his back on me just for a second and then thrust a small piece of paper into my hand. I glanced at it, and it was a tiny piece of paper – with his autograph on it.

I quickly shouted out “Swinging Norman!” and he held out his hand with thumb raised acknowledging he heard me. His autograph was the smallest in my collection then and has remained so.

Colin MacLeod

Beaulieu, Inverness

Fully Loaded

Dear Simon,

Bob Bicker’s modification of a Morris 1000 to improve its carrying capacity (Postbag: The Vanishing Tent, September) struck a chord.

As impoverished newlyweds in the early 1970s, we owned a two-door Austin A35. Since it was green, we called him Hughie.

By removing the restraint strap, the passenger door could be folded back on the wing. The passenger seat removed by simply unclipping it.

Through the enlarged opening, items as bulky as a washing machine, fridge, and four dining chairs were accommodated. We were, however, defeated by a room divider.

On reflection, we should have renamed Hughie “the Tardis”.

Regards

Derek Lamb

Potters Bar, Hertfordshire



A Testing Time

Dear Simon,

I just wanted to write to say how much the memories came flooding back with regards to the letter I'm a Van Fan in September's Postbag.

In 1972, at the age of 15, I started work for Royal Mail as a telegram boy. When I became a postman at 18, a job I did for all my working life, the very first vehicle I ever drove was the Post Office Morris Minor van, I learnt to drive in one, and also passed my test in one. I remember during the said test and in the middle of my three-point-turn, a member of the public coming up to the van to ask me for directions, not what you want in the middle of your driving test, but the examiner sent them on their way, and fortunately I still passed, although this was my third attempt.

So now, I had passed my test I could drive the larger vans. The first one of these I drove was the Morris J4. A particular feature about this van was the sliding doors. In hot weather, and I'm thinking about the long hot summer of 1976 here, you would always drive with the van door wide open. But the problem with this was that every time you had to brake there would be a whoosh-bang as the door slid along and slammed shut, very annoying, but there was a way around this. (Health and Safety look away now.) You just had to tie the seat belt around the door handle to keep it open. Obviously, this would be frowned upon today but back then things tended to be a little bit laxer. Here is a photograph of me standing next to the J4.

John Rainer

Abingdon, Oxfordshire



The Collector



I developed a great interest in earthenware ginger beer bottles after discovering a Victorian/Edwardian rubbish dump in local woods as an eight-year-old. Finding broken and chipped bottles was exciting enough but later discovering whole ones for sale in junk shops was even better.

So, I started a small collection which now numbers over 50. They are not of a high value, worth only about £10 each. I have collected bottles that relate to places where I have lived or visited. Bottles with green or blue tops are especially rare. Before about 1890, the bottles had impressed designs. After this date, designs were printed on the bottles before being glazed. By the late 1920s, stoneware bottles were phased out to be replaced by glass bottles. This was considered more hygienic. The customer could now see any impurities lurking in the bottle.

All these bottles were once disposable items with no value. To me they provide valuable clues to the past. The bottles advertise drinks companies that are long gone. One of my favourites is a York bottle that was dredged up from the Thames half a century ago and then left in a garden shed for decades. The previous owner provided this interesting background detail.

Lyndon Parker

Knaresborough, North Yorkshire



Do you have a collection that you would like to share in the pages of Best of British? If so, send us a photograph of you and the object, along with a description, how you came to have it and what you like about it.

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FREESAT 306 | VIRGIN 445

Clash by Night (1963)

(Wednesday 2 October, 12.25pm)

Drama. Director: Montgomery Tully. Starring: Terence Longdon, Harry Fowler and Peter Sallis. A prison bus en route to jail is hijacked by a gang.

The Brothers

(Thursday 3 October, 8pm)

Happy Anniversary
Bill Riley and Martin Farrell join the Hammond board, but Brian and Riley quickly come into conflict.



Green for Danger (1946)

(Friday 4 October, 7.10pm)

Thriller. Director: Sidney Gilliat. Starring: Trevor Howard, Sally Gray, Rosamund John and Alastair Sim. Against a background of bombing raids, a series of murders take place in a hospital during World War Two.

Adventures of PC 49 (1949)

(Saturday 5 October, 5.35pm)

Crime. Director: Godfrey Grayson. Starring: Hugh Latimer, John Penrose and Annette D Simmonds. A policeman goes undercover to infiltrate a gang of thieves trading tobacco.

Hell Drivers (1957)

(Sunday 6 October, 10.10am)

Drama. Director: C Raker Endfield. Starring: Stanley Baker, Herbert Lom, Peggy Cummins and Patrick McGeehan. Tom signs up as a "Hell Driver", but the death-trap roads are the least of his problems.

The Wrong Arm of the Law (1963)

(Sunday 6 October, 6pm)

Comedy. Director: Cliff Owen. Starring: Peter Sellers, Bernard Cribbins, Lionel Jeffries, John Le Mesurier, Bill Kerr and Nanette Newman. A gangster learns of a traitor in his midst and makes a deal with the police.



bbc.co.uk/iplayer

Hitchcock at the NFT

First broadcast in 1969. In his 70th year, Alfred Hitchcock came to the National Film Theatre in London to talk to fellow director Bryan Forbes and to answer questions from an audience of film enthusiasts.

Face to Face

Evelyn Waugh John Freeman faced a difficult subject in Evelyn Waugh when he interviewed him in 1960. Waugh, author of *Brideshead Revisited*, was in characteristically obstructive frame of mind. The result is a rare glimpse into the life and temperament of one of the greatest novelists of the 20th century.

The Mrs Merton Show

Caroline Aherne, in the guise of Mrs Merton, unnerves her celebrity guests with a series of off-the-wall questions.



itv.com

The Commander

Amanda Burton stars as a top cop in this gritty thriller. Follow the



trials and tribulations of Commander Claire Blake – head of the serious crimes unit in the male-dominated Metropolitan Police.

Goodbye Mr Chips

Martin Clunes stars in this charming adaptation of a novella about the life of a school teacher. Jaded and thorny at first, he thaws out thanks to a kind student.

Robin of Sherwood

Michael Praed and, later, Jason Connery, star in Richard Carpenter's influential reworking of the classic myth.



**FREEVIEW 41, SKY 148,
FREESAT 137, VIRGIN 149**

The Man Who Haunted Himself (1970)

(Tuesday 1 October, 11am)

Tense psychological terror starring Roger Moore. Uptight Harold suffers a high-speed car crash in which he is momentarily clinically dead, only to awake to find his mirror image is meddling with his personal and professional life.

Raise the Titanic

(Sunday 13 October, 3pm)

During the cold war, the American government needs a valuable mineral found solely in the Soviet Union to make a new defence system work. They find out a sample of the material was smuggled out of Russia and was being transported on board the Titanic when the ship sank. The only solution for the government is to send a survey team to raise the vessel from the depths. Adventure, starring Jason Robards and Alec Guinness.

Jules Verne's Rocket to the Moon (1967)

(Friday 18 October, 2.35pm)

Escaping from his creditors to England, Phileas T Barnum (Burl Ives) finances a trip to the moon in an attempt to recoup his

fortunes. Loosely based on the 1865 novel *From the Earth to the Moon* by Jules Verne, this film, directed by Don Sharp, also stars Jimmy Clitheroe, Gert Fröbe and Terry-Thomas.

Frankenstein Created Woman (1967)

(Thursday 31 October, 3pm)

Baron Frankenstein has acquired the dead body of a woman but lacks the means to bring it to life. He finds success by transplanting the soul of a killer into the corpse, with predictably gruesome results. Hammer horror, starring Peter Cushing, Thorley Walters, Susan Denberg and Robert Morris.



**SKY 110, VIRGIN 124,
TALKTALK 310, NOW TV**

Porridge

(Wednesday 2 October, 10.35am)

Disturbing the Peace When Mr McKay leaves Slade prison, everyone is happy – until his replacement arrives.

Dad's Army

(Friday 4 October, 7pm)

The Royal Train Watch out, Mainwaring's men are about! The platoon provides a guard of honour for a royal train passing through Walmington.



**FREEVIEW/YOUVIEW/BT/
TALKTALK 20, SKY 143,
VIRGIN 130, FREESAT 158**

London's Burning

(Thursday 3 October, 2pm) Drama with the team from Blackwall Fire Station. Tragedy follows for Blue Watch when a crew filming a pop promo set off a massive blaze in a disused factory.

London's Burning

(Friday 4 October, 2pm)

Recall is rushed to hospital as the factory fire rages. But there is worse to follow for the Blue Watch crew.



**FREEVIEW/YOUVIEW/BT/
TALKTALK 27, SKY 155,
VIRGIN 129, FREESAT 159**

Hornby: A Model World

(Tuesday 1 October, 6.10am)

Coronation Coach Hornby prepares for a right royal year with a miniature 1930s classic Coronation train including the elegant beavertail observation carriage.

Bangers & Cash: Restoring Classics

(Thursday 3 October, 9pm) The Restoring Classics team set out on a pre-war challenge with a 1939 three-wheeled Morgan F4 – and aptly named Russ Storer from MG Mecca is still keen to take it on.



Watch Dave, U&W, U&Yesterday and U&Drama shows on demand with U (u.co.uk) and catch up on your favourite programmes.



Channels may be unavailable in certain regions. If you are having trouble viewing channels, go to freeview.co.uk/freeview-channel-checker or call the Freeview Advice Line on 03456 50 50 50 (Mondays to Fridays, 9am-5pm).



BRITAIN NOW

TOPICAL SNIPPETS FROM AROUND THE NATION

From Scrap to Skills

The restoration of a steam locomotive that spent almost 25 years in a scrapyard has been boosted thanks to a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The £151,200 grant will allow the 2874 Trust (2874trust.org) to develop the engineering skills of existing volunteers and attract and train a new generation to help secure heritage skills for the future. The development of these skills uses the restoration of former Great Western Railway locomotive 2874, based at the Toddington workshops of the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway (GWSR), as the training platform. A variety of work projects will concentrate on teaching and developing the skills particularly required for boiler restoration.



The former GWR steam locomotive 2874, which spent almost 25 years in a scrapyard, is being restored at the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Steam Railway.

School's In

A Grade II* listed Sunday school building, which sits alongside a popular church and arts venue, has been awarded a grant of £1.3 million from The National Lottery Heritage Fund. Essential repairs have begun on The Sunday School, adjacent to Union Chapel (unionchapel.org.uk), a Grade I-listed Gothic Revival chapel in Islington, north London which has hosted concerts by the likes of Amy Winehouse, Adele, Damon Albarn and Elton John. In addition to a new roof, thermal insulation and a more efficient heating system, a further grant of £150K from City Bridge Foundation – London's biggest



independent charity funder – will provide new wheelchair accessible facilities and a loop system. An archive of Union Chapel's 200-year legacy will be created and, once reopened, The Sunday School will be a vibrant lively community space for workshops, events, activities, meetings, and an up close and personal music and arts programme.

Essential work has begun on the Grade II* listed Sunday School, part of the popular Union Chapel church, music venue and drop-in centre in Islington, north London.

Closer to the Edge

Archaeologists from the National Trust and Oxford Archaeology have completed work to restore the profile of Britain's oldest chalk figure, the Uffington White Horse in Oxfordshire.

Archaeological work last year proved that parts of the 3,000-year-old chalk figure have narrowed over time. To return the 111-metre-long horse to its typical profile, archaeologists have carefully cut the encroaching turf back to the estimated original edge and redistributed some of the top layer of chalk on the figure. Soil samples from the lowest layers of the figure were taken to see if they can accurately date its creation. Samples taken

in the 1990s revealed the horse to be Britain's oldest chalk figure, but as dating techniques have improved there is an opportunity to refine the date even further and the results are expected later this year.



Having proved that the Uffington White Horse had narrowed over time, archaeologists worked to restore the 3,000-year-old chalk figure to its former glory.

Crowning Glory

A 3D model of Robert the Bruce's face has gone on display at Dunfermline Abbey. Produced from a cast of the king of Scots' skull, the 3D reconstruction is the most realistic likeness of Robert the Bruce to be produced to date. Created as part of a collaboration between the University of Glasgow and Liverpool John Moores University Face Lab, the model was produced using a combination of historical research and scientific analysis with advances in facial reconstruction techniques. The team used a 3D laser scanner to scan the cast of Robert the Bruce's skull held at Hunterian Museum, which allowed the team to accurately establish the muscle formation from the positions of the skull bones. Using CGI technology, realistically textured skin was then layered over the muscle structure. The nose is the least accurate feature of this facial depiction due to the bone deterioration.

Historians have long debated whether Robert the Bruce suffered

from leprosy. The team created two versions of the digital reconstruction, one without leprosy and one with a mild representation of leprosy. For the 3D physical model, only the version showing no visible signs of leprosy was portrayed.

Dr Martin MacGregor, senior lecturer in history at the University of Glasgow, who conceived the model after the discovery of Richard III's skeleton in Leicester in 2012, said: "In a lifetime of only 55 years, Robert Bruce achieved the impossible



Based on a 3D laser scan of Robert the Bruce's skull, the reconstruction is the most realistic likeness of the king to be produced to date.

and restored peace and freedom to a war-torn and colonised kingdom. Contemporary sources tell us much about his remarkable life, but virtually nothing about his appearance.

"This is what persuaded a team of historians, museum curators, geneticists, forensic scientists and medical artists to combine to create a new 3D depiction of the head of the hero-king, based upon the skull-cast taken from a skeleton in a tomb discovered within the ruins of Dunfermline Abbey in 1818. The head is dressed in a helmet surmounted by a crown, as worn by Bruce at his most famous victory, the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314. 750 years after his birth in 1274, it is fitting that Dunfermline Abbey, where Robert Bruce was buried in 1329, should host an exhibition which brings us face-to-face with Scotland's greatest monarch."

The model will be on show at Dunfermline Abbey until Saturday 7 December, and is complemented by a series of events taking place across Historic Environment Scotland. For further information and to book tickets, go to historicenvironment.scot/bruce



In the **November Issue** of
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The Good Old Days

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Thank You for the Days

Jon Askew remembers Kirsty MacColl

Left: Kirsty MacColl pictured in Chicago in 1995. Right: A memorial bench, installed in Soho Square in 2001, makes reference to one of Kirsty MacColl's best loved songs.



Had her life not been so tragically cut short, this year would have seen Kirsty MacColl reach her 65th birthday. As one of Britain's most celebrated, and possibly most underrated, singer-songwriters, this gives us the opportunity to celebrate the glory of her life as well as reflect on her shockingly early death.

Born in Croydon, south London, on 10 October 1959, Kirsty was the daughter of renowned folk musician Ewan MacColl and dancer Jean Newlove. Coming from a musical family, it's no surprise that she began performing and, in 1978, joined a local punk band which brought her to the attention of Stiff Records. This influential record label signed her as a solo artist where she joined a roster of talent that included Elvis Costello, Ian Dury and the Damned.

Her debut single, *They Don't Know*, was released in 1979 and achieved moderate success at the time, but became hugely successful four years later when the comedian Tracey Ullman's cover version, with backing vocals supplied by Kirsty, made the Top 10 in both the UK and US.

Kirsty quickly moved on from Stiff Records to Polydor and released her first album, *Desperate Character*, which included the hit single *There's a Guy Works Down the Chip Shop Swears He's Elvis*. This song highlighted her poignant and observational but often witty lyrics that were delivered in her endearingly streetwise yet vulnerable style.

She went on to record four more solo albums and had several other chart hits, including *Walking Down Madison*, co-written with her close friend, Smiths guitarist Johnny Marr, and cover versions of Billy Bragg's *A New England* (including an extra verse Bragg wrote especially for her) and *Days*, originally a hit for the Kinks.

Her body of work as a singer-songwriter appealed to lovers of many musical styles, spanning new wave, folk, country, pop and rock. Having been

married to acclaimed record producer Steve Lillywhite, she also contributed vocals to several albums produced by him for a range of artists including the Rolling Stones, Talking Heads, the Smiths, Simple Minds and Happy Mondays, proving herself to be a true crossover artist who was comfortable in any genre.

But her most famous collaboration came, of course, in 1987 when she duetted with Shane MacGowan on the Pogues' *Fairytale of New York*, that perennial festive favourite that even people who generally hate Christmas songs agree is a classic. So perfect is her performance on that song, it's amazing to think that the female vocal part was originally intended to be recorded by the Pogues' bass player Cait O'Riordan. Cait, however, left the band before the track had been finalised, leading producer Steve Lillywhite to ask Kirsty to step in and bring her vocal prowess to the final recording. She went on to make it her own and it's been a national favourite ever since, receiving more air play than any other Christmas song in the 21st century. What a wonderful legacy.

Sadly, Kirsty MacColl didn't live to see the enduring success of that great record as her life ended in tragic circumstances at the ridiculously young age of 41. While holidaying in Mexico in December 2000, she was diving in a designated safe area of the Cozumel National Marine Park when a speedboat entered the restricted area and sped towards her party. Having heroically pushed her two sons to safety, she was unable to make her own way clear before the boat struck, killing her instantly.

Her personality and her talent live on in the music she left behind, and one of the most touching tributes to her is located in London's Soho Square. In 2001, a memorial bench was unveiled near the southern entrance gate of this picturesque little park and bears a plaque inscribed with lyrics from the song she named after this charming location, which was released on her album *Titanic Days*.

The song tells a sad story of growing old while waiting for the return of a lost love to celebrate her birthday at an empty bench in Soho Square. It was always a fans' favourite, and every year they gather together at the bench and sing in celebration of her life. This takes place on the Sunday nearest her birthday and so fits perfectly with the lyrics and the spirit of the song.

Although the bench isn't particularly easy to find, it really is worth taking the trouble to locate it and enjoy this simple but immensely touching memorial in such a beautiful spot that somehow manages to be amazingly tranquil while being just a stone's throw away from the mayhem of Oxford Street.

And I'm sure Kirsty MacColl would have loved it there. 🇬🇧

Rock & Stroll: A Walk Around London's Greatest Hits by Jon Askew is available from Amazon.



Photograph: (Kirsty) Creative Commons/K8 Fan

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Derby & Moan

A trip to Derby could haunt you for a lifetime says **Andrew Wilson**

Derby might not be the first place you would immediately associate with Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Transylvania, certainly. Whitby, without question. But Derby? Yet this is the city where the first theatrical adaptation of Stoker's novel was staged, and where the renowned actor Bela Lugosi finally decided to put a metaphorical stake through the heart of the Count Dracula he helped to create.

It's also a city where there's a strong whiff of "dark tourism". But, for all its "ghoulies, ghosties, long-leggety beasties, and things that go bump in the night", it's the recent revelations about *Dracula* that have helped Derby to hit the headlines. Two former theatres helped forge major connections to one of English literature's most infamous characters, and now Derby is understandably keen to mark the centenary of the world premiere of the first licensed adaptation of *Dracula*. All of which makes for an especially fascinating story, especially at a time when Halloween approaches.

Author Bram Stoker died in 1912 and, 12 years later, his widow, Florence, agreed to a proposal for a stage version of *Dracula* from Irish actor and playwright Hamilton Deane, who had always been a fan of the novel.

This was to be the first licensed adaptation of Bram Stoker's 1897 book, and, within a month, Deane had adapted the Gothic epic into a stage play and had also transformed Count Dracula from an evil monster into the character we all picture today: suave, sophisticated and charming, wearing evening dress and cloak. It was the look adapted by Hollywood, and which went on to become synonymous with the character.

In the play, Abraham Van Helsing investigates the mysterious illness of a young woman, Lucy Seward, with the help of her father and fiancé. He discovers she is the victim of Count Dracula, a powerful vampire feeding on her blood. When they find him, they kill him with a stake through the heart.

Deane played Van Helsing, while Edmund Burke played Dracula. The

Count Dracula outside England's first factory, the Silk Mill, which now houses Derby's Museum of Making.

play opened its three-night run at the Grand Theatre in Derby on 15 May 1924. With Florence Stoker herself seated in the audience, the play was well received. Burke gained credit for a performance which even saw him "disappear" at the close of the third scene – something one local newspaper described as "ingenious stagecraft". The play itself went on to enjoy a successful tour in England after its Derby premiere.

The Grand Theatre had opened on 25 March 1886 with a production of *Rip Van Winkle*. Only a few weeks after that, however, a fire gutted much of the building. Adding to Derby's claim to have more ghosts lurking in its backstreets than any other town or city in Britain, local lore has it that the two men killed in that fire still haunt the building to this day.



Left: The Dracula stage play returned to Derby in 1951, with Bela Lugosi reprising the role of Count Dracula for the last time. Right: Now a crazy golf centre, the former Grand Theatre, Derby presented the first theatrical adaptation of Dracula in May 1924.

It is somehow fitting that Derby is also the home of Richard Felix, former presenter of TV's *Most Haunted*, who now guides visitors through the city and introduces them to the scenes of some chilling episodes in history: England's final hanging, drawing and quartering being one, and the last pressing to death in this country, another.

All the ingredients for a truly hair-raising visit are available here. Take, for example, the chance to join one of Felix's renowned guided ghost tours (richardfelix.co.uk/ghost-walks) that feature stories of witchcraft, execution and treason. Derby, explains Felix, lies at the geographical and historical crossroads of Britain. As such, it truly is "the dead centre of England".

A trip here will introduce visitors to some terrible tales, including that of executioner John Crossland, a criminal who earned a pardon for carrying out the sentence of death on his own father and brother, and whose spirit roams restlessly around the cathedral. Or poor Alice Wheeldon who is said to haunt the guildhall. Accused, in 1917, of plotting to murder the prime minister David Lloyd George, she was the victim of a government fabrication because she had been hiding conscientious objectors. After being released, she lived as a recluse and was eventually buried in an unmarked grave.

Elsewhere, St Peter's churchyard was literally filled with the "undead" in the 14th century, when some of the victims of the Black Death who fell into a coma were buried alive; England's first factory, the Silk Mill, which now houses the award-winning Museum of Making (01332 641901, derbymuseums.org/museum-of-making), is "home" to the ghost of a boy killed after being kicked downstairs for not working hard enough; and the cellar of the oldest pub in Derby, Ye Olde Dolphin Inn (01332 389568, [facebook.com/YeOldeDolphinInne](https://www.facebook.com/YeOldeDolphinInne)) – once the site of a doctor's house and dissecting slab – is populated by a poltergeist.

Following its rebuild, the Derby Grand went on to welcome many of the biggest names in British theatre and comedy to its stage. But when its glory days finally came to an end in the 1940s, it was bought by the Coliseum Syndicate and staged its final performance in 1950. Another of the syndicate's theatres, the nearby Hippodrome, took over where the Grand left off.

The original stage version of *Dracula* did eventually reach the West End, in 1927, at London's Little Theatre. It was here the American producer Horace Liveright asked John L Balderston to revise the play for a Broadway production that opened at the Fulton Theatre in New York. It was this production which starred Bela Lugosi in his first major English-speaking role.

Lugosi had been born in 1882, in a region which is now a part of Romania. He moved to the US in 1920 and was cast as Count Dracula seven years later. Lugosi played the count for the next two years and, in his next step towards making the role his own, was chosen as the lead for Universal Pictures' 1931 film adaptation of the play. It was Lugosi's performance in that movie which established a new and everlasting benchmark for all future Draculas.

Having been persuaded to play the part again in 1951, the stage play returned to the UK, very much in the hope of once again making it back into the West End. This time, the tour opened at Brighton's Theatre Royal and reached the Derby Hippodrome on 17 September, with a reporter proclaiming almost breathlessly: "There were moments when even my flesh crept, and I'm hardened to the game."

Lugosi's performances were a hit, the run was also a financial triumph, and everything appeared to be going well. Behind the scenes, however, Lugosi – perhaps "too long in the tooth" – was upset by laughter from audiences during some scenes. Having once stated "Dracula is Hamlet to me", Lugosi was hurt that a more sophisticated audience in the 1950s were failing to take it all as seriously as he was.

By 1951, Lugosi – 68, exhausted, in a low mood – made the decision while



Actor and playwright Hamilton Deane adapted Bram Stoker's *Dracula* for the stage and took the role of Van Helsing.

playing at the Hippodrome in Derby to withdraw from the play. The tour ended the next month. The Hippodrome closed eight years later. But, in the best traditions of theatre, "the show must go on". In 1977, the play enjoyed a brief Broadway revival featuring art designs by Edward Gorey and starring Frank Langella – winning the Tony Award for best revival and leading to another film version, starring the same actor.

Even more importantly, it is Hollywood that has taken the character from the theatre adaptation, rather than the character from the book, on to a global stage. More than 60 *Dracula* films are listed on the Internet Movie Database website. Virtually all of them portray *Dracula* in a way that mirrors the one which Derby first introduced to the world 100 years ago.

So, it's only right and proper that the city which proved to be the starting point of the character's journey from monster to international cultural superstar should now be the focal point for a centenary celebration – involving a whole host of events, workshops, talks, trails, and performances for locals and visitors alike to enjoy.

For some, it will be "fangs, but no fangs". For many others, however, it's going to be nothing short of a megabite. 🇬🇧



THE HAMMER YEARS

John Stoker recalls conversations with film director Roy Ward Baker about his work for Hammer Films

The first time I met Roy Ward Baker was in a Westminster television studio. I was shooting interviews for a documentary on Hammer Films and I was with some of the company's major names. We could only afford two hours of studio time, so I had to move quickly. Roy, who'd worked in television for many years, understood this. "We're not going into overtime are we?" he asked knowing full well how much an extra minute would cost. But we needn't have worried because Roy was a total professional and we wrapped up his interview on time.

Since the interview we had spoken several times on the phone but, a few years later, I took him to lunch at his local pub, the Builder's Arms. I told him my daughter had just been watching *A Night to Remember* (1958), his classic retelling of the Titanic disaster. "James Cameron probably spent more on the catering in his version than we spent on our entire film," Roy reflected. That may well be, but Roy's version stands up

Roy Ward Baker and Marilyn Monroe on the set of *Don't Bother to Knock*, 1952.

remarkably well to the Oscar-winning *Titanic* (1997).

Roy had had a distinguished film directing career in both Britain and Hollywood and coaxed Marilyn Monroe through one of her first roles after being forced to throw her drama coach off the set. His advice to her and other actors was: "You don't have to act the character, you have to be it."

But in the 1960s, Roy began an association with Hammer Films which led him into the fields of science fiction and horror. He never expected this to happen and seemed rather bemused by it all. "They offered me *Quatermass and the Pit*. It was a bloody good script and I jumped at it." But before the 1967 film even hit the screen Hammer was on the phone again.

The company had bought the stage play *The Anniversary* which had had much success in the West End. But the film was in trouble as its star, Bette Davis, had fallen out with the director

and had had him fired. Roy knew her from his time in Hollywood and agreed to take over but with conditions. Roy did not want to use any of the footage that had already been shot. So, the weekend before his first day of shooting he asked for the staircase on the main set to be moved so that any previous shots were useless. Roy started from scratch and brought the troubled production to a satisfactory conclusion.

Hammer then offered him *Moon Zero Two* (1969), a space opera which Roy claimed was ruined by the lack of a decent budget. "The idea was to make a science fiction picture in space. We couldn't and we didn't. End of story."

A different problem occurred on his next Hammer film, *The Vampire Lovers* (1970). "American International, the co-producers, weren't happy with the script and sent a telex saying so but we'd started shooting and I said: 'Sorry old love but the boat's sailed!'" It also marked the first time Roy worked with Peter Cushing. "We sent him the script and I got a letter from him saying: 'Dear Mr Baker, can I come and discuss my role with you?' So, I arranged a meeting and when he arrived his script was covered with notations and he had with him some little water-coloured drawings of what he was going to wear in each scene. And if I'd asked him, he could have probably told me what was in the man's pockets. Such meticulousness, such style."

In the same year Christopher Lee encountered a problem when Roy directed him in *The Scars of Dracula* (1970). As he carried his latest victim towards a door, the actor paused and asked how he was supposed to open it. Roy's solution was easy. "Oh, the doors just open for Dracula just like they do in all the supermarkets!" This time it opened with the help of a technician and a piece of string.

Roy's next outing for Hammer had a most unusual birth. "I was sitting in Elstree having lunch with Brian Clemens and a few others, just chatting about what we could do next. We'd done the Frankensteins and the Draculas. What on earth could we do that was new? Brian said: 'I'll tell you what. Take Dr Jekyll. He drinks the magic potion, he goes into a terrible fit and he turns into a woman.' Everyone thought that was absolutely hilarious, but Brian went back to his office and wrote Dr Jekyll and Sister Hyde and Hammer bought it."

Ralph Bates was cast as the troubled doctor but who would play Sister



Produced with a budget of £500,000, 1958's *A Night to Remember*, Roy Ward Baker's retelling of the Titanic disaster still stands up remarkably well.

Hyde? The producers interviewed many actresses until James Carreras, the head of Hammer, introduced them to Martine Beswick whose features were striking, and Roy recalled: "We just changed her hair style and the resemblance to Ralph was astonishing and she was a good actress with a sense of humour." However, there was a slight height difference between Dr Jekyll and Sister Hyde. This was solved by placing lifts in Ralph's shoes and allowing Martine to wear slippers.

The following year, Roy made three horrors for Hammer's competitor Amicus Productions, one of which, *Asylum*, was an award winner at a French film festival. But British cinemagoers seemed to be growing tired of horror as box office returns were diminishing. The current craze was for martial arts films coming from Hong Kong. Michael Carreras had now taken over Hammer from his father and had arranged a co-production deal with Shaw Brothers, owners of the largest studio in Hong Kong. The result was *The Legend of the Seven Golden Vampires* (1974), which saw Peter Cushing's Van Helsing hunting down Count Dracula with the help of a family of martial artists. What could go wrong? Plenty.

Roy discovered the Shaw studio was a large collection of tin shacks but he admitted they had some wonderful standing sets. "If we'd known about them, we could have written them into the script. The problem was that we didn't know how Shaw Brothers worked and they didn't know how we worked.

There was a lack of communication. They just didn't understand why we recorded sound because they shot silent, created a music and effects track and dropped in whatever language they wanted to because they distributed their films in so many countries. But we insisted on recorded sound and brought over a crew who worked in dreadful conditions."

That wasn't Roy's only difficulty. "You have a sequence in the script where you have a caravan crossing the desert. Well Hong Kong is about the size of the Isle of Wight. There ain't no desert, so we shot very near to the Chinese border. There are no caravans and no horses. The only horses that were available were racehorses and when they put them between the shafts the animals were having none of it."

The movie did very well in Britain but Roy reminded me that it did even better in south-east Asia. "I think it made the Shaws a small fortune in Singapore alone. I've never seen the film since it opened. I've never really wanted to. It wasn't a happy experience."

But for the most part Roy looked back on his Hammer years with fondness as he enjoyed working with their crews. "That was the good thing. We were used to working with each other. Hammer always used people who knew what they were doing because we had to finish on time."

Roy was one of the most practical and most imaginative directors you could ever meet. He died at the age of 93, on 5 October 2010, but his work still brightens our screens. 🇬🇧



FOOD & DRINK

TASTES GONE BY AND THE FLAVOURS OF TODAY

Feeding the Trolls

Simon Stabler rewrites the history of the potato crisp

With premium subscribers to certain social media platforms getting a share of the advertising revenue, it's little wonder that there is so much nonsense on the internet. It doesn't have to be accurate or decent, but as long as a post gets people clicking on it, liking, or responding to it, then the money comes rolling in.

There's a plethora of nostalgia accounts out there which have it easy by posting a photograph of a classic toy, TV series or foodstuff, with the word "remember?" and the messages come flooding in. Elsewhere, there are inane questions such as: "Who remembers buying fish and chips on a Friday night?" (er, me, on Friday night), and other posts that have a list of things that children did in a certain decade which invariably ends with the phrase: "And we turned out all right."

One list that really got my blood up was titled Eating in the 50s, which featured such gems as: "Pasta was not eaten", "Curry was surname/Indian restaurants were only found in India" and "Seaweed was not a recognised food." Unsurprisingly, these "facts" were countered by mentions of Heinz Spaghetti and Quaker Quick Macaroni, that the UK's first Indian restaurant opened in 1810, and that the original poster had clearly never heard of that great Welsh delicacy, laverbread.

Another gem: "Crisps were plain; the only choice we had was whether to put the salt on or not," was quite rightly met with comments about cheese and onion being launched in 1954, firstly in Ireland by Tayto and, later the same year, in the UK by Walkers, the Leicester-based firm which had introduced ready salted crisps in 1948.

However, neither Tayto nor Walkers can claim credit for introducing



Clockwise: Blue paper twists of salt could be found in "with salt" bags of Queens Road Crisps. In business from 1936 to 1937, Western Crisps was probably the first company to manufacture flavoured crisps. Queens Road Crisps sold flavoured crisps at least two years before fellow Leicestershire-based rivals Walkers.

flavoured crisps, with smaller firms already offering such choice. Perhaps the earliest of these was the short-lived Western Crisps of Plymouth, which offered cheese, curry, onion, tomato, and cheese and celery flavoured crisps. Founded in August 1936, the outlay must have been exorbitant because by September of the following year, a liquidation sale was announced of "the whole of the newly-installed plant and equipment," which included potato peelers by the Peerless Electrical Manufacturing Co.

Slightly more successful was Queens Road Crisps, a Loughborough-based company, which was established in 1954 by Mr and Mrs Gordon Jones, who had first started selling their Queens Brand "cheese or onion flavoured potato crisps" from their home on Queen's Road in 1952. Like Smith's, Queens Road Crisps also sold crisps that came with a twist of salt.

Many Loughburians have fond memories of the crisps, which were available in local shops and pubs, and many recall being able to get free samples if they stood outside the gates of its Russell Street factory long enough.

While Walkers crisps trebled its sales every year between 1962 and 1970, Queens Road Crisps couldn't "by reason of its liabilities continue its business" and in 1967 was voluntarily wound up.

Eight years earlier, there had been a fire in the Russell Street factory, after one of the large fryers flashed alight, damaging 140 sq ft of ceiling boards. If it wasn't for the fire brigade, the flames could have spread to another 20 pans, each containing around 15 gallons of nut oil, and another 135 gallons of the oil in three metals drums. However, the author of Eating in the 50s, wouldn't think that was possible, having confidently but erroneously claimed that "oil was for lubricating, fat was for cooking."

Doff Your Cap

A beer drinker's desire to resurrect the memory of his family's brewery came to fruition thanks to Britain's oldest brewing site. Peter Sutcliffe, whose maternal grandfather was Stanley Robson, managing director of the former Hull-based Moors and Robsons Breweries, was delighted when Sambrook's John Hatch agreed to brew a version of M&R Red Cap Ale. John, who continued to brew beer at the Ram Brewery, Wandsworth between the departure of his former employer, Young's & Co, in 2006 and the arrival of his current employer in 2021 – maintaining the site's record as a place of brewing since at least 1532 – used a recipe from 1955 to produce the 4.1% beer which was last brewed in the early 1960s.

With the help of brewing historian Ron Pattinson, who was sure that most Yorkshire ales had 5% flaked



Peter Sutcliffe enjoyed a revival of Red Cap Ale, a beer brewed by his family's firm, Moors and Robsons Breweries, until its closure in the early 1960s.

maize in them at that time, John brewed with ingredients as close to the original as possible, with Yorkshire pale malt, sourced

from Thomas Fawcett maltings of Castleford, West Yorkshire. East Kent Goldings made the bulk of the hops, alongside another old-fashioned hop, Admiral to achieve the bitterness specification.

Brewed for Peter's 70th birthday party, which was held in the Sambrook's Brewery Tap (020 7228 0598, sambrooksbrewery.co.uk), the brew went down well and, despite being rationed, ran out before all his guests could drink it. Another batch was brewed for Sambrook's Beer by the River beer festival, held at the brewery from 5-7 September. Speaking ahead of the three-day event, Peter, the Campaign for Real Ale's brewery liaison officer for Sambrook's, wondered if the beer would "last into Friday?

Unlikely with me and my Camra friends back for some more."

Winkles at the Weekend

In 1950s Whitechapel, Saturday lunch would be at the nearest pie and mash shop, complete with the white liquor which I never did grow fond of. The tiled shop with wooden tables and benches was in the nearby market, Roman Road, where my mum would often buy eels for Saturday evening as a change from egg and chips. The eels were alive and swimming around on the stall and she would point at the ones she wanted which were chopped and put into a bag, still wriggling. Quite a violent way to buy your dinner. Jellyed eels were an occasional option, but, again, I never became a fan of the jelly – although the eels tasted better than expected.

Sunday mornings were spent prepping the roast lunch, usually what with hindsight was quite a fatty joint of lamb – podding the peas (which could be done sitting outside the front door when it was sunny), peeling potatoes, washing the cabbage, mixing the Yorkshire puddings, stirring and stirring the gravy, a very lengthy faff overall, although I



Dee enjoyed pie and mash but was never fond of the liquor.

didn't mind podding the peas because they could be, and were, edible when raw. Dad would disappear to the local pub for a pre-lunch drink, often having the lengthily prepared meal kept warm in the oven where it didn't always look that desirable when he took it out. Memories of over-boiled cabbage also linger.

Sunday tea was usually winkles (also bought at the market on Saturday) with

bread and butter, often accompanied by well-salted celery sticks occasionally filled with cream cheese, as a treat. The best part about the winkles was sticking the little brown "caps" on your face as a substitute for beauty spots. Although they could be a bit on the gritty side, this was par for the course, and they were infinitely preferable to the too-chewy whelks which sometimes appeared.

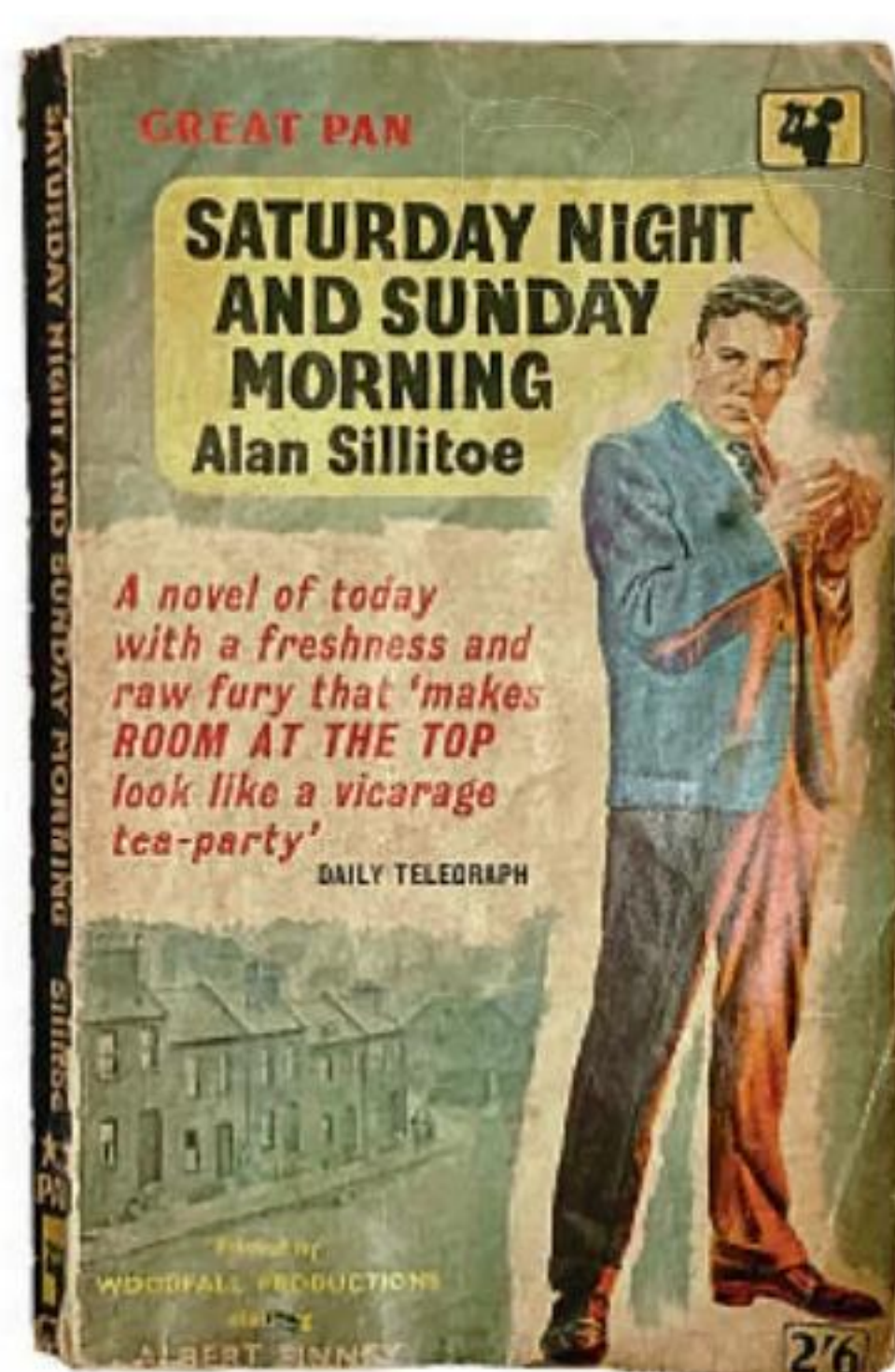
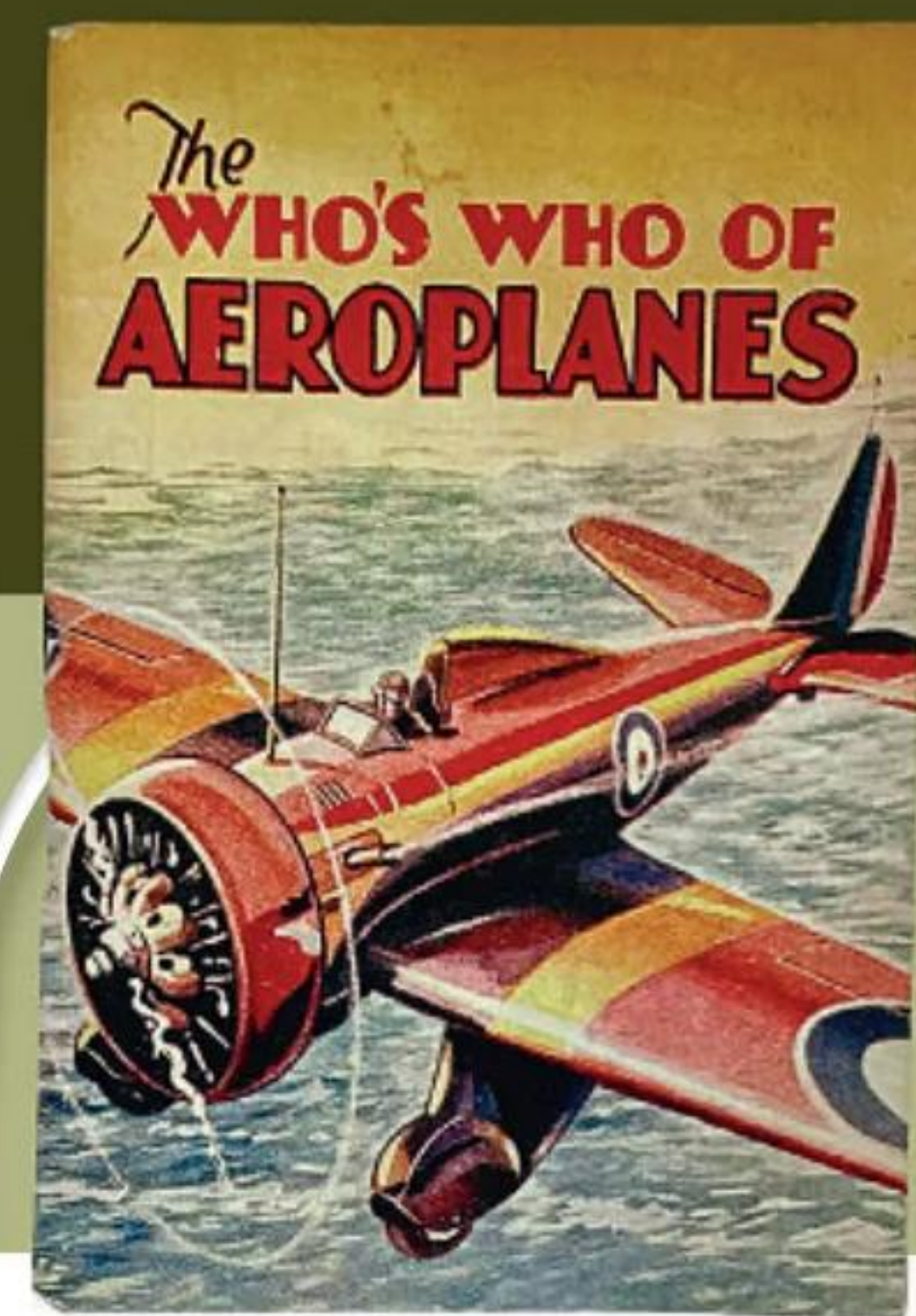
My other memories of food in the East End at that time were familiarity: Monday was always shepherd's pie, Tuesdays were always some sort of stew or hotpot with the last of the leftovers from Sunday, Wednesdays were sausage or frankfurter and chips cooked in last weekend's fat which had congealed in the frying pan, Thursdays was bread and dripping or toad in the hole if there were some sausages left over from Wednesday, and Friday was, of course fish and chips brought home wrapped in newspaper saturated in salt and vinegar – the highlight of the week, apart from, perhaps, the winkles.

Dee Gordon, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex

If you know of a regional delicacy that has all but died out or would like to share your food and drink memories, then let us know via info@bestofbritishmag.co.uk or at the address given on page 4.

TREASURES *In the* ATTIC

Brian Howes unearths some nostalgic collectables that might be discarded as worthless junk but actually have a value to today's collectors. Can you estimate what each object might be worth and pick out which one is the big-money item? **The values are printed on page 72.**



1 Angry young men

First published in 1958, *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* told the story of 22-year-old Arthur Seaton who worked at the Raleigh cycle factory in Nottingham. Its author, Alan Sillitoe, was one of a group of writers who became known as the "angry young men". This Pan edition was published in 1960 when the novel was released as a film.

3 Great giveaways

This great little "Who's Who of Aeroplanes" was published by DC Thompson & Son Ltd and given away as a gift with *The Skipper* comic in the 1930s. Comic giveaways were always a great method of boosting the circulation of comics right up until the 1980s. *The Skipper* was published from 1930 until 1941.

2 Snap happy

Who remembers the flashy little Kodak 100 Instamatic camera? I certainly do and still have hundreds of the family snaps I took with it. It was designed by Frank A Zagara in 1963, revolutionising amateur photography, its 126 format film cartridge being so easy to load. In the first seven years of production, 70 million Instamatic were sold.



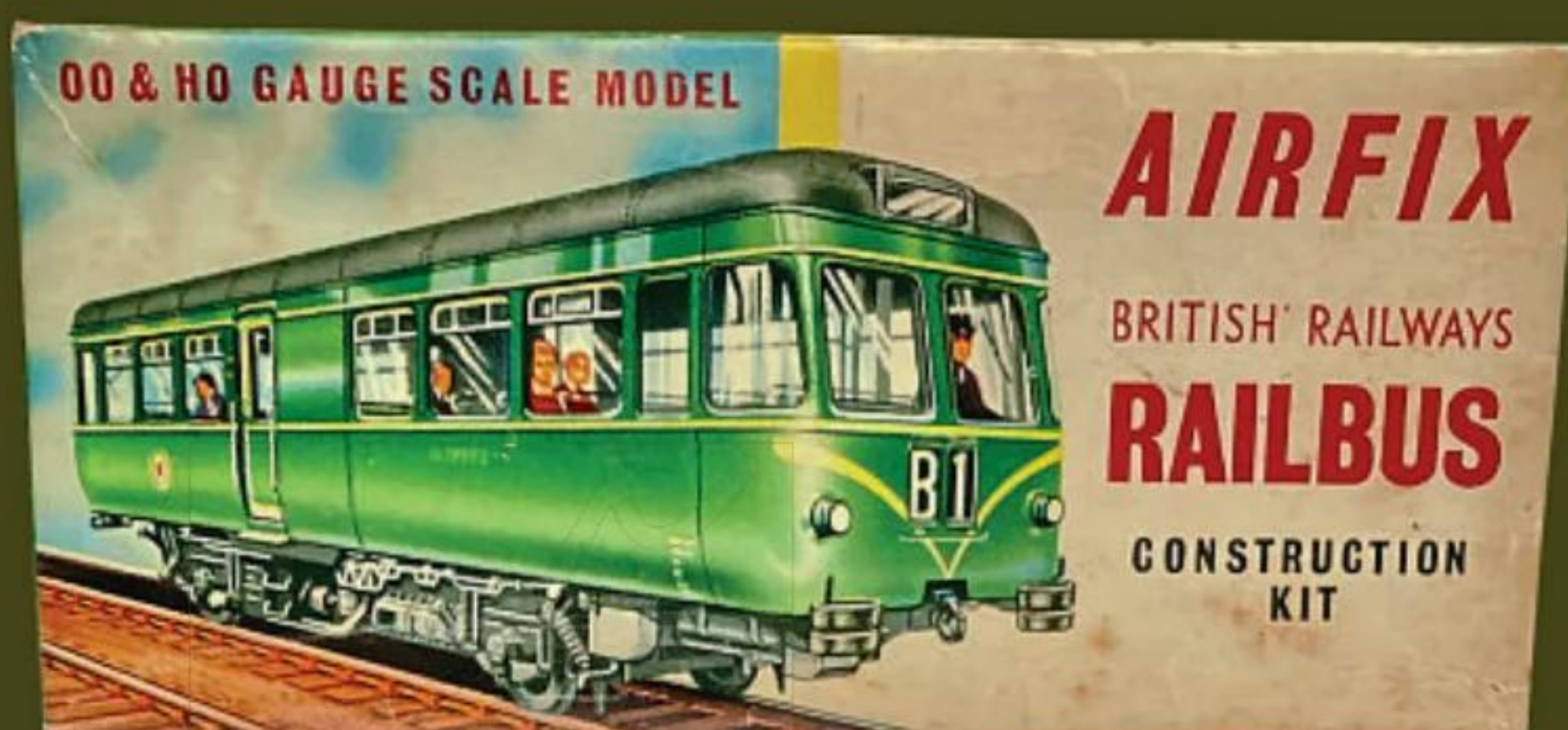
4 A bumpy ride

This lovely Edwardian postcard shows an old solid-tyred Rambler motor coach about to depart on an outing somewhere along the Hampshire coastline. Its destination remains unknown but you can bet it was a very bumpy ride wherever it went and the passengers would surely be hoping that no rain was forecast.

5 Bird song

This *Little Bird* was the third single to be recorded by 1960s pop pin-up girl Marianne Faithfull. It was released in May 1965 on the Decca label and remained in the hit parade for 10 weeks, reaching No 6. Her first hit, *As Tears Go By*, was written by Jagger, Richards and Oldham and was also recorded by the Rolling Stones.





6 A bus on rails

One of the highlights of summer for me as a child were our excursions up and down the wonderful river Exe estuary on board British Railways diesel rail cars, or DMUs as they are known to us trainspotters. This lovely old Airfix kit of a splendid Park Royal Railbus first appeared in British toy shops during the late 1950s.

8 Super tankers

There's no doubt that these big Foden eight-wheelers were the kings of the Dinky Supertoy range. They became available in the late 1940s as the Meccano factory in Liverpool returned to full production. These lovely Mobilgas tankers entered British toy shops in 1953 and this one still has its original box. Collectors need to be aware of reproductions.



10 Speedway Stars

Leo McAuliffe was born in Swansea in 1933. His first professional speedway club was Eastbourne Eagles after which he starred for many other clubs including Birmingham Brummies, Bradford Tudors and Southampton. These plastic badges were sold outside speedway stadiums in the 1950s for sixpence each.



11 Hello sailor

These diecast metal signs were miniature replicas of a range of different advertisements once to be found on railway station platforms. They were produced by Meccano to complement its Hornby-Dublo train layouts. Made by WD & HO Wills of Bristol, Capstan was one of the most popular brands of cigarettes in the 1930s.



7 Ups and downs

We all remember that lovely yellow submarine made famous by the Beatles, but who remembers the little yellow submarines that Kellogg's tucked inside cereal packets in the 1960s? How on earth did this one survive still inside its original cellophane packet? Just a pinch of baking powder and down they went before emerging again like magic.



9 Young guns

This original pin badge dates back to 1982 when Wham! burst on to the British pop music scene with Young Guns (Go for It!). Reaching No 3 in the British hit parade, it remained in the charts for 11 weeks. George Michael and Andrew Ridgeley had been school friends prior to forming Wham!



12 Songs for sixpence

It is the nostalgic cover artwork of these old sixpenny song sheets that make them so attractive to collectors today. The words and music to this wartime classic were composed by Jimmy Kennedy and published by the Peter Maurice Music Co of London. Jimmy Kennedy also wrote the hugely popular song Red Sails in the Sunset.





STERLING WORK

Michael Foley traces the history of a weapon with a very long lifespan

Many of the men who served in the British forces after 1940 would have been familiar with the Sterling submachine gun. It was a weapon introduced when Britain was short of arms during World War Two and dependent on aid from the US.

The use of the weapon did not end with the 1939-45 conflict and the Sterling story had only just begun. When Colonel H Jones won his posthumous Victoria Cross in the Falklands War, he died holding a Sterling. The weapon had a very long lifespan.

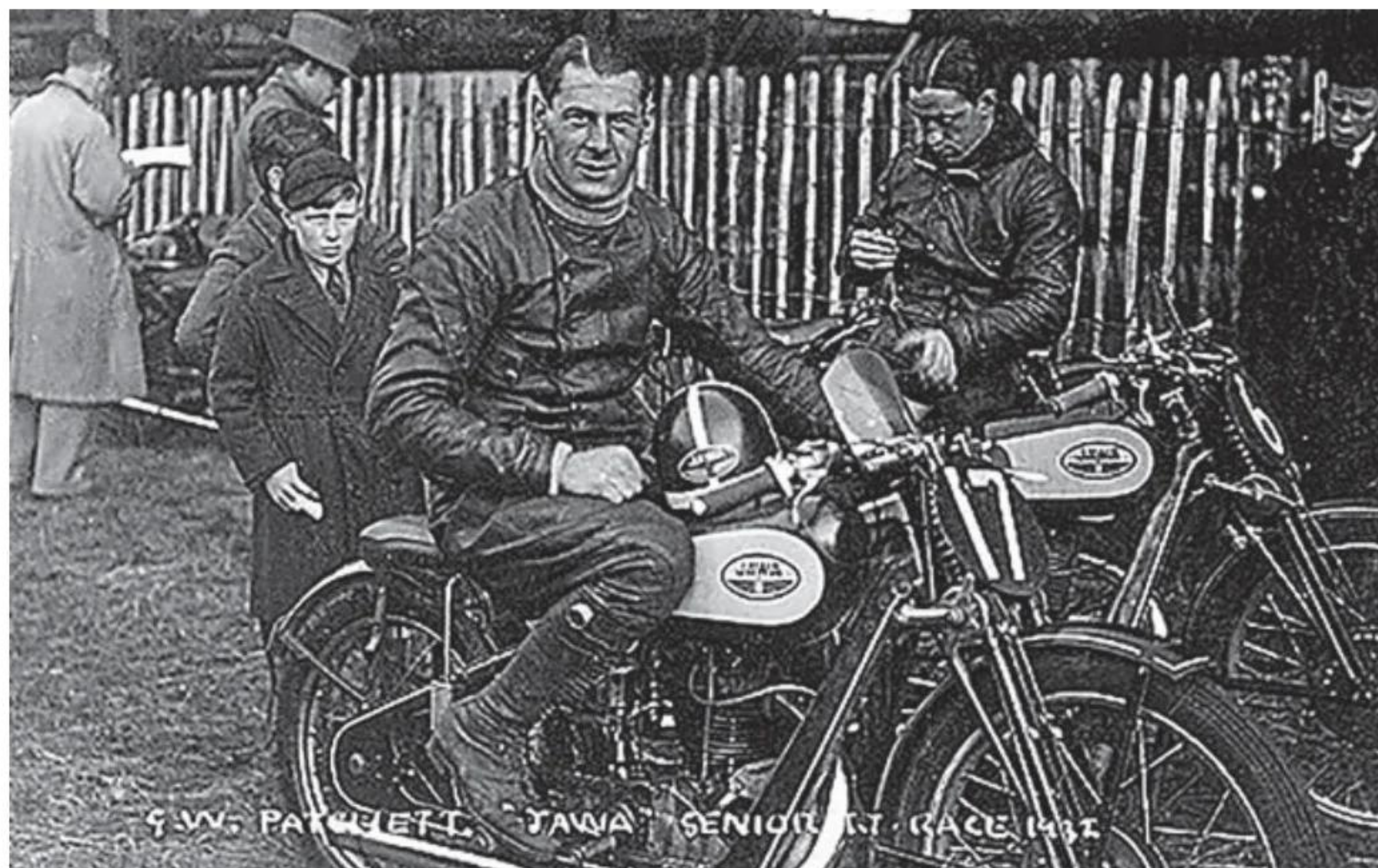
The origins of Sterling guns under their various guises are based on an event that could have come straight out of a Dennis Wheatley wartime espionage thriller and was ordered by the top men in the British government of the time.

It involved smuggling a gun expert and secret plans out of occupied Europe under the nose of the Germans to be put to use in the Sterling factory and provide Britain's forces with a weapon to be relied upon.

Sterling Telephone and Electric Company bought four acres of industrial land in Dagenham, Essex in 1909, well before the large council estate that eventually covered the area was even thought of. The last thing the company owners planned to make was guns. They produced crystal radio sets with headphones. It was a strange coincidence, considering the company's later production, that the site it took over had previously been owned by the Morris Aiming Tube and Ammunition Company Ltd, which had made barrels for the .303 Short magazine Lee-Enfield rifle.

Used by British forces from World War Two until the 1990s, the Sterling Submachine Gun was used in conflicts including the Aden emergency.

Until the Ford Motor Company arrived close by on the bank of the Thames in 1931, Sterling was the largest employer in Dagenham. It had its own power station, gas works, print shop and fire station and was a progressive company that looked after its workforce with a first-aid room, canteen and recreation hall. There were parking spaces for 700 bicycles as working men at the time did not run a car. Employees mainly came from the new Becontree Estate, built by the Greater London Council after World War One, at the time the largest council estate in the world.



Left: The Sterling workforce grew enormously during World War Two to more than 1,400 who were mainly women. Right: Gun expert George Patchett, seen here on a Czech-made JAWA at the 1932 Isle of Man TT, was smuggled out of Czechoslovakia just as the country was invaded by Germany. Below: Produced and sold all over the world, the Sterling submachine gun was seen as a reliable weapon.

By 1932, it had become Sterling Works Dagenham Limited and was making electric lights, gas and oil lamps. It wasn't only members of the public that were conscripted into service. As the war approached, companies were directed by the government as to what they should manufacture and for Sterling it was the origin of an item that was to dominate production for the next 40 years.

Britain had a very limited stock of submachine guns at the beginning of the war and many of these came from the US. As money became short it was decided to produce the guns at home. The original proposal was they would be made by Alfred Mann & Company in nearby Romford but then the plan was changed, and the contract went to Sterling.

George Lanchester had been producing armoured cars in his own factory but had been seconded to Sterling and was responsible for producing the first machine guns which were copies of the German Schmeisser gun. Some 50,000 of this type were produced, most of which went to the Royal Navy.

Lanchester was an engineer and what the company needed was an expert on machine guns. The Lanchester guns had been designed in the 1920s and were by this time out of date. George Patchett had more experience of making guns but had been working in Czechoslovakia when war broke out. Acting on orders from Winston Churchill, Patchett and his French wife were smuggled out of Czechoslovakia just as the country was invaded by Germany.


Patchett and Lanchester supposedly did not get on when working at Dagenham. Patchett had, though, brought drawings of more up-to-date weapons with him. The first Patchett


guns were produced in 1942 and went through several adaptations. The Sterling workforce grew enormously during the war to more than 1,400 who were mainly women. Keeping up their good treatment of the workforce, the firm employed an onsite hairdresser as the women were working such long hours.


The first real Sterling gun came after the war and was produced in the 1950s which was in fact the Patchett Mk III but the name was changed to the Sterling submachine gun. It sold all over the world and was seen as a reliable weapon. However, the company went into decline in the 1960s and was sold to Land and General. Production was moved to a much smaller factory a few miles away. The original site was broken up and sold. In 1966, the government decided the Sterling guns were to be made by another company. Sterling sued

the government and received a large settlement for breach of contract.

Sterling later moved back to its original site but was housed in a much smaller factory. It kept its belief in being a strong family firm. The company went through various owners until 1989 when it was taken over by British Aerospace which shut the firm down. Despite this, the guns were still in use by the army into the 1990s and were known to be reliable in all weathers. Some of the guns were older than the men using them.

Although the factory no longer exists, its name does – the original site is known as the Sterling Industrial Estate. The name now means little to the local population as the history of what was produced there is unknown to them. The Sterling, though, was a weapon that played a large part in the many conflicts of the 20th century and has become part of military history. 





STERLING Sub-Machine Gun 9 mm.

THE STERLING FOR CANADA

The Canadian Government recently announced in Ottawa that the Sterling has been adopted by the Canadian Armed Forces and will be manufactured in Canada for this purpose. This decision was reached after a long and exhaustive series of trials including tests under the worst operational conditions of sand and mud, and at the coldest temperatures in the sub-Arctic.

As a result of these trials the Canadians described the Sterling as

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Round the AUCTION HOUSES

Every week at auction houses up and down the country, a varied host of collectables are put up for sale at general and specialist events, offering everything from top-end treasures to more modest items. **David Brown** picks a selection of recent gems that have found new homes, and looks ahead to forthcoming sales.

LOT 46 Lacy Scott & Knight – Toys & Models, 23 August (lskauctioncentre.co.uk)

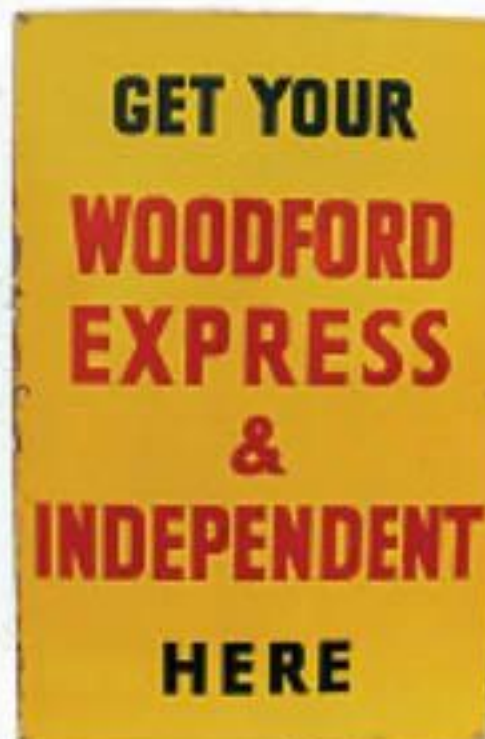
The 4-4-0 Claud Hamilton Class locomotives (named after Great Eastern Railway chairman Lord Claud Hamilton), would once have been a regular sight at Bury St Edmunds station and a 5ins gauge live steam coal-fired model of BR No 62546 certainly proved popular in the recent LSK Collectors' Bury-based sale. Finished in British Railways lined black livery with early BR emblem, the locomotive features fully modelled inside valve gear. The model also features a fully sprung chassis, sideways sprung bogie, hand pump in the tender, two injectors and backhead controls. In need of a clean, the loco had a missing roof panel, loose splashers and while its boiler test certificate was included, this expired back in 2013. A splendid restoration project for a model engineer or a great display item.



SOLD FOR £2,800

LOT 584 GW Railwayana Auctions – Timed Sale, ended 25 August (gwra.co.uk)

Newspapers – national and local – were well represented in GWRA's 900 lot timed auction in late August among the advertising enamels category. Pick of the bunch was a colourful 29ins x 19ins "Get Your Woodford Express & Independent Here" example. A posterboard heading style 20ins x 5ins enamel "Daily Telegraph" was sold for £100, with the same price being paid for a larger two-piece and more wordy "Daily Mail Free Insurance Register Here". Another £100 choice was the even-more wordy 17.5ins x 13ins "The Ocean Accident & Guarantee Corporation Limited Agency Incorporated in England".



SOLD FOR £130

LOT 243 McTears – The Art of the Biscuit Tin – The Lewis Collection, 28 August (mctears.co.uk)

There's a lot more to biscuit tins than you might imagine. Not only are they practical, there is also an artistic aspect to some of the fancier container designs. Excellent examples of this art form were to be found in the single-owner collection of novelty biscuit tins offered for sale by Glasgow auctioneers McTears. DB "Barrie" Lewis built up his collection between 1983 and 2014. A highlight was the circa 1930 Golden Aeroplane tin from William Crawford & Son Ltd, complete with retractable wings for easy storage and with original box, all in fairly good condition for its age, that was estimated at £500-800. A Crumpsall Cream Cracker Van advertising biscuit tin sold for its top



estimate of £800. For collectors with less deep pockets, there were several examples that sold for hammer prices starting at £10 each.

SOLD FOR £900

LOT 3 Comic Book Auctions Ltd – British Comics turn here Artwork, 8 August – 1 September (compalcomics.com)

The first issue of The Beano complete with extras has always been a greatly sought after holy grail among collectors of British comics and there was great expectation in the latest online comic book auction. The cherished copy of Beano No 1 was sold in a live auction back in February 1999 complete with the only known surviving whoopee mask free gift, when it made a hammer price of £6,800. The pre-sale estimate for the recent sale was £18,000-22,000. Lot 3 also included The Beano No 1 Flyer, a copy of The Times newspaper where the previous sale made the front page, an original auction catalogue, plus a copy of The Beano No 2,000, which had the first front cover reprinted on its back page. Copies of The Beano issues No 3, No 6 and No 9 were also included in the latest sale.



SOLD FOR £26,000

COMING UP

LOTS TBA Transport Auctions of London – Sale of Underground, Railwayana, Bus, Tram & Trolleybus Collectables & Memorabilia, 26 October (transportauctionslondon.com)

The usual strong mix of transport-related collectables is promised in TAL's final sale for 2024. At the time of writing, the lots for the October sale were still being collated with the catalogue to appear online in due course. Among the highlights of its most recent online auction on 29 June was a quantity of Great Western Railway Docks & Ports publications, that included nine volumes of large-size books dated 1926, 1927, 1928 (two copies including one in French), 1929, 1932, 1936, 1937 & 1939. There were several issues of Docks of the GWR, plus various publications on the Alexandra (Newport & South Wales) Docks and Railway, Fishguard, the new port for ocean liners and others. The pre-sale estimate was £300-400, but the hammer fell at £900.



When you are placing your bid(s) please be sure about what you are bidding for. Remember to take into account that on top of the hammer price, you will have to pay a buyer's premium (usually with VAT payable on the premium). Also, allow for post and packing with remote bidding.

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Remember the Pirate Radio Stations?

In the summer of 1964, the boring world of British broadcasting was rocked to its foundations by the launch of offshore radio stations Radio Atlanta, Radio Caroline, Radio City and Radio London.

The classic former Trinity House Lightvessel LV18, restored by volunteers over the past 25 years, is a national heritage vessel and on the National Historic Ships Register. She is now open to the public following a recent arson attack and is the last example of a manned Lightship in original condition. See the original cabins, mess room and the lantern that shone for 40 years protecting the mariner in the stormy waters off the British coastline.

On board is the definitive museum of the Offshore Pirate Radio days of the 60's and 70's - including the original Radio London and Caroline microphones as used by Kenny Everett, Tony Blackburn and Johnnie Walker along with other artifacts from the era that changed the face of British Broadcasting forever.

Swing along to the music of those times with the 2 onboard live radio stations which now broadcast to the world and on August 9-11th this year come and meet some of the original DJ's who worked on these Pirate Stations, broadcasting on Radio Mi Amigo for a special weekend!

Radio Mi Amigo and Haven Community Radio - Playing Vinyl Music on board a ship, just like it used to be!

Listen via www.lv18radio.uk



Roger 'Twiggy' Day and Keith Skues







Keith Skues and Stephen 'Foz' Foster

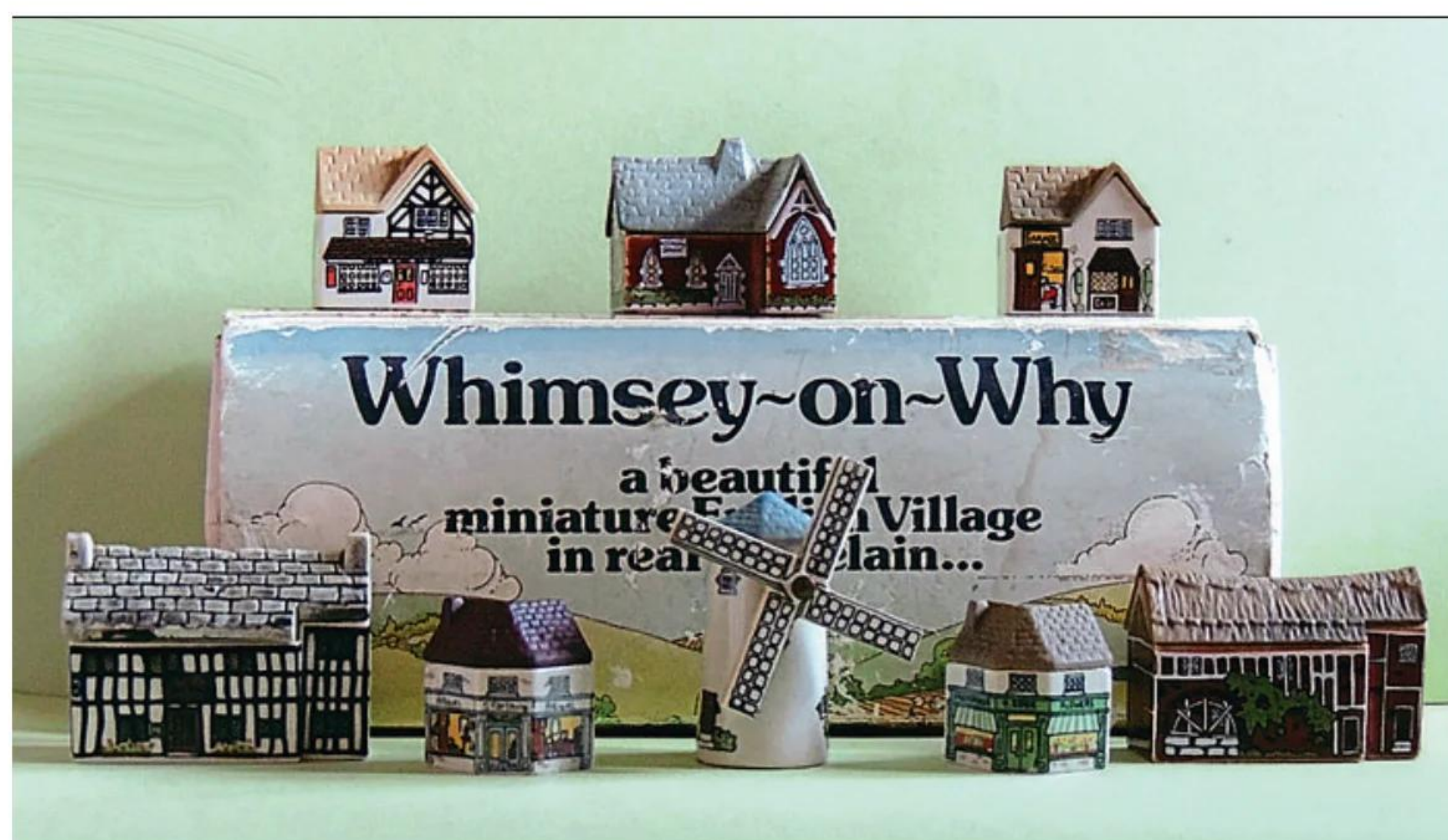
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Whims and Fancies

Susan Brewer shows her appreciation for Wade Ceramic's porcelain model villages

Many of us living in large towns or cities, coping with the bustle of everyday life, yearn for a peaceful, picturesque environment. Imagine ambling down a cottage-lined street, calling in at the baker, the butcher and the sweetshop, then popping into a thatched, beamed village pub for a leisurely lunch. Bliss.

Back in the 1980s, the Wade company decided to create the joys of village life in miniature, and people loved collecting these tiny, hand-painted porcelain models.

The company could trace its origins back to the Henry Hallen pottery of Chesterton, Staffordshire which began in 1810 producing items for the textile industries. It was taken over by George Wade & Son in 1905, and was based in Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent right up until 1989.

It changed its name slightly along the way, before finally becoming known as Wade Ceramics and moving to Etruria, still in Stoke-on-Trent. There was also an Irish branch, in County Armagh, which opened in 1946 and traded until the early 1990s. Wade Ceramics was bought out of administration by Staffordshire consumer goods giant RKW in 2023.

Although Wade made many, often exquisite, ornaments right from the start, the company didn't really become a household name until it came up with the idea of Whimsies in 1953. These tiny animal figurines captured people's

imagination and, being sold at pocket money prices, enabled children to enjoy the thrill of collecting.

A surge of awareness by the public ensured it wasn't long before thousands upon thousands of items poured from the factory, not just the tiny ornaments, but larger animals too, as well as ornamental vases, posy holders, ashtrays, Disney characters, pipe racks,

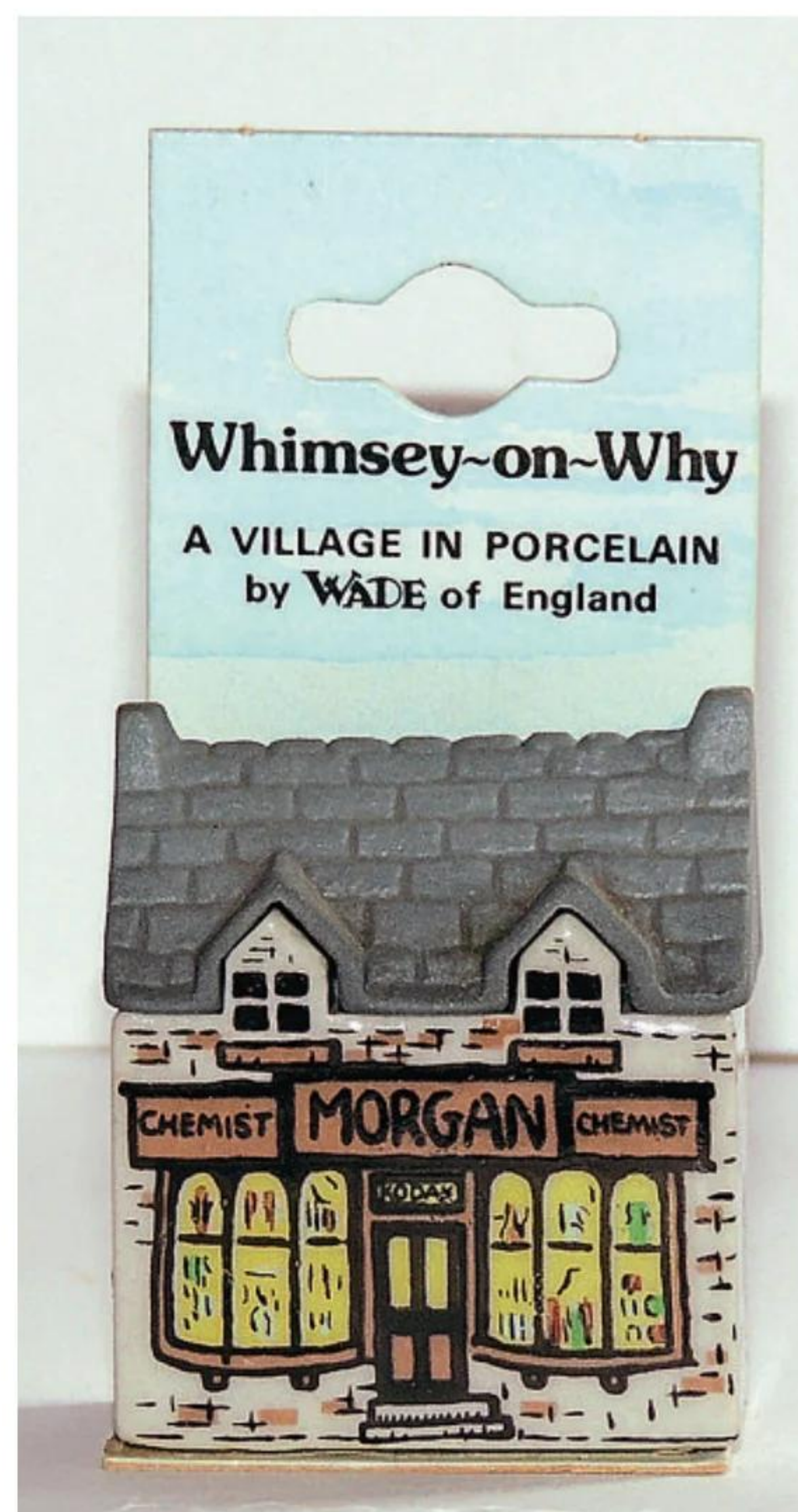
candle holders and trinket boxes. Many of these pieces were very innovative, such as tortoises whose shells lifted to reveal a storage place for trinkets, or seals balancing colourful balls which turned out to be corkscrews. By the late 1960s, most houses in Britain would have at least one Wade piece on display.

It was in 1980 that the company decided to produce a set of eight miniature buildings to represent those found in a typical English village. Wade named the village Whimsey-on-Why. These little shops, houses, cottages, churches and stately homes became so popular that a further four sets were introduced over the next decade, as well as the Irish Bally-Whim Village and then a further village called Whimsey-in-the-Vale.

The small porcelain buildings were all accurately detailed by using fire-on enamel transfers and each bore a tiny number in a circle, often well hidden among the design, to indicate which model it was. In all, there were 36 buildings to collect in the Whimsey-on-Why sets, 10 in Whimsey-in-the-Vale, and eight in Bally-Whim. Nowadays, some buildings are much easier to find than others, with a few of the later models being quite scarce. Most of the pieces were embossed Wade England or Wade Ireland.

Some of the smaller models measured less than 1½ins high. More substantial buildings, such as Bloodshott Hall, were 2ins tall and 3½ins long. The tallest piece was the windmill, standing 2½ins high. The villages could be bought as a set, packaged with a layout map so the buildings could be arranged for display purposes. Pieces could also be bought separately, each being mounted on a small card, or later, boxed.

Among the quaint models are some that are particularly interesting or unusual, such as the windmill, from set two. This was quite a vulnerable piece because the sails were attached by a copper pin. They rotated when touched and no doubt the windmill was quite a temptation when on show, especially to children who would spin the sails round and round, until eventually they fell off



Top: Buildings from set two of Whimsey-on-Why, including the windmill, the sails of which were attached by a copper pin. **Left:** Individual models were mounted on a small card, or later, boxed. This is Morgan the chemist shop from set two of Whimsey-on-Why.



The steeple-roofed market hall, beamed picture palace and butcher's shop from set four of Whimsey-on-Why.

and broke. Many of the buildings were cottages, sometimes thatched, others with tiles or slates on their roofs. Often there were timbered walls, painted bricks or the cottages painted in pastel shades of pink or lemon.

The detailing on many of the models was amazing, with tiny pictures of people, animals, bicycles, posters, dustbins or flowers decorating them – not just at the front but all around the model. The unusual market hall, for example, with its steeple-type roof bearing a clock face, depicted different scenes on all four sides, while the amazing picture palace had an impressive, beamed frontage, and showed people queuing to get in, alongside some posters. One poster advertised the film *Casablanca*, the other showed a Dracula-like figure with the wording “Curse of the Vampire”.

The reverse of the picture palace had two doors marked exit plus another poster, while the church of St Sebastian's had a Saxon-type tower and colourful stained-glass windows all around, typical of many of the churches dotted around villages in the United Kingdom. Various shops showed their ranges of products – fruit in the greengrocers, furniture in the antiques shop and pipes in the tobacconist.

Whimsey-on-Why was obviously the perfect place to live as it seemed to contain everything its residents could possibly need. It had a doctor's surgery, post office, school, hotel, pub, chemist, greengrocers, garage, butcher,

library and even a fire station (probably necessary with all that thatch around). There was a watermill, a police station and a smithy, in case your horse lost a shoe – especially useful for nearby Merryweather Farm. Why Knot Inn was a cute, thatched Tudor-style building with troughs of flowers by the front door, and barrels of beer at the back. The large, impressive red-brick Bloodshott Hall boasted four Georgian pillars and a pointed decorated pediment.

The Irish village of Bally-Whim came along in 1984. Most of the eight buildings in the set were embossed “Wade Ireland”. Among them were the undertaker, Barney Flynn's Cottage, Murphy's Bar and the dentist's house, while the largest was Ballywhim House.

The final set, Whimsey-in-the-Vale, was produced in 1993 and featured the Boar's Head pub with people sitting on a bench outside, a couple of dogs and someone walking by, with several cars

parked around the back. This pub was a long, low building with lots of lattice windows, and a thatched roof.

Also from this set, Jubilee Terrace was another long building, again thatched, comprising four cottages, each with its own character style – different shaped and coloured doors, and varying window designs including lattice and elongated arch. St Lawrence church depicted a wedding scene, complete with the bride, groom and all the guests. This used the mould of St Sebastian's from Whimsey-on-Why. All the models in this series reused existing moulds.

In 2003, Wade produced a set of people representing characters from the Whimsey villages for Key Collectables. These attractively detailed figures were around 3ins high, so were taller than the buildings. Among them were the fishmonger, landlord, postman and miller.

The American market wasn't forgotten when Wade issued a set of five “painted ladies” in the 1980s. These colourful 2ins high mini mansions were based on some Victorian-style houses in San Francisco, California which survived an earthquake in 1906. Later, the homeowners decided to paint the houses in vibrant shades of blue, red, pink and yellow. These models are very rare to find in Britain.

I can't be the only person who has held one of the delightful tiny cottages in the palm of my hand, such as the Tudor-styled Pump Cottage with roses around the yellow front door, and wished it was larger so I could live there too. 🇬🇧



St Sebastian's Church with its Saxon-type tower and colourful stained-glass windows.



Yesterday Remembered

We welcome your memories of around 800 words and pay £20 for each story published. Don't forget to include pictures with your submission.

“Come on, George!”

David Sim of Normanby, Middlesbrough, North Yorkshire remembers:



I expect that this magazine has received and published many articles over the years about how cinemas all over Britain had a special children's matinee on Saturdays. They would have a basic pattern: a serial, a cowboy film, a cartoon, and a main feature. Just William was popular. Boys would cheer when the serial and the cowboy film came on and would boo if they were lumbered with a soppy film with dancing or kissing.

In the 1940s I went to the Regal cinema in the Upper Parkstone area of Poole in Dorset on Saturday mornings. At other cinemas you would queue at the front and make your way to the box office. Not at the Regal where they had an unusual arrangement just for the children's Saturday show. You stood outside a door at the rear of the cinema and the queue went around the car park.

The Regal had a passage that ran the length of the cinema from the back to the box office. It was dark with no windows. The doorman would open the box office, whereupon a great mass of children surged forward, all intent on reaching the box office first to get the seat they wanted. I went with a group of pals. If near the front, you needed a big lad to hold others back to give you a head start, we had a hefty lad in our group called Norman. Very useful.

I assumed every Saturday matinee showed the same programme wherever you were in Britain. However, I was staying



The Regal cinema which David went to on Saturday mornings in the 1940s.

in Grangetown, near Middlesbrough one year and went to the Lyric cinema for the Saturday children's show. The place erupted when three middle-aged men appeared on the screen and hit each other on the head with any object they could find. Each hit was greeted with a roar from the children: my introduction to The Three Stooges. I didn't find them funny but there was no doubt who Grangetown loved the most. I never saw them at the Regal but, then again, I wasn't there every week. None of my friends had ever heard of them.

One film stands out in my memory from those Saturday shows. It was a George

Formby film in which he played a jockey riding in the Grand National. He was miles behind with no chance of winning but slowly he and his mount began to reel in their competitors. I'm not sure what the film was called but have a sneaking suspicion it was called Come on George.

If it wasn't it should have been because every child was up on their feet shouting out "Come on, George!" and a great cheer went up when he won. When it was over, I suddenly realised I was on my feet and so was everyone else. We had all got behind George, forgetting for a moment it was just a film.

P-p-p-pick up a Penguin

Peter Sargison of Gillingham, Kent remembers:

In 1953, I said goodbye to friends and students at one of the better schools in the Medway area of Kent – Highfield Secondary, which focused on the educational needs of the sons of gentle folk, or so I was led to believe.

At Highfield, there was lots of cricket during the summer but woodwork was my favourite subject. Woodwork on Thursdays at Highfield spilled over into Dad's shed and on one occasion I even tried to make a guitar. At the time, of course, it was a case of: "Look out, Elvis, I am right behind you." As the age of 15 approached, a career was just around the corner and the dockyard at Chatham came into view.

After passing the entrance exam, Dad and I were invited to attend the trade selection process and a shipwright loomed into view with the word master added by the man at the top table who, most of the time, was hidden by heaps of paperwork and a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles. A shipwright I had to be.

At Highfield, we started six weeks of summer holidays from the Friday but, in 1953, Mum had other ideas. She had me up bright and early on the Monday and after two cups of tea and marmalade on toast it was: "Get your bike out of the shed and off you go for your first day in the yard." What a way to start a summer holiday but, out on the road, I was joined by the father of a schoolmate and, together, Barney Costello and I cycled safely side by side down St Williams Way heading for Chatham and the impressive main gate to the dockyard.

Barney was a crane driver and during my early years afloat I spent many a cold lunch break in the warmth of



Barney's crane cab. On one occasion, over a cheese sandwich and a second or even third cup of tea, I remember watching from above the making of the film *Carry On Jack* which focused on one of Her Majesty's ships moored below us on the Upnor Wall.

One of the daily highlights of my first two years was an hour-long lunch break with luncheon vouchers as a bonus. We were directed to use these for a healthy meal at one of the dockyard canteens but we soon discovered there was a British Restaurant in the town – a leftover from World War Two when they were set up to help people who had been bombed out of their homes or had run out of ration coupons. After a cycle ride down to the town, we could exchange our luncheon vouchers for seven chocolate Penguin biscuits. As always, all good things come to an end and we were firmly told Penguins did not constitute a healthy meal, and the sale of them hit rock-bottom across Chatham.

I must admit, I sometimes went home at the end of the day wishing for the good old days of Highfield. Such days become a little arduous but life had to go on. However, I quickly put broken fingernails and blisters behind me and moved on at a

pace to the daily grind which, for the first year, was working at a bench hacksawing and filing large pieces of metal into shapes such as spanners and other well-meaning objects.

For our second year, armed with two toolboxes of equipment, we moved on to working in small groups building 14ft sailing dinghies. We had all year to create our boats and, once tested for seaworthiness, they were passed to commissioned naval ships and used by sailors for recreational activities.

Moving on into the rest of our time as apprentices, early mornings on the plate wharf come to mind. There we were in the depths of winter having to light an old oil drum full of holes with wood and coke. After getting it alight, we had to drag it around the steel plates to dry them off ready for shipwrights to mark off using a chalk line before the plates were taken to be cut and machined, ready to take their place in the building of a naval ship.

Lots more could be said, but I completed my apprenticeship, missed out on National Service, and, after 10 years as a master shipwright, decided to change my career. But that's another story.



The impressive main gate to the dockyard at Chatham during Peter's time as an apprentice.

My Travel Scrapbooks

Sarah Warburton of Swindon, Wiltshire remembers:



One of the perks of my dad's job in promotions with an automotive company was that my mum and I were permitted to travel with him when his work took him away over the weekend. For several years from the age of eight or nine, we visited dozens of places around the country, and I loved nothing more than keeping a record of everywhere we went in a series of scrapbooks.

As soon as I knew a trip was coming up, I'd tear out a sheet of my Basildon Bond writing paper, place the lined guide sheet underneath and pen a letter in my best spidery handwriting to the tourist office of the place in question to request some literature. I'd go to the local library and ask for help from the librarian to find the correct postal address and pop the letter in the post.

If there wasn't enough time for me to write to the tourist information centre, I'd badger my dad into ringing them instead to ask if they would be able to send some information to me.

For the next few days, I'd eagerly await the postman's arrival, racing to the front door as soon as I heard the post arrive (always by 8am in those days). If I found a bulky envelope addressed to me, I'd tear it open excitedly and begin reading up on where we were going, until a stern shout of "get a move on" from my mum would bring me back to my senses and I'd scramble to get ready and set off on my walk to school.

Sometimes, alongside the brochures, there might be a free pen, a sticker or, if I was really lucky, a promotional brightly-coloured, googly-eyed fuzzy bug, sporting a marketing slogan on the ribbon. I had a small collection of those bugs stuck to the side of my bookcase, forming an orderly line in all their garish glory.

After returning from a trip, I'd sit at the dining room table, lost in a world of paper, scissors and glue, sticking down all manner of keepsakes – postcards, tickets for bus rides and toll bridge crossings, vehicle passes, handwritten receipts as well as pictures and maps cut out of the tourist information brochures. All of this would be carefully arranged, dated and labelled.

If I was able to obtain a menu small



enough to be included in my scrapbook, then I'd draw a star next to what I'd eaten. Judging by the stars, ice-cream sundaes were my favourite dessert, and if they were topped with a cocktail umbrella, these decorations would also be stuck into my books, as would branded sugar bags and napkins. I often concluded each section by adding some notes about what we had done each day and anything else that captured my imagination.

But these scrapbooks were strictly for items gathered from places I'd visited. Anything relating to other, non-visited places I found interesting was carefully stored for future reference in a paper pocket that I'd make and stick on the inside back cover of each book.

Decades later, while cleaning out my parents' house, I came across one of my old scrapbooks. Languishing at the bottom of a box of assorted childhood toys and books was a battered and musty smelling book with brittle pages and a broken spine, literally bursting with mementoes.

Inside those yellowing pages, I was taken back to a sunny trip to Harrogate, North Yorkshire. We stayed in a guest house, which, the leaflet told me, boasted a fire certificate and a residents' room, complete with colour television. That weekend, I recall feeling very grown up as Mum took me for my first afternoon tea. I was amazed by the delicate sandwiches with exotic fillings such as salmon and cucumber, brought to us on doily-adorned china plates. It all seemed a world away from the lukewarm crab paste sandwiches on floppy paper plates I was used to from birthday parties I'd been to.

Another vivid memory was of a trip to north Wales. We visited frequently and sometimes stayed in a high-end hotel in Llandudno, Conwy. It was my favourite place as there was a warm, indoor pool and a whirlpool bath – the height of luxury. I would have been delighted to find a postcard of the town with the hotel



Left: Sarah's scrapbooks included tickets, receipts and maps cut out from tourist information brochures. Above: After returning from a trip, Sarah would sit at the dining room table, lost in a world of paper, scissors and glue, sticking down all manner of keepsakes in a scrapbook. Below: Sarah, aged around eight or nine, enjoying an ice-cream sundae during one of her trips away.



pictured and, as we had a front-facing room, I'd drawn an arrow pointing to the window of our room. Also included from this trip was a small packet of matches with the hotel brand that would probably have been found sitting in a glass ashtray on the bedside table – how times have changed since the early 1990s.

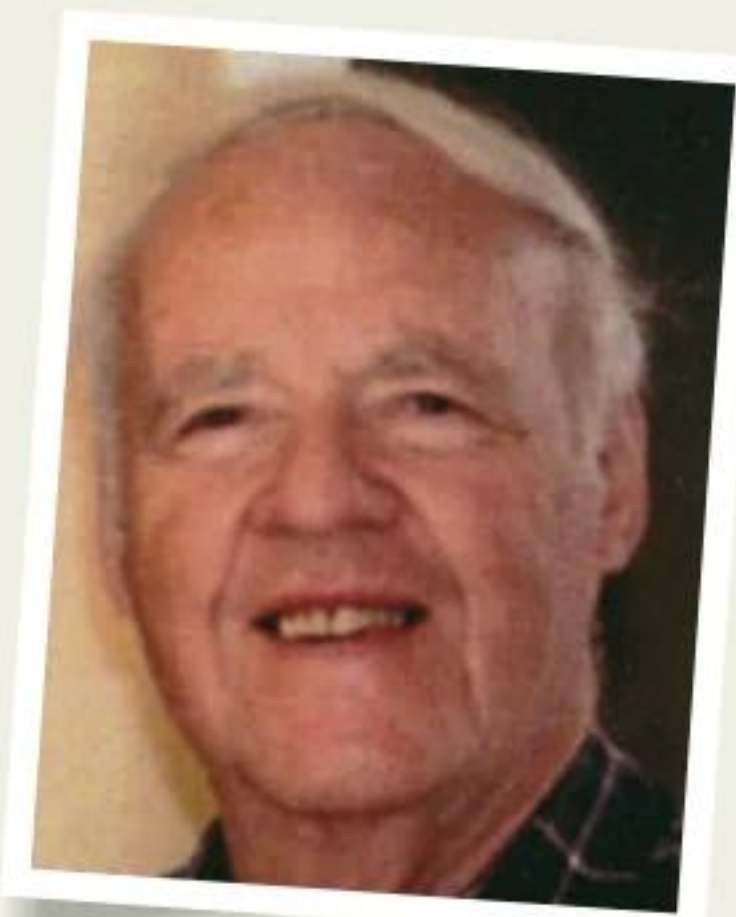
A Midnight Ramble

Ron McGill of Guildford, Surrey remembers:

Back in the 1950s, I was one of a group of young telegraphists who were employed at the Central Telegraph Office in the City of London, which was a large office employing more than 2,000 people. The younger operators tended to keep together and share our activities – mostly sporting ones like cricket, football and, for the fairer sex, netball.

We had a lad, John Barnes, who had the nickname “Bimbo” and he tended to be the ringleader in any proposed activity and one day he told our group of around 30 teenagers, of both genders, that one day after work we should go on a midnight ramble. He had organised rambles before, but they had been on a weekday or a weekend if the weather forecast was good.

His rambles were always in the countryside around London and for this caper he proposed going to Surrey after our 8pm finish from work. We were all ready to go that evening and, armed with our Thermos flasks and sandwiches, we took the tube to Waterloo to catch



the last train that evening to Tattenham Corner at the start of the Epsom Downs.

Bimbo always had a few funny ideas and he told us we were going on a four-carriage train which ended its journey at Tattenham Corner. He asked us all to get out at the last but one station, and go to the last but one compartment, which normally held 10 people and all pile in. Somehow, all 30 of us did, and crammed in like sardines, we made it to Tattenham Corner, the last station on the line.

We stayed in the compartment while the guard made his final inspection before the train trundled off into the sidings. Having checked the empty compartments, his eyes nearly popped out of his head when he saw arms and legs everywhere. He quickly saw the joke and joined in the laughter and, after we managed to untangle ourselves, led us to a waiting room, where we sat and enjoyed drinks and refreshments before we set out across the dark downs.

It was around 11.30pm and off we went, past a darkened grandstand and on to the downland. A pathway led to the fields, quiet hamlets and the odd farmhouse on the outskirts of Ashted. There were dark woodland pathways but a lot of open fields and, as the moon began to rise, we were able to walk in good visibility.

Bimbo called a halt to our hiking at the entrance to a large field which had

two haystacks in one corner. He had had the sense to speak to the farmer beforehand and had permission for us to stop there as there were no livestock to be disturbed. So, we sat there in the moonlight, resting against the haystacks and finished our food and drink. Bimbo said we could have two hours’ rest and we all snuggled into the hay.

It was all so very quiet, just the hooting of a few owls and there were bats swirling about. The girls did not like the mice that were running around but we did rest up OK. I was woken by a large rabbit that jumped over my outstretched legs, while another lad was roused by a small grass snake crawling over his legs.

The two hours was quickly over, and we continued our hike. We had the last of the moonlight as we walked through the woods and fields around Cobham and the first streaks of light began the dawn as we neared Effingham Junction.

There was an interesting feature of our final hike to Effingham. We were all Londoners, and nobody knew anything about the dawn chorus. It seemed that every bush and tree had a bird singing like mad to welcome the dawn of a new day and it was all so astonishingly loud and quite memorable.

We wearily made it into Effingham Junction, and eventually boarded what in those days was the first milk train for Waterloo. It was back on the tube and into our office. We all rushed to the washrooms, cleaned up a bit and were off to our duties by 9am.

As I entered my work area, Mr Joe Blundell, a bow-tied, “spic and span” supervisor, eyed me up and down and said: “McGill, you look like you have been sleeping in a field.” “Well, to tell you the truth, sir, I have,” I replied, and scurried away before he could ask me any more questions.

At the end of our duty operating the keyboards, we were all completely and utterly worn out and said to Bimbo: “Never again, unless it is in daylight.” We all stuck to that and we enjoyed many more of Bimbo’s rambles, always in a different direction.

Bimbo had an interesting career when he retired. He was nominated to speak for the organisation Save Our Footpaths and spent many of his later years fighting landowners in court and other varied cases, and appearing on television as the expert in many disputes. What a man.



The guard’s eyes nearly popped out of his head when he saw arms and legs everywhere, with 30 teenagers crammed into the penultimate train compartment like sardines. Ron was rather weary the next day at work after the midnight ramble.

Knock Me Down With a Feather

Dr Colin Harris of Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands remembers:

I feel a bit of a fraud about my wartime memories since I was born in August 1941

and, compared to many who can give their own accounts and memories of their daring-do in the war, mine pale into minor insignificance. For what it's worth, here they are as a young boy in sad and puzzling times.

My toys included a cardboard train set made from Cadbury's cocoa tins and other scraps painted a vivid red. I used to scoot down the churchyard at Hall Green, Birmingham frightening all the parishioners as they went to their services, especially on my roller skates.

I well remember taking shelter during air raids under the table, in the garden and a large shelter in the church grounds next to my grandad's house who was the verger at Hall Green church. This land later became Chatterton Hall, named after the Rev Percy Chatterton, who many will remember as a dynamic vicar who created the Hall Green Church Fellowship. My mother and father were founder members, and I was the next generation who re-established it again in about 1957.

I can't really remember running for shelter as enemy planes approached Birmingham but I do remember waiting for the all-clear. I distinctly remember the deep penetrating sound of the one o'clock "bull" from the Joseph Lucas factory in Shaftesmoor Lane and, within five minutes of that, my two aunts had returned from their piecework and we all had lunch.

I can recall the sounds of bombing and shrapnel from a bomb which came through our roof into a bedroom and brought the ceiling down.

I went to Hall Green Infants School. My wife, Sheila (Carter), also went there and indeed took me to school safely over the main roads each day with their busy traffic. Many of my friends there later went to Moseley Grammar School. There were air raid shelters (strictly forbidden territory but great for kiss chase), outside toilets which froze in the winter, and we had to drink ice-cold milk each day. It was a great honour to be ink pot monitor when you mixed an evil Prussian blue powder with



warm water, topped up all the ink wells in each desk and basked in the glory of being teacher's pet.

In the 1940s, our clothes were quite austere. Our short grey trousers were held up by snake belts and we wore string ties, school caps were obligatory, and gloves were threaded through the arms of the regulation blue gabardine macs to dangle to the ground, never to be lost. We read and giggled at Just William books by Richmal Crompton. I was regularly told off by my parents for giggling as I read them by torchlight under the bedclothes until late at night.

I was in the Little Bromwich Fever Hospital for nine months with scarlet fever and septicaemia in 1947. The treatment was to be stuck outside under a tarpaulin each day come rain, sleet, hail, snow, frost, fog and even sunshine – this kill-or-cure treatment must have worked. My motto to this day is "fresh air never killed anyone except Scott of the Antarctic".

All our kitchen waste was regularly put into a pig food bin for the farmer to collect each week. Most people kept hens for eggs and meat. The radio doctor gave us recipes for cheap nutritious meals usually containing cabbage, egg powder and tapioca, often called frogspawn and blood. We bought everything from the Co-op – coal, bread, milk, vegetables,



Colin never really knew his chief petty officer father until he was about six when he returned from Australia.



Colin pictured in 1945, when he was also known as Big Chief Cave-in-the-Face.

meat, the lot – no one ever forgot their number. The milkman used a horse and cart and Mr Holbeach used to ladle the milk from a churn.

Sweets were very rare. There were queues at the tuck shop in School Road when they came off the ration. The terrifying Miss Moss, with a grey beard and whiskers, worked there. She was very slow, methodical and reeked of mints as she marked out the boxes in your sweet ration book. She was the sweet control freak of Hall Green to my generation.

I was particularly lucky since my father was a chief petty officer in the Royal Navy and an old Moseleian (1928-33). He sent me a Mars bar and a comic each week from Sydney, Australia. Such was my total faith in him that I cut the Mars bar into seven equal pieces, one for each day until a new one arrived with total certainty the next Friday.

It is to this day a great sadness that I never really knew my father until I was about six – he returned from Australia full of its joys and opportunities and wanted to go back. Alas, my mother had no intention of leaving Hall Green and he slowly settled back into life in Civvy Street. My life would have been very different if we had emigrated on a £10 passage. I suffered the severe shock and distress of losing my father when he died aged 48 in 1965 – we all mourned him deeply. I still feel his loss every day.

Back on Track

Richard Keane of Axminster, Devon remembers:

Right from an early age, I have, at various times, ridden on old electric trams. Once, electric trams rattling along the streets of our cities were a common sight. Their large heavy frames filled the centres of roads in busy city centres as they made their way from one depot to another.

I was born in London in the late 1940s when the London tram was a crucial part of the transport system in the capital covering both inner and outer areas. The first generation electric trams were introduced in 1901. As an inexpensive form of transport, the trams encouraged workers to move out of crowded inner London areas to healthier lives in the suburbs. The network of services reached places like Enfield in the north and Wimbledon in the south.

The Kingsway tramway subway opened in 1906 allowing trams to move from north of the River Thames to the south side. Originally the tunnel was designed for single-decker trams. In 1929, the subway headroom was increased to allow double-decker ones to pass through. There were two substations for passengers to alight at Holborn and Aldwych before trams continued to an exit under and then over Waterloo bridge. I remember being taken on a tram ride through the Kingsway tramway. The red and cream liveried trams were run by London Transport. With the demise of trams the subway was closed in 1952. Today part of it survives as the Strand Underpass opened in 1964 and used by cars and taxis.

My maternal grandparents lived in Sheffield, a city which had one of the largest tramway networks in the UK. Here, trams were introduced in 1899. By 1902, all the tram routes were electrified. At the height of its popularity and development, the system covered 100 miles of tram routes. One of the most familiar sights on Sheffield's streets was the Roberts Car developed by



Charles Roberts & Co near Wakefield. In its distinctive cream livery, this four-wheel tram offered comfortable upholstered seating for 62 passengers, operated by Sheffield Corporation. Trams were finally replaced by buses in October 1960.

I well remember staying with my grandparents and my grandfather taking me on one of the last tram routes. Sitting on the top deck with him, he was able to point out all the familiar landmarks. One of the last routes was from Meadowhead to Firth Park, passing along the Chesterfield Road, Abbeydale Road, the Moor (Sheffield's main shopping area) and Barnsley Road. One of the final trams to run is now preserved at the National Tramway Museum at Crich in Derbyshire. On a visit there, the memories of that Sheffield tram ride with my grandfather came flooding back. There was the cream Roberts tramcar number 510 which was the last one to run from Leopold Street to Beauchief and Tinsley.

Many years later, and in retirement, I moved to east Devon. Once again, I have been able to rekindle my childhood experiences of tram rides with my grandchildren. Seaton Tramway was originally the brainchild of Claude Lane. After World War Two, he ran a company in north London which built battery-operated electric vehicles such as milk floats. His real passion, though, was the electric tramcar, so he built his based

on one which was then running on the Llandudno and Colwyn Bay systems in north Wales.

Outings to various local events proved so popular that he ventured further afield into St Leonards on the Sussex coast and Rhyl in north Wales. Eventually, in 1953, a permanent site was leased in Eastbourne and, in 1956, a larger open-top tram was built to accommodate an increasing number of passengers in comfort. As the popularity of tram rides increased, Claude Lane's company built further tramcars. Unfortunately, with the development of Eastbourne's road system, the future of his tramway was threatened.

In March 1966, a branch line operated by British Railways from Seaton Junction to the seaside town of Seaton was closed. On hearing of this closure, Claude Lane began negotiations to purchase the Seaton to Colyton section. After a public inquiry, before the granting of transfer and light railway orders, final permission was granted in December 1969. With the laying of new track, the first passenger service operated along part of the route in August 1970.

Today Seaton Tramway operates a fleet of 14 trams and is a major attraction in Devon. Each tram offers a different ride experience through the Axe Valley by the river Axe, rekindling tram travel from a past era.



Running over part of the former Seaton branch line, Seaton Tramway is a narrow-gauge tramway that features scaled down versions of classic British trams.



A GRAVEYARD SMASH

Churchyard memories from The Francis Frith Collection

Sunlight and Shadow, Puncknowle, Dorset

(Photograph taken in 1939)

As a family, we stayed at a self-catering cottage here just before 1962, one of our first holidays in the Standard Vanguard estate after many staying in railway camping coaches all over southern England.

I well remember the water being delivered and the spout and trough in the retaining wall that held up the church graveyard. I suppose it still does. Considering the origin of the water, all the residents seemed very

fit and healthy. The walks and views from the ruin at the top of Puncknowle Knob have never been forgotten.

Chris Scott



Church of St Mary and St Peter, Salcombe Regis, Devon

(Photograph taken in 1928)

I happened upon Salcombe Regis by chance late April and what a magic sight the churchyard was. The huge low-hanging white blossom tree was magnificent, and yellow and white daffodils scattered among the old lichen encrusted tombstones completed the picture. I discovered that evening, from long lost relatives, that several of my ancestors (Maeers and others) had been born in Salcombe Regis, and there would be many of them lying in that churchyard. So now I want to return and get to know the village and find out what it would have been like for my forbears who lived there. (I live in Australia, so it's quite a journey). This is a modern memory of Salcombe Regis, but it's a magic one for me.

Jacqueline Deacon

St Mary's, Walthamstow, Greater London

(Photograph taken in 1903)

I lived at 11 Church Lane with my sister, Anne, and our parents, John and Barbara Mawson, until 1978. It was my grandfather's house (William Henry Cazaly) that he bought in the 1950s and had sold it to my parents in 1965. Our house was next door to the churchyard. I remember the huge horse chestnut trees that over hung the high wall surrounding the graveyard. They were filled with cooing wood pigeons and, in the warm summers, I would play in the garden, stopping for a rest on the old stripey deckchair and lay listening to the peaceful sounds of wind in the trees and the pigeons. It was so very peaceful. In autumn, the thrilling plonk of falling conkers had my sister and me scurrying round to the churchyard, excited at finding the beautiful new conkers that had burst open and were brimming with conker fight potential.

Joy Connel



High Street, South Benfleet, Essex

(Photograph taken around 1960)

I have a small picture hanging on my wall, which is a print of a painting by my late father, Harry Russell. It depicts the view shown in the picture, but from an era slightly before. Not a lot different. I can remember the cockle shed that was there, and who can remember the orchard behind the pub, the Hoy and Helmet? We used to climb over the wall from the graveyard and pinch carrots of all things. I vividly remember clambering back over the wall and down on to a headstone, a firm hand gripped my leg and a voice roared: "What are you up to then?" To my horror, it was the local bobby, Sgt Wally. Who remembers him?


Christine James



The Francis Frith Collection

Over 150 years ago, pioneering Victorian photographer Francis Frith set up his company with the grand plan of photographing all the cities, towns and villages of Britain. His two sons, and later his grandson, continued Frith's massive task, and The Francis Frith Collection now contains more than 360,000 images taken between 1860 and 1970. Over 250,000 images are available to view online. Prints of the Frith photographs, as well as a wide range of other products and local history books, featuring these vintage images, are available from the website francisfrith.com

Share Your Memories

The Francis Frith Collection invites you to visit the website and add memories to the places featured in the photographs, or comment on others already added. Seeing a place from your past can rekindle forgotten or long-held memories. Why not add your story for others to read and enjoy – making your memories and stories part of this growing chronicle of British life? 



Former mobile disc jockey **Bob Barton** enjoys getting on the trail of pop music nostalgia and still finds the time to visit a restored inland port

Like many people born in the mid-1950s, I grew up listening to a wonderful variety of pop music. Schooldays were enlivened by all the excitement of Beatlemania and Merseybeat. Then soul and Motown groups stormed the charts and pirate radio stations filled the airwaves with great music. Later in the 60s, I enjoyed the reggae hits that crossed over from Jamaica, then was bowled over by David Bowie, Marc Bolan and other glam rockers. There was heavy metal and punk to get my teeth into and, in my early 20s, the rise of the disco genre encouraged me to become a mobile disc jockey. Though I hung up my microphone many years ago, I still play my vinyl records and am always on the lookout for places rich in pop nostalgia.

That's what took me to Coventry recently. I've always found it an interesting city to visit, and its pop music heritage is second to none. I'd heard about the Coventry Music Museum (07971 171441, covmm.co.uk), and just had to visit. It's just over a mile from the city centre, then reached through a narrow

passageway between two shops: Cake Box and the Beef Belly Burger House. The museum is a joy: very compact but crammed with a variety of exhibits. These include fashions, musical instruments and vintage record players and radios.

There's a replica of a sound booth

found in 1960s record stores, a "rude boy's" bedroom and the "wall of Coventry Top 10 hits". This features top-selling singles from a range of stars: from Frank Ifield (though born in Coventry, he grew up in Australia), Lieutenant Pigeon (remember Mouldy Old Dough?) and



Although compact, Coventry Music Museum is crammed with a variety of exhibits. Top: The bars, restaurants and pubs of Brindley Place, Birmingham at dusk.



The 1961 Vauxhall Cresta used in the promotional video for Ghost Town by the Specials on display at Coventry Music Museum.

Vince Hill, through to James Morrison. I was puzzled as to why Chuck Berry's novelty hit My Ding-a-Ling is also featured. Apparently, it was recorded live at the city's Tiffany's nightclub.

A portion of the museum is given over to 2 Tone Records, the label founded in the city by Jerry Dammers. In 1979, he blended ska and rock to create a unique sound, spawning bands including the Specials, the Selecter, the Beat, and Madness. The revival of "mod" fashions was also part of this scene. On the day I visited the museum, a gathering of Madness fans created a festive buzz.

Ghost Town by the Specials is one of my favourite tracks; it was a thrill to sit in the car used in the promotional video for it (a 1961 Vauxhall Cresta). One of the enthusiastic volunteers who run the museum told me it was rescued from

a scrapyard in Wales. How it was then manhandled upstairs and into position is anyone's guess. Another exhibit is devoted to another former local: Delia Derbyshire (1937-2001). She was one of the pioneers of electronic music, best known for her work on BBC TV's original Doctor Who theme.

Inspired by this attraction, I was eager to explore more of the former UK City of Culture. Coventry Cathedral (024 7652 1200, coventrycathedral.org.uk), rebuilt after World War Two, the blitzed ruins of the old one and Coventry Transport Museum (024 7623 4270, transport-museum.com) are must sees. I was also keen to walk some of the 2 Tone Trail (theoutdoorguide.co.uk/walking-routes/coventry-walks/2-tone-trail), with various sites marked with distinctive black-and-white plaques. The highlight

was the former nightclub, Tiffany's, where most of the bands mentioned above played. The building is now a library. I strolled the former dancefloor, now furnished with bookcases but once alive with fans. I spoke to a man who remembers queueing for hours to attend a seminal 2 Tone concert in 1979. Pop producer and television personality Pete Waterman also DJ'd here.

I then made a beeline for the bus station, where a large mosaic mural, made from ceramic tiles by artist Carrie Reichardt depicts Coventry's 2 Tone musical heritage.

Birmingham, an easy hop by train, is sometimes called the "capital of heavy metal". I found several musical landmarks on one of the city's main thoroughfares. Broad Street links several areas of entertainment and nightlife. Where this road crosses the Birmingham Canal, I found an unusual rock landmark: the Black Sabbath Bridge (blacksabbathbench.co.uk). It features a bench adorned with images of the iconic Brummie band's members – notably lead vocalist and one-time hellraiser Ozzy Osborne. The seat is part of a so-called "Walk of Stars", though I only found three stars set into the pavement. One is for singer-songwriter Jeff Lynne of Electric Light Orchestra and Traveling Wilburys fame.

Of all the city's rock venues, one that has gone down as legendary is the Rum Runner. It was where Duran Duran cut their teeth as house band and groups such as Dexy's Midnight Runners and UB40 also performed. It was said to be modelled on New York's Studio 54 but was demolished more than 35 years ago. A plaque has been unveiled on what is now a grey and anonymous canal-side building. But I could imagine the



Left: Adorned with images of the Birmingham band Black Sabbath, Black Sabbath Bench sits on the canal bridge on Broad Street, Birmingham. Right: The water feature of a curvy woman in Birmingham's Victoria Square, nicknamed the "Flooie in the Jacuzzi".



Left: The Custard Factory is where Alfred Bird's egg-free custard powder was made for more than 60 years in the Digbeth area of central Birmingham.

REFRESHMENTS

All serve meals and real ale.

The Old Crown, High Street, Deritend, Birmingham B12 0LD (0121 248 1368, theoldcrown.co.uk)

Rambling, timber-clad pub with centuries of history.

Golden Cross, 8 Hay Lane, Coventry CV1 5RF (024 7655 1855, thegoldencrosscoventry.co.uk)


Close to the cathedral, a fine medieval building that has been a pub since 1661. Regular live music.

Hare & Hounds, High Street, Kings Heath, Birmingham (0121 444 2081, hareandhoundskingsheath.co.uk)

Long established music venue and ornate Camra heritage pub. A plaque records that UB40 first performed there.

it has been transformed into a tourist attraction. I found it buzzing with people enjoying an art gallery, cafes – and a towering sculpture (the Green Man by Toin Adams).

My biggest surprise in Digbeth was finding one of the most impressive pub restorations anywhere. The timber-framed Old Crown dates from at least the 15th century and is claimed to be the city's oldest secular building. Abandoned for years, it has been restored at a cost of £1.7m and is a prized landmark once more. Even its well has been retained.

One of my last ports of call on this trip was another pub. The Golden Cross in Coventry is one of that city's oldest pubs. It is said to be built on the site of a Royal Mint. Surrounded by cobbled streets and full of gnarled beams and stained glass, it has long been a live music venue, too. Enjoying a perfect pint of Goats Milk ale from the local Church End Brewery, while listening to a talented vocalist named Ava Rose, I was in my element. The perfect end to a "bostin'" trip. 

excitement of being a youngster in the queue to enter this one-time palace of fun.

Just yards away, the towering new Library of Birmingham (0121 242 4242, birmingham.gov.uk/libraryofbirmingham) is a shiny focal point on Centenary Square. I think the building, by architect Francine Houben, resembles a pile of gift-wrapped birthday presents. It is well worth a look inside – notably for the ornate Shakespeare Room.

I did lots of walking. I passed the water feature of a curvy woman in Victoria Square, nicknamed the "Flooie in the Jacuzzi". It is gushing water once again after several years when she suffered the ignominy of having to "bathe" in a flower bed. I also enjoyed a stroll along the canal to Gas Street Basin. This has been pleasingly restored to reflect its days as a bustling inland port. It contrasts with nearby Brindley Place, a sanitised centre of hedonism, replete with busy bars, restaurants and pubs. I passed the Symphony Hall (0121 289 6300, bmusic.co.uk) and headed up

towards the vast Arena Birmingham (utilitaarenabham.co.uk), venue for the Eurovision Song Contest in 1998.

I'd been told that Digbeth, just beyond the city centre, has become a creative quarter for musicians, artists and film-makers. Following part of its heritage trail (07775 308062, birminghamcivicsociety.org.uk), I discovered that formerly industrial back streets and railway arches have become a colourful, though unofficial, gallery of street art. (There is also a Graffiti Art of Digbeth trail.) On my trek, I called into a university that is actively inspiring the next generation of musicians. The BIMM (British and Irish Modern Music) Institute (0344 2 646 666, bimm.ac.uk) recently announced a scholarship partnered with singer-songwriter Joan Armatrading, who spent her formative years in Brum.

It was a short stroll, through Technicolor-painted railway arches, to the old Custard Factory. Also known as the Devonshire Works, it's where Alfred Bird's egg-free custard powder was made for more than 60 years. Now



Left: A plaque on the site of the old Rum Runner club in Birmingham demolished more than 35 years ago. Right: The Golden Cross pub in Coventry is one of that city's oldest pubs and said to be built on the site of a Royal Mint.





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A Sprinkling of Stardust

Perri Dodgson celebrates 50 years since the release of the David Essex film

Jim MacLaine effortlessly sang his heart out to the sea of wet-cheeked faces of screaming teenage girls, all pushing through the crowds towards him in the hope of catching his eye. He was a singer and bass player with the Stray Cats, the latest musical phenomenon which was sweeping across Britain, and everything was even better than he had dreamed it would be.

The story of *Stardust* begins with two old friends meeting up at a fairground, on 22 November 1963, the day of the JFK assassination. Jim MacLaine, a rising rock star played by David Essex, and his friend and manager Mike Menary, played by Adam Faith, are the overriding stars of the film, released 50 years ago, on 24 October 1974.

It tells the tragic story of how the young, handsome singer gets singled out from the group, and is catapulted to stardom in his own right. Sadly, though, he is not able to deal with the pressures of fame, and soon his delusions of grandeur cause him to lose his band. His excessive use of drugs and alcohol affects his personality so much that, on impulse, he buys a castle in Spain, where he lives as a recluse until he dies from an overdose.

The prequel to *Stardust*, *That'll Be the Day*, had been a massive hit a year earlier, so the funding was dramatically

increased for the second film. The producers were able to take the story to Los Angeles, and to the Castillo de La Calahorra in Andalusia, Spain where some scenes were shot from the air.

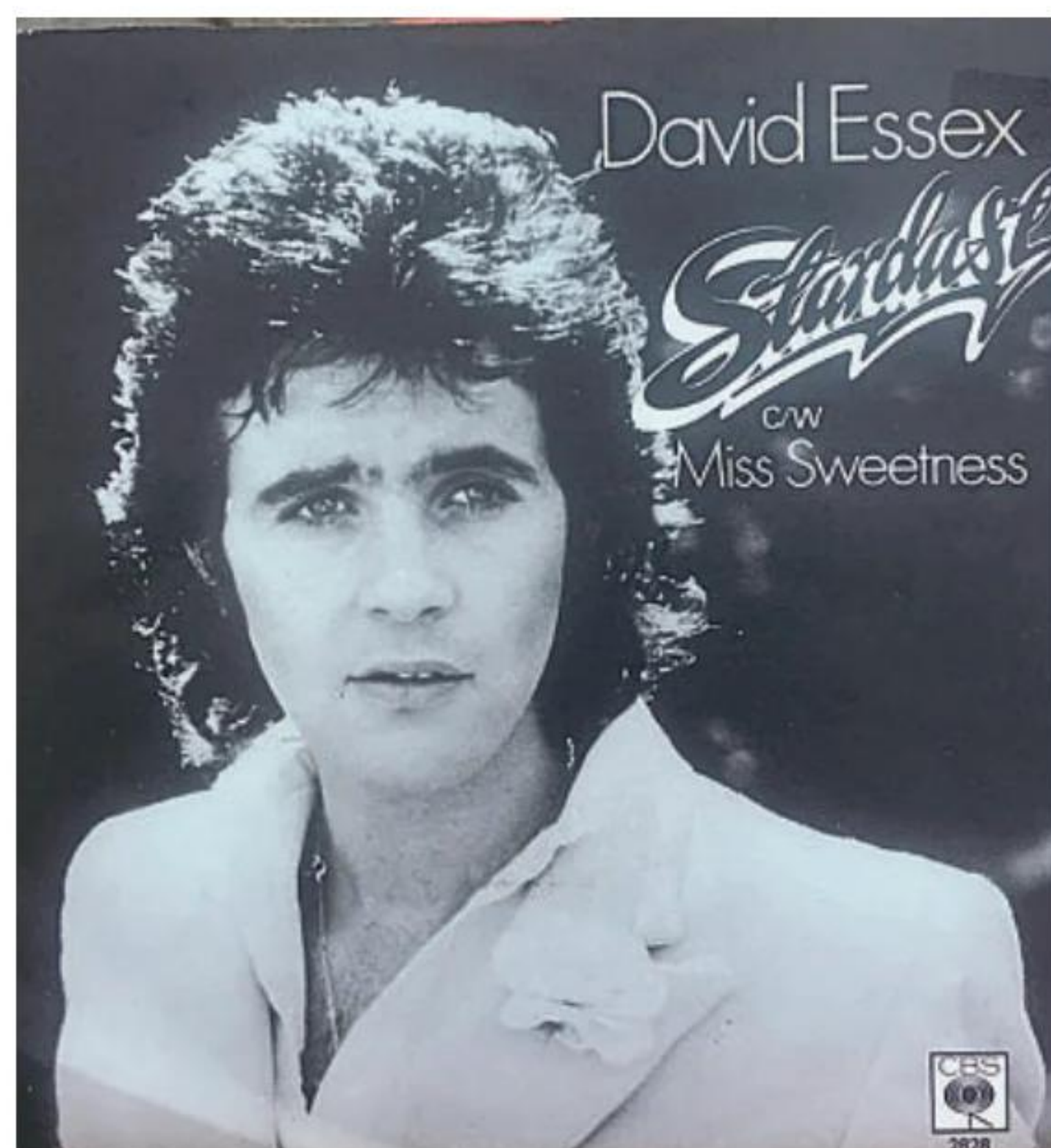
At first, writer Ray Connolly, director Michael Apted, and producer David Puttnam found it difficult to cast the role of Jim. Connolly has said: "Jim hardly did a decent thing in the whole story. There was so little about the character that was

likeable." But after seeing David Essex on stage in *Jesus Christ Superstar*, they thought he was so good-looking and

Top: David Essex as Jim MacLaine, the singer unable to deal with the pressures of fame, in a scene from *Stardust*. Bottom: The story of rising rock star Jim MacLaine is told across the films *That'll Be the Day* and *Stardust*.



Photographs: Studiocanal/Shutterstock



“As I tried to clout Keith Moon, the makeup artist shouted: ‘Don’t hit his face, he’s been made up!’”

likeable that audiences couldn’t fail to warm to him. After filming *That’ll Be the Day*, David had a Top 10 hit with *Rock On*, and was becoming very popular.

Jim’s scheming friend and manager Mike Menary, played by Ringo Starr in the first film and by Adam Faith in the sequel, had been in a fight at the end of *That’ll Be the Day*, so the fact Faith was sporting a limp, obtained from a recent car accident, fitted into the *Stardust* storyline perfectly. Starr was invited to reprise his role in *Stardust* but declined, saying he didn’t want to recreate that era since he had been through it in real life. He also felt there was an uncomfortable resemblance between a subplot and the real-life story of Pete Best’s departure from the Beatles.

The original character for Jim’s US manager was from the Bronx and the broody Tony Curtis was chosen for the role. He read the part and loved it but when it came to the contract, his agent asked for nearly half the budget of the whole film. The production team decided on Larry Hagman in the end and, because of his brown hair and blue eyes, they changed the character to a Texan named Porter Lee Austin, chosen because Larry was born in Austin, Texas and Porter had been his best friend. He later told the crew that on the flight to the set he had been rehearsing his lines in a New York accent, so it had been a nice surprise to know he could speak in his natural Texan voice. In interviews later, Larry often said it was his role in



Left: The closing track, *Stardust*, reached No 7 in the UK charts. Above: Larry Hagman believed that playing manager Porter Lee Austin led to his casting as JR Ewing in *Dallas*.

Stardust that won him the part of JR Ewing in *Dallas*.


Keith Moon, Paul Nicholas and Karl Howman, later to star in the BBC sitcom *Brush Strokes*, were the other members of the Stray Cats. Writer Ray Connolly has said: “Desperate to always be the centre of attention, the extrovert drummer from the Who, Keith Moon, was once found walking around naked in the cold Lancashire hotel where we were staying. He also cut off the top half of his room door so he could hang his head over it like a horse in a stable. The hotel manager was not best pleased, nor the film’s accountant. He could be very friendly and funny. But he could be a real pest too.”

The two of them once got into a scuffle. “What I remember most clearly is that as I tried to clout Keith back, the makeup artist rushed forward shouting: “Don’t hit his face, he’s been made up!””

Four years later, Keith died after an accidental overdose; a similar fate to that of Jim MacLaine in the film. A quieter member of the Stray Cats was the cheeky-faced, musician extraordinaire, Dave Edmunds. The talented Welsh singer-songwriter and guitarist wrote all the songs, did all the singing, and played all the instruments on the recordings himself, completing the whole soundtrack. The only song David Essex wrote and sang himself was the closing track, *Stardust*, which reached No 7 in the UK charts.

All through the filming, the crowd extras had little work to do as it was more authentic to use footage from actual mobbing teenage girls in David Essex performances. In the scenes of his mother’s funeral in Northolt, Greater London it is David the pop star who is being mobbed, not his character, Jim.

When it was released, *Stardust* was an even bigger success than *That’ll Be the Day* and made a huge star of David Essex. Originally an X-rated film, it was soon reduced to an AA to enable millions of David Essex fans, aged 14 or older, to see it without their parents. By 1985, it had earned an estimated profit of £525,000. Ray Connolly was awarded a Bafta for best original British screenplay and Adam Faith was nominated for best supporting actor. David Puttnam went on to produce hit films such as *Midnight Express*, *Chariots of Fire*, *The Mission*, and *The Killing Fields*, and, in 1997, entered the House of Lords as a life peer.

In an article, Ray Connolly said: “The last day of filming was in Los Angeles and Larry Hagman invited a few of us back to his rather beautiful house by the ocean in Malibu. Then, without warning, he and his wife suddenly took off all their clothes and, insisting we did the same, stepped into a whirlpool bath. Coyly, we did what we were told, whereupon a couple of Larry’s neighbours arrived and got in with us.... Well, it was the 70s.” 



HAIL TO THE CHIEFTAIN

Patrick Boniface tells the story of Kent's preserved Liverpool class lifeboat which had saved 132 lives

We all hope a lifeboat that saves more than 100 souls from the sea can have a good, long and useful retirement. This is exactly what has occurred with the Chieftain, a Liverpool class lifeboat that has found a new home in the Kentish seaside resort town of Whitstable.

Built in 1948 on the Isle of Wight by Groves and Gutteridge of Cowes at a cost of £9,943, Chieftain served in the treacherous waters around Wales between 1949 and 1982 before being retired from service.

The boat arrived at the home base of Barmouth, Gwynedd on 11 March 1949 and was officially named on 6 July. Just three weeks later, on 29 July, the vessel was called upon for the first time when an aircraft crashed into the sea and Chieftain was launched to rescue the pilot from the rough seas. His co-pilot was nowhere to be seen, but his body was eventually recovered. This was to be the first of 113 callouts during a 33-year

career with the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI).

In the early days, when a shout went out, the crews were alerted by the firing of maroons from the lifeboat house. These rockets screamed into the air with an ear-piercing screech that could be heard for miles.

To mark the passing of such an illustrious lifeboat that saved 132 lives in total, the decommissioning in 1982 was attended by the then Prince and Princess of Wales.

The Chieftain is no shrinking violet, and it was never likely the vessel would fade away and be forgotten. The boat is kept in top condition by her owners Richard and Suzy Judge who bought it in 2019. They immediately fell in love with the classic

lines but only good fortune, when a sale to another buyer fell through, allowed them to purchase the Chieftain. The lifeboat was then taken from Wales to Ramsgate, Kent on a low-loader before a final passage though the English Channel and North Sea to the forever home of Whitstable.

Top: The beautifully restored Chieftain received the accolade of being awarded the title of NHS-UK Operational Flagship of the Year in July 2023. **Right:** Although retired from the RNLI in 1982, the Chieftain is still a working vessel, taking passengers on seal safari trips or half-hour jaunts around Whitstable Bay.



Photograph: (Women of the RNLI) Jack Lowe/National Maritime Museum, Greenwich London



Top left: Chieftain served in the treacherous waters around Wales between 1949 and 1982, based at Barmouth, before being retired from service. Below left: In the early days when a shout went out, RNLI crews were alerted by the firing of maroons from the lifeboat house.



Richard knows a thing or two about lifeboats being the son of one of Whitstable's founding crewmembers and a former lifeboatman himself. His son also joined the RNLI, making it a truly family affair.

In July 2023, the beautifully restored Chieftain received the accolade of being awarded the title of NHS-UK Operational Flagship of the Year as part of the vessel's 75th anniversary year. Unlike most historic lifeboats, Chieftain isn't on land on display but is a working craft. During the summer months Richard and Suzy take passengers on seal safari trips around the remotest parts of the Thames Estuary or half-hour jaunts around Whitstable Bay allowing tourists to explore Kent's oyster capital from a whole new perspective.

Richard Judge's year is tightly regulated packing in as many journeys as possible during Britain's all-too-short summer season. Autumn and winter see the lifeboat high and dry, just a stone's throw around the Kent coastline at Faversham's Iron Wharf boatyard. Here, Richard can inspect, repair and repaint. 🇬🇧

For further information about trips onboard the Chieftain, go to vintagelifeboattrips.co.uk

Women of the RNLI

Since its foundation in 1824, the RNLI has had one mission: to save every life at sea. The organisation is entirely self-funded and relies on the tireless work of volunteers across the UK and Ireland.

In its 200th anniversary year, Women of the RNLI, an exhibition at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, shines a spotlight on the various roles that women have – and always have had – in this vital charity.

The exhibition explores the experiences of current volunteers as well as the stories of the people who paved their way. From crewmembers and lifeguards to fundraisers, mechanics and station managers, women contribute to every aspect of the RNLI's work.

At the heart of Women of the RNLI is the photography of Jack Lowe, an artist who for almost a decade has been documenting the crews and views of every RNLI lifeboat station. His evocative images, captured using Victorian glass-plate technology, allow us to see the modern work of the RNLI through a historic lens.

Together with the voices and experiences of RNLI volunteers, Women of the RNLI provides a personal perspective on a lifesaving institution.

**National Maritime Museum,
Greenwich, London SE10 9NF (020
8858 4422, rmg.co.uk/national-maritime-museum)**



A photograph of Leah, a Whitby RNLI lifeboat volunteer, which was taken in 2017 using Victorian glass-plate technology.



ART DECO FLYING

Ronan Thomas claims aboard a DH89 Dragon Rapide airliner

Duxford Airfield, Cambridgeshire is Britain's home of vintage flying. Its popular air shows from May to October each year feature iconic military aircraft, roaring overhead to thrill aviation fans from all over the world. In June, flying displays celebrated the 80th anniversary of the D-day landings in June 1944.

Seven miles south of Cambridge, Duxford is also home to the Imperial War Museum's rich collection of historic military aircraft. What's more, private companies at this famous airfield offer affordable pleasure flights over Cambridgeshire in extraordinary biplane aircraft. It's a marvellous experience of history, sight and sound.

I recently flew in an art deco airliner from Duxford to London on a 100-mile

round trip. I was transported back in time. In 2024, we can easily take jet airline flight for granted. But airlines used to be vastly different. In the 1930s, the British civilian aviation industry was still in its infancy, operating piston-engine biplanes built of wood, metal and fabric. Then, as now, it was rare to fly in a biplane. In 1934, a new airliner took off – the de Havilland 89 Dragon Rapide. Those who flew in it knew it was something special. In its 90th anniversary year, it still is.

The DH89 Dragon Rapide airliner (or Rapide as it was popularly known)

Top: The silver DH89 Dragon Rapide airliner before take-off at Duxford Airfield. Built in 1946, RAF roundels on its fuselage and wings proudly recalled its flying history. Right: Eight passengers climbed in from the rear with the assistance of a dangling rope. Each of them had a window seat.



Photographs: Ronan Thomas

was made of plywood and fabric. With stylish swept-back wings – designed to resemble the shape of a moth – it was truly an airliner for the art deco age. At 34ft long with a 48ft wingspan, it was powered by two de Havilland Gipsy Six engines each producing some 200hp. It had a range of up to 556 miles (four hours of flying time) and a ceiling of 16,000ft, at an airspeed of 135-157mph. Along with the pilot, the Rapide carried six to eight passengers and their luggage.

Rapides were built at de Havilland's factory at Hatfield, Hertfordshire. Aimed at new airlines and private operators, the Rapide also found royal favour. In 1935, it was the preferred aircraft for the new King's Flight. Edward, Prince of Wales (briefly Edward VIII) and Prince George, Duke of Kent were both qualified pilots and used two red-and-blue liveried DH89 Dragon Rapides for official duties. In 1936, King Edward himself flew one to London, a first for a British monarch.

Biplane aircraft began to be replaced by faster monoplanes as World War Two approached but a military variant of the Rapide – the Dominie – was also produced. A total of 728 Rapides and Dominies were built. At the war's end, more than 100 of these aircraft were sold for service as light airliners in Britain and overseas. DH89 Rapides were operated on short-haul routes to and from the Channel Islands, the Isles of Scilly and in Scotland.

Today, some 43 Rapides survive in museum collections and 17 remain airworthy. My own parents flew (for the first time) in a Rapide from London to Jersey on holiday in 1960, and recalled a thrilling, sea-skimming approach over the English Channel. Each summer, the Rapide's distinctive silhouette is a familiar sight, droning gracefully over Cambridgeshire and London.

This is what art deco flying from Cambridgeshire is like. The silver Rapide – built in 1946 and formerly a company airliner and RAF parachuting aircraft – waited at Duxford, nose defiantly up. It was truly a thing of beauty. RAF roundels on its fuselage and wings proudly recalled its flying history.

Eight of us climbed in from the rear with the assistance of a dangling rope. It was a comfortable fit, each passenger with a window seat. It was a novelty to sit at an angle for take-off. A small escape hatch in the cabin roof above was secured by two metal pins. Sitting


Right: The cabin of the Rapide is enclosed but an opening in the pilot's nose cockpit let airflow gently circulate. Middle: The curve of the Thames passed below as the vintage aircraft flew over the capital. Below: The stationary Rapide before gaining the runway at Duxford.

by the rear entry door, with daylight showing through a small gap between the seal, my first thought was I was in an Agatha Christie film. Or ready to strap on a 1930s RAF parachute. Belted into our bucket seats, the pilot, in the nose cockpit, warmed the Rapide's twin engines up. They made a deep, sonorous roar, as we took off into the Cambridgeshire skies.

Heading south from Duxford, we reached an altitude of around 1,500ft under the cloud base, with an airspeed of around 100mph. Light aircraft passed us, going the other way. The cabin was enclosed but an opening in the pilot's cockpit let airflow gently circulate. The view from my window – of the airliner's silver wing struts and bracing wires – soon began to feel natural.

A sense of the past was powerful. The twin piston engines purposefully resonated. There was little turbulence on the hour-long trip, although the wind periodically gusted and the Rapide gently bucked. The verdant countryside inexorably gave way to congested London.

It is an extraordinary sensation to bank gracefully in a vintage aircraft over the capital. The curve of the Thames passed below, along with landmarks such as the Palace of Westminster, Buckingham Palace, Tower Bridge and Battersea Power Station (another art deco icon built 1929-1941). At 1,016ft high, the modern Shard building seemed to reach up at us as we passed well above.

On our return, as we approached Duxford airfield, the pilot throttled the twin Gipsy engines back. I will never forget the sound of the wind singing through those wires and struts, before a landing smoother than in a modern airliner. It was an art deco marvel from start to finish. 

For further information on a range of flying experiences from sightseeing flights to trial lessons onboard vintage craft, go to classic-wings.co.uk





From the Horse's Mouth

John Greeves tells the story of a participant of the Charge of the Light Brigade

The Charge of the Light Brigade in the Crimean War took place 170 years ago but is still remembered in the immortal lines of Alfred Tennyson's poem. As with most conflicts, the war arose through political and religious differences with Britain allied with France, Turkey and Sardinia against Russia in the Crimean peninsula.

Today, a visitor can find the grave of the charger Sir Briggs, ridden by Captain Godfrey Morgan, in the grounds of Tredegar House on the south-western edge of Newport, Gwent. A circle of low yew bushes surrounds a large obelisk headstone in the beautiful and tranquil cedar garden of the house.

The inscription reads: "In memory of Sir Briggs. Favourite charger. He carried his master, the Hon Godfrey Morgan, Captain 17th Lancers, boldly and well at the Battle of Alma, in the first line of the Light Cavalry Charge of Balaclava and the Battle of Inkerman, 1854. He died at Tredegar Park, February 6, 1874. Aged 28 years."

For more than 500 years, Tredegar House, set in 90 acres of parkland, was home to the Morgan family who owned vast tracts of land in Monmouthshire, Breconshire and Glamorgan. Sir Briggs, a chestnut stallion with black stocking and measuring 15 hands of unknown

“The whole charge lasted only 25 minutes. Of the 678 of all ranks, only 195 came back.”

pedigree, was bought in 1851 and would have remained a hunter if the Crimean War (1854-55) had not broken out.

Godfrey Morgan was educated at Eton and, in 1850, aged 19, purchased a commission as a cornet in the 17th Lancers. Morgan rose fairly quickly through the ranks and was a captain when hostilities began. At the outbreak of war, cavalry officers cut a great dash and were known as “plungers” or “swells” who rode blood horses. Of the mastery of war, they knew very little, believing valour to be the only prerequisite for an officer and gentleman. Senior command was riddled with ineptitude and the only true experienced officers were the Indian officers who were often passed over for promotion to those with no experience.

The 17th Lancers set sail for the Crimea from Portsmouth in five sailing ships from 18-25 April. Captain Morgan, aged 23, sailed in the Edmundsbury with his manservant John Stokes and was seen off by his brother Frederick. He had 80 men under his command and his ship was the last to set sail. The vessel itself was dirty, the food poor and the Lascar

crew quarrelsome. Ideally, it would have been better to have sent the troops and 40 horses on board by steamship as sailing ships were never equipped to carry horses.

Horses were particularly poor sailors and often suffered from sea sickness. As they cannot vomit, they became ill, and many died. As a remedy, vinegar was used to alleviate suffering by sponging the head, and especially the nostrils, morning and evening. When Captain Morgan's ship encountered a gale in the Bay of Biscay, the first horse died from seasickness. This was closely followed by Atheist, Captain Morgan's second charger, one of four horses he had shipped to the Crimea.

Captain Morgan's main concern lay with the horses which suffered badly on board before they reached Malta to take on water. He wrote to his mother: "If every ship lose in proportion as ours has done we shall be but a skeleton squadron." Most of his free time was spent reading. Some relief came from turtle fishing, pistol practice and even catching a porpoise which they ate.

Towards the end of May, the ship

Top: This classic formal lawn of the cedar garden at Tredegar House contains the grave of Sir Briggs, a circle of low yew bushes surrounding the large obelisk headstone. Inset: Sir Briggs near the gates of Tredegar House.



Left: A statue of Godfrey Morgan, 1st Viscount Tredegar and Sir Briggs in Cardiff.
Above: Tredegar House, set in 90 acres of parkland, was home to the Morgan family for more than 500 years. It is now in the care of the National Trust.

anchored, waiting its turn to go up the Dardanelles Strait in Turkey. Luckily, the Edmondsbury had a tow up the Dardanelles by the steamer Trent to Gallipoli, before setting sail for Constantinople where it berthed for several days. Captain Morgan sent his subaltern and John Stokes to buy a couple of Turkish horses to carry his baggage.

Up until now, the 17th Lancers had lost 26 horses. The regiment now re-embarked for the Bulgarian port of Varna and, after landing, moved on to Devnya which they thought a beautiful valley. Little did they know, the Turks shunned it, calling it "the valley of death." Cholera soon broke out and men died. In early September, the cavalry finally embarked on four transports from Varna for the Crimea.

Conditions on board ship in those days for men and mounts were totally inadequate. On the War Cloud, a transport used by another regiment, 75 of 100 horses perished. In the Crimea, Lord Raglan, British Commander in Chief, was determined to preserve what was left of the cavalry and used the Light Brigade primarily for patrol duties until that fateful day.

On 25 October 1854, the Russians attacked, and the battle of Balaclava took place. There were three stages to the battle, of which the Charge of the Light Brigade forms the final episode. In the first phase, the Russians captured several Turkish redoubts (gun emplacements) and then pressed on towards Balaclava, before being checked by the fire of Major-General Sir Colin Campbell's Highland Brigade, with the famous "thin red line". The British Heavy Cavalry Brigade, commanded by Major-General Sir James Scarlett, then charged and drove back the Russian cavalry, which outnumbered them by more than three to one.

The Charge of the Light Brigade is still remembered to this day and can be summarised as a blunder which resulted in unwavering bravery, valour and self-sacrifice. The controversy surrounding the charge still provokes much heated debate. It seems Lord Raglan sent a loosely worded order instructing the cavalry "to advance rapidly to the front, follow the enemy and try to prevent the enemy carrying away the guns." The ill-fated order was delivered by the impetuous Captain Nolan to Lord Lucan, with Lord Cardigan subsequently ordered to attack the guns.

In its final deployment, the Light Brigade was made up of the 17th Lancers and 13th Light Dragoon regiment in the front line, with the 11th Hussars in the middle and the 4th Light Dragoons and 8th Hussars forming the rear line. Historians have argued over the exact number of men taking part. Some give the number between 661 and 673, while John Fortescue (who wrote *A History of the 17th Lancers*) gives it as 678.


The Russians thought the light cavalry was about to attack the captured redoubts on the causeway but when no "wheel" was made, the Russian artillery opened fire on the slow-moving formation. Fire continued as they advanced towards a battery of 12 guns. Men and horses continued to drop.

Those who were not killed, wounded or blinded charged the battery and fought savagely for the guns. Captain Morgan wrote of the charge: "On we went for three-quarters of a mile, the enemy's gun firing in front of us till we were within a yard and a half of them." The enemy was routed, but Sir Briggs received a sabre cut just below his right eye from a gunner.

The whole charge lasted only 25 minutes. Of the 678 of all ranks, only 195 came back. The light cavalry never actively engaged the enemy again.

Captain Morgan was greatly changed after experiencing the "fearful scenes of carnage and bloodshed, his best friends lost," and was resolved in a letter he wrote to his mother to sell his commission. Fate intervened, when Captain Morgan was taken seriously ill with a fever, then deemed unfit for service and gazetted out. He convalesced at the Hotel D'Angleterre in Constantinople while Dobson, his soldier servant, looked after him during his long and slow recovery.

When he was better, Godfrey Morgan went on a European tour, before returning to Tredegar House. Sir Briggs was left with Godfrey's brother until the end of the war and then returned to Tredegar House where he remained for the rest of his long life.

In 1905, Godfrey Morgan was created Viscount Lord Tredegar. His earlier memories never deserted him. Speaking at the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Balaclava, at the Willis's Rooms at St James's, he said: "It may interest my audience to know what I was doing this time of day 50 years ago. I was numbering off all that was left of them, and it was a very sad duty; comrades were lying about who wanted to whisper into one's ear last words to someone – some girl, mother, sister or daughter while the breath of life was passing away." 

Tredegar House, Pencarn Way, Newport (01633 811661, nationaltrust.org.uk/tredegar-house)

TRIPLE THREAT

Chris Hallam relives the classic science fiction series *The Tripods*

Welcome to Britain: 2089. While some of us might think of a futuristic landscape dominated by artificial intelligence or manned missions to Mars, imagine instead a society locked forever in the pre-industrial age: a world of horse and carriages more reminiscent of, say, the year 1739 than anything in the future.

However, don't get too cosy. For within seconds, a towering metallic Tripod has stridden into view: a giant hemisphere supported by three long metallic legs. The Tripods' tyranny over the Earth has endured for decades, courtesy of the "Capping" process which most humans undergo on reaching adolescence. The caps are essentially metal plates which are fused into the wearer's head by the Tripods through which the Tripods can send orders or instructions.

The Capped are not mindless zombies: they can work as butchers, farmers, sailors or housewives as they might have done otherwise. But they are never again truly independent entities. Once Capped, no one is ever truly free. For the Tripods have three legs and at least one of the legs is always (at least metaphorically) deployed crushing the conquered humans underfoot.

Little wonder then, on being tipped off by a local resistance figure, village teenager Will Parker (played in the series by young Liverpool-born actor John Shackley), has no interest in being offered up to a Tripod as the date of his Capping ceremony fast approaches. He plans to escape, embarking on a long journey to the white mountains of Switzerland. In time, he is joined by his cousin Henry (Jim Baker) and a French boy, Jean-Paul Deliet, nicknamed "Beanpole" (Ceri Seel).

Such was the premise of the first series of *The Tripods*, the first of whose 13 episodes aired at 5.15pm on 15 September 1984 on BBC One, kicking off a Saturday evening schedule otherwise

dominated by Noel Edmonds' *The Late Late Breakfast Show*, *Bob's Full House*, *The Paul Daniels Magic Show*, the ongoing drama of police series *Juliet Bravo*, and the popular US soap *Dynasty*. A second 12-part series would run from September to November 1985. Both series were produced jointly by the BBC and Australia's Seven Network.

In fact, *The Tripods* were first brought to life by British author John Christopher who had been born Sam Youd in 1922. Already a prolific author, Christopher had produced *The Tripods* trilogy of books aimed at a young adult audience comprising *The White Mountains*, *The City of Gold and Lead* (both published in 1967) and *The Pool of Fire* (1968).

The new television series was a big deal at the time. *Blue Peter*'s Simon Groom and the late Michael Sundin interviewed the three main cast members, the series also made the cover of the *Radio Times* and was adapted into a computer game available on the ZX Spectrum, Commodore 64 and Amstrad CPC.

A few viewers complained about the relative infrequency of the appearances by *The Tripods* on screen or felt the lack of special effects made it resemble a period drama. This sense of period was reinforced by the decision to film certain scenes at the medieval Saltwood Castle near Hythe in Kent. The building was then home to the famously rakish Conservative MP and diarist Alan Clark.

Despite the massive age gap, Clark (then in his 50s) admitted to taking a

strong liking to "little Charlotte Long", the aristocratic teenaged actress cast as potential French love interest Eloise. In a tragic twist of fate, Long was killed in an accident on the M4 motorway, a week before her first appearance in *The Tripods* in October 1984. Long's death came just three days before what would have been her 19th birthday. Cindy Shelley, an actress who later became known for her role as Abby Urquhart in *Howards' Way*, played Eloise in the second series.

Generally speaking, reviews for *The Tripods* were largely favourable. The *Daily Express* hailed it as "the most compelling imaginative teatime adventure story in years", while *Broadcast* described it as "strongly acted and beautifully shot... The overall sense is one of menace and adventure... *Tripods* is quite simply one of the best half-hours of the week."

However, not everyone was so kind. "What I don't like about it is that it's a certain type of British science fiction which is looking backwards instead of forwards," claimed author Brian Aldiss on BBC Two's *Did You See...?* Likening it to an advert for Hovis bread, he labelled it "a rather clumsy piece of engineering."

Others on the panel of the Ludovic Kennedy-fronted show seemed confused as to whether it was supposed to be set in the recent 1970s or medieval times (as we have seen, neither of these were true). There was some enthusiasm about the theme tune, however. Composed by Ken Freeman, the theme (which was later released as a record) now bears a slight similarity to that of the long-running BBC medical drama *Casualty*, which Freeman also composed soon afterwards.

The first series received an average of 6.2 million viewers – consistently more than the omnibus edition of Channel 4 soap opera *Brookside* – although

The initial attempt to film the Tripod leg crashing down on to the farmhouse roof resulted in destruction of the prop.



Photographs: (Behind the scenes) Les McCallum

Doing the Leg Work

In more than 30 years of working for the BBC in the design department, I worked on many science fiction shows, such as Doctor Who from the first Doctor, William Hartnell, then Patrick Troughton, Jon Pertwee, Tom Baker and Peter Davison after he had returned to Earth as a normal person. Then there was Blakes 7, The Day of the Triffids, Survivors, and The Tripods.

Vic Meredith was the designer and we had to travel down to Cornwall in just one day from London to do a recce of several locations, one being Charlestown Harbour, near St Austell.

I had broken my toe the day before and trying to keep up with the director, location manager and Vic was rather painful as I took measurements, notes, photos and quick sketches.

Charlestown was such a lovely location and when we arrived a few days before filming, we had to transform the harbour front to look like it was a bustling waterfront with boats, a public house, signs, rope, rigging, lobster pots, stools and tables, and even a camel to make it feel and look exotic.

The Tripods were required to appear as if they were walking through a lake, which was filmed in the hamlet of Friday Street, near Dorking, Surrey. We had built a small wooden jetty and special effects

had organised a huge cherry picker lorry with crane to land one of the legs into the water. Unfortunately, it was a stretch too far, and the truck started to sink into the earth and was in danger of toppling.

We had some scenes set in a derelict farm on Exmoor and, on the recce, we found dead animals in the pens. The farmer was most peculiar and would call to his sister, who was out in the fields, with some animal-like call. I don't think there was electricity and certainly no telephone. We heard later the farmer was prosecuted for animal cruelty.

The farmer lived in one part of the farmhouse, the rest had collapsed, and the section we were to film housed livestock. The boys were to run out of the farmhouse as the rooms caught fire, courtesy of special effects. The trouble was the exit from the kitchen was blocked by empty food tins, which had to be cleared. There were thousands of them that had obviously just been thrown and allowed to pile up over many years. To show willing, I took the prop guy's shovel and did the first attempt at clearing a path. The stench was disgusting, and I had to wrap a cloth around my face.

The last shot of the day was of the Tripod leg, once again on a crane, which had to crash down on to the roof and



Les McCallum with visual effects supervisor Kevin Molloy and a Tripod.

demolish it. The guys had spent ages cutting through the beams ready for the action. But as the Tripod leg hit the roof tiles, it disintegrated (the roof beams must have been oak) and another leg had to be brought in.

Les McCallum

generally less than those watching quiz show Blockbusters and other shows which ITV aired during the same Saturday evening timeslot. The show also compared well to 1984's dark festive BBC children's fantasy Box of Delights, which also averaged 6.2 million viewers and did better than the terrifying Children's ITV John Wyndham adaptation Chocky (5.9 million), although rarely did better than Doctor Who which consistently averaged 7.2 million in the era which saw assistant Peri (Nicola Bryant) overseeing Peter Davison's regeneration into Colin Baker.

Although these figures were considered slightly disappointing, the decision was made to press ahead with a second series to air in 1985. The new series again got the Blue Peter treatment with Simon Groom, Janet Ellis and Peter Duncan (who had himself had a small part in the 1980 science

fiction film Flash Gordon) explaining the process of colour separation overlay (better known as chroma key), which contributed to many of the show's special effects.

Sadly, just as the second series came close to completing filming, producer Richard Bates learned the devastating news: there would be no third series of The Tripods. The series had been



The Tripods walking through a lake was filmed in the hamlet of Friday Street, near Dorking, Surrey.

cancelled and was destined to remain permanently incomplete with the final novel in the trilogy unfilmed. The three-legged structure of The Tripods was to remain forever one leg short.

Nearly 40 years on, this brutal decision seems hard to justify. As Chris Jones, author of The Tripods: All For Nothing? explains, the £1.68m budget for the entire second series was not excessive (more than that for sitcom 'Allo 'Allo! but considerably less than for Miss Marple, two other BBC shows which were both commissioned around this time). Ratings did fall during the second series, perhaps partly due to competition from popular US export The A-Team on ITV, but hardly fell through the floor.

As it turned out, none of The Tripods' three young leads continued acting long into adulthood. The series remains surprisingly free of familiar faces, two exceptions being Lisa Maxwell (Zelina in the second



The Tripods was promoted across a wide range of media, including on the cover of the Radio Times, in interviews on Blue Peter and a comic strip in the short-lived “junior BBC Television magazine”, BEEB.

series), who in the 21st century would enjoy a long stint as DS Samatha Nixon in The Bill, as well as Pam St Clement (Frau Heintz) who would soon take up residence in Albert Square as Pat in 2,301 episodes of EastEnders.

Chris Jones praises the series: “... the scale of the undertaking – from visual effects, technological and logistical standpoints... so much more adventurous and difficult to achieve than anything that had been attempted on video, anywhere. The level of minute planning required to achieve this was far beyond anything the BBC had tried previously, forcing several new (or custom invented) technologies to be developed and employed.”

In 1988, a book prequel, When the Tripods Came appeared. Set in the near future, John Christopher’s novel explained how The Tripods had used the medium of television to take over the Earth. Sadly, however, in reality, The Tripods’ own attempt to conquer the world of TV had proven less successful.

“In spite of its cancellation, the series still holds a complete fascination for those who spent their Saturdays watching it,” says Jones. “So, to have the opportunity to work with the cast, crew and the BBC – to finally ‘open the vault’ as it were and share everything from concept drawings and storyboards to unseen photos and colourful anecdotes – is a real honour.” 🇬🇧

The Tripods: All For Nothing?: The Secrets and Stories Behind the BBC Series, by Chris Jones, was published by Graphetti on 14 September 2024.



Its editor, **Jason Quinn**, looks back on 45 years of Doctor Who Magazine

Forty-five years? Forty-five years? Unbelievable... it only seems like yesterday that 15-year-old me bought the first issue of what was then Doctor Who Weekly from Tom Baker himself at a newsagent in Leeds. No, Tom wasn’t moonlighting as a newsagent, he was helping to promote Marvel’s newest comic. I say it seems like yesterday, but in 1994 when I first started working at Marvel UK, it seemed as if the magazine had been running forever. Those were, of course, the lean years, when the show wasn’t in production and apart from that brief flurry of excitement surrounding the 1996 television film, it would be another age before we saw it return to our screens.

Now don’t worry, I’m not going to give you a potted history of the world’s longest-running magazine based on a television show. There are way more qualified people who could do that. Instead, I’ll just give you a history of the mag as it affected me personally. Back when I joined Marvel, Gary Russell was editor, and although I was full of hopes to be working on the superhero titles, I was given Barbie and Care Bears. My brother Tim was still working alongside Dicky Howett on the long-running Doctor Who? strip that appeared in each issue.

Top: Doctor Who Magazine editor Jason Quinn, flanked by deputy editor Richard Atkinson and art editor Mike Jones, onboard the Tardis.



To celebrate the 600th issue of Doctor Who Magazine, Jason and his colleagues took every issue of the magazine to the BBC studios at Cardiff for a cover shoot inside the Tardis.

When Panini took over the reins at Marvel UK, Gary headed off on another adventure and Gary Gillatt stepped in as editor. In those days, he still looked like a teenager. In fact, he doesn't look that much older now, nearly 30 years later. The Panini takeover meant it wasn't long before the whole company relocated to Tunbridge Wells with the move to Kent in 1996.

I became chief subeditor, and it was then that I first began working on Doctor Who Magazine in earnest. Well, I say in earnest, I was really just reading it, giving it a proof before press. That was quite a feat in itself. Every other magazine we produced could be read in half an hour or so, but Doctor Who Magazine took all day. Now any aficionado worth their salt will tell you Doctor Who Magazine is best enjoyed at your leisure, and not in a marathon session. But alas, poor old subeditors don't get that luxury.

Doctor Who fans have always been vocal, but back in the 1990s there was no social media and angry fans would often take out their frustrations in a different way. I remember once the whole of the Pantiles in Tunbridge Wells had to be evacuated while the bomb squad came in to investigate a mysterious ticking package the Doctor Who Magazine team received one morning. It wasn't a bomb, just a box of random bits and bobs and an alarm clock, but even so, it made us all think we were on the front line of journalism, risking our lives daily to

satisfy the demand for anything Doctor Who related.

It was shortly after that I left Panini for the first time. No, I wasn't fleeing in terror, I headed off to work at Pinewood Studios for a while before jetting off to live in Spain and India for the next 14 years. During that hiatus, I still received Doctor Who Magazine every month, and I've been a fan of the comic strip all my life. I finally headed back to Panini in



The cover of the first issue of what was then Doctor Who Weekly, which a 15-year-old Jason bought from Tom Baker himself at a newsagent in Leeds in 1979.

2014 and wound up on the junior DWM title Doctor Who Adventures. In those days, Tom Spilsbury was editor, and I always enjoyed our chats and the whole Doctor Who team.

In fact, during all these years I've been so impressed with the dedication and knowledge of everyone who has worked on this magazine of ours. It's a fount of knowledge and it's an ever-present, ever-changing, ever-evolving entity of its own. Quite unlike anything else I've ever worked on or known.

Last year, as we geared up for the 60th anniversary of the show, I was lucky enough to be asked to become editor and what a joy it has been. Working with our own team and with Bad Wolf and BBC Studios has been such fun. People ask if it isn't a lot of pressure, and I suppose it is, in a way. Obviously, you want the magazine to be good and to reflect the current era, while staying true to itself at the same time – but pressure? Well, it's fun pressure.

Even the late nights when we go to press are fun. I mean, we're reading about something we love. I think I can speak for myself, well I know I can speak for myself, but I can also speak for Mike, our art editor, and Richard, our deputy editor, when I say we've got one of the best jobs in the world. I hope that doesn't sound smug. I'm happy for Doctor Who Magazine to be the world's longest-running magazine based on a TV show. I don't want it to be known as the world's smuggest magazine, too.

No sooner were the 60th anniversary celebrations over for the show than we were preparing for the 600th edition of our magazine, by bringing up every issue to Cardiff for a special cover shoot inside the Tardis itself. That Tardis set is immense. In fact, it's so big I got lost in there. And carting 600 issues up to Wales and then spreading them out all over the Tardis console is a bigger job than you'd think. It took us all morning, and even longer to pack them away. But what an experience.

Forty-five years, flown by in the blink of an eye. Before I have a chance to blow my nose, we'll be celebrating 50 years. This magazine and this show reaches for the stars, but at the same time it's as British as ... I was going to say chips, but I'm not that mad about chips, so insert your own favourite item in there in its place. 🇬🇧

Jason Quinn is editor of Doctor Who Magazine. Go to doctorwhomagazine.com for further information.



Racing *to* Gold

Colin Allan recalls how a last-minute decision led to Olympic victory

It was 20 October 1964 and the Women's 800 metres final was about to begin at the Tokyo Olympics. Britain's Ann Packer had not expected to be on the starting line. Her main event was the 400 metres in which she had won the silver medal three days previously. The 22-year-old PE teacher from Surrey had already run the 400 metres three times and the 800 metres twice in that week. Having scraped into the 800 metres final, she seriously considered forgoing the run to go shopping and sightseeing.

However, she changed her mind after seeing her fiancé, 400 metre runner Robbie Brightwell, finish an agonising fourth in his final the previous day. He had been one of the favourites and now

his hopes had been shattered. Ann explained her change of mind: "It was a bad time for us, so I vowed I would win the gold medal for him, and for the rest of the team. For Robbie, I was prepared to run myself into the ground."

In her 400 metres final, Ann had clocked 52.2 seconds but was beaten by Australia's Betty Cuthbert (52.0). She had reduced the Aussie's lead in the final straight but had to settle for the silver medal.

Ann Packer was a versatile athlete. She had won the English Schools 100 yards title in 1959. Her events included the long jump, pentathlon, sprints and 400 metres. In 1962, she gained a bronze medal in the European Championships as a member of Britain's 4x100 metres

relay squad. Later in the season, she ran in England's 4x110 yards relay team at the Perth Commonwealth Games in which the squad obtained the silver medals. By 1963, she had improved her 400 metres personal best to a world class 53.6 seconds.

Ann had only run five 800 metres races prior to the Olympics, mainly to improve her stamina for the shorter event. Her lack of experience showed in her heat as she finished in the last qualifying place in 2 minutes 12.6 seconds. She made the final by coming third in her semi in the time of 2:06.0.

At the starting line, she had the second slowest personal best of the competitors. Right from the gun, Szabo of Hungary took the lead but the



Left: Ann Packer with her fiancé, Robbie Brightwell, who won silver in the men's 4x400 metres relay at the Tokyo Olympics.
Right: Ann Packer, No 55, competes in the Women's 800 metres during the Tokyo Olympics on October 20 1964.

clear favourite, France's Marie-Yvonne Dupurier was on her shoulder. The French woman took the lead on the opening lap and seemed to be creating a challenging lead. Dupurier reached the bell in 58.9 seconds. Ann was sixth at this point but moved into third place down the back straight and began tracking the New Zealander Marise Chamberlain thinking the Kiwi would make a decisive move. But as Ann later explained: "I got behind her and waited for her to sprint but she didn't, so I stepped into an outside lane to clear myself of the ruck." Then, entering the final straight, Ann accelerated and, maintaining perfect poise, seemed to glide effortlessly past Dupurier to establish a five-yard lead which she maintained to the tape.

Not stopping at the tape, Ann ran right on straight into the arms of Robbie Brightwell who was stood trackside at the first bend.

Ann had won in the world record time of 2 minutes 1.1 seconds. Yet, it had all seemed so straightforward. Ann remarked: "It was so easy. I could not believe I had won. Yet when I ran 2:12 in the first round, I really thought I had had it!"

With her own gold medal secured, she had the further satisfaction of watching Robbie run a barnstorming last leg in the men's 4x400 metres relay to gain silver for the team.

Ann Packer then announced her retirement from the track, despite her young age. She ran just one further race, a week later, in the British Empire v USA v Japan triangular meeting at Osaka. When asked by a Japanese journalist the reason for her decision, she replied: "So I can be a good wife." 🇬🇧

Homecoming Queen

Two weeks after winning her gold medal, Ann returned to work as a PE teacher at Coombe Hill School in New Malden, Surrey. As she drove into work with a colleague, she was surprised by the whole school who were waving banners and chanting her name.

Carried into school on the shoulders of her pupils, Ann was taken to a special assembly where she was showered with tributes from the headmistress and the mayor. Following a lunch held in her honour by the school's governors, Ann umpired a netball game which saw Coombe Hill beat Croydon's Lady Edrich School 25 – 13.

In mid-November, Ann and Robbie Brightwell – a PE teacher at Tiffin Boys' School, Kingston upon Thames – were given a dinner at County Hall, hosted by the chairman of the Surrey County Education Committee.

Ann and Robbie, who were appointed MBEs in the 1965 New Year Honours, were married at St John the Baptist in Moultsford, Berkshire – the village where Ann's parents lived – on 19 December 1964. Robbie's best man was John Cooper, who had been part of the silver medal winning 4x400 metres relay team and had won another silver for the 400 metres hurdles.

The Brightwells had three sons: Gary, a 400 metres runner, and professional footballers Ian and David, who would both play for Manchester City.

Ann, who was inducted into the England Athletics Hall of Fame in 2009, was widowed in March 2022. In June 2023, Ann cut the ribbon at the reopening of Congleton Leisure Centre in Congleton, Cheshire. Facilities at the refurbished centre include the Brightwell Suite, a meeting room named after the town's famous residents.



Ann Brightwell, cutting the ribbon alongside Cllr Rod Fletcher, mayor of Cheshire East Council, to mark the reopening of Congleton Leisure Centre.



Top of the Class

Chris Hallam says hello again to Mr Chips

Ninety or so years ago, a small schoolboy called Linford went to visit an elderly gentleman. It was November 1933 and the old man soon realised that young Linford, a new boy, had been the victim of a good-natured ruse by his fellow pupils. He was, after all, no longer a serving member of staff at the boy's school, Brookfield, and there was no need whatsoever for the boy to report to him. For this was the legendary Mr Chipping, better known to one and all as "Mr Chips".

After well over half a century at the school, first as a master, then as acting head, then as the actual head, Chips has become as much an institution as Brookfield himself. He treats the young boy kindly. He is 85 years old and is clearly nearing the end of a long and rewarding life.

The scene described above, arose entirely from the imagination of author James Hilton whose novella *Goodbye, Mr Chips* was first published to immediate success in 1934. I first encountered Mr Chips for myself 50 years later, courtesy of a BBC One adaptation of the story starring Roy Marsden which aired in 1984 when I was seven years old. I enjoyed the series at

Top: Robert Donat as Mr Chips in the 1938 film adaptation of *Goodbye, Mr Chips*. **Right:** Author James Hilton shared an Oscar for his contribution to the *Mrs Miniver* screenplay.

the time but have never seen it again. I encountered the book a few years later and was immediately captivated.

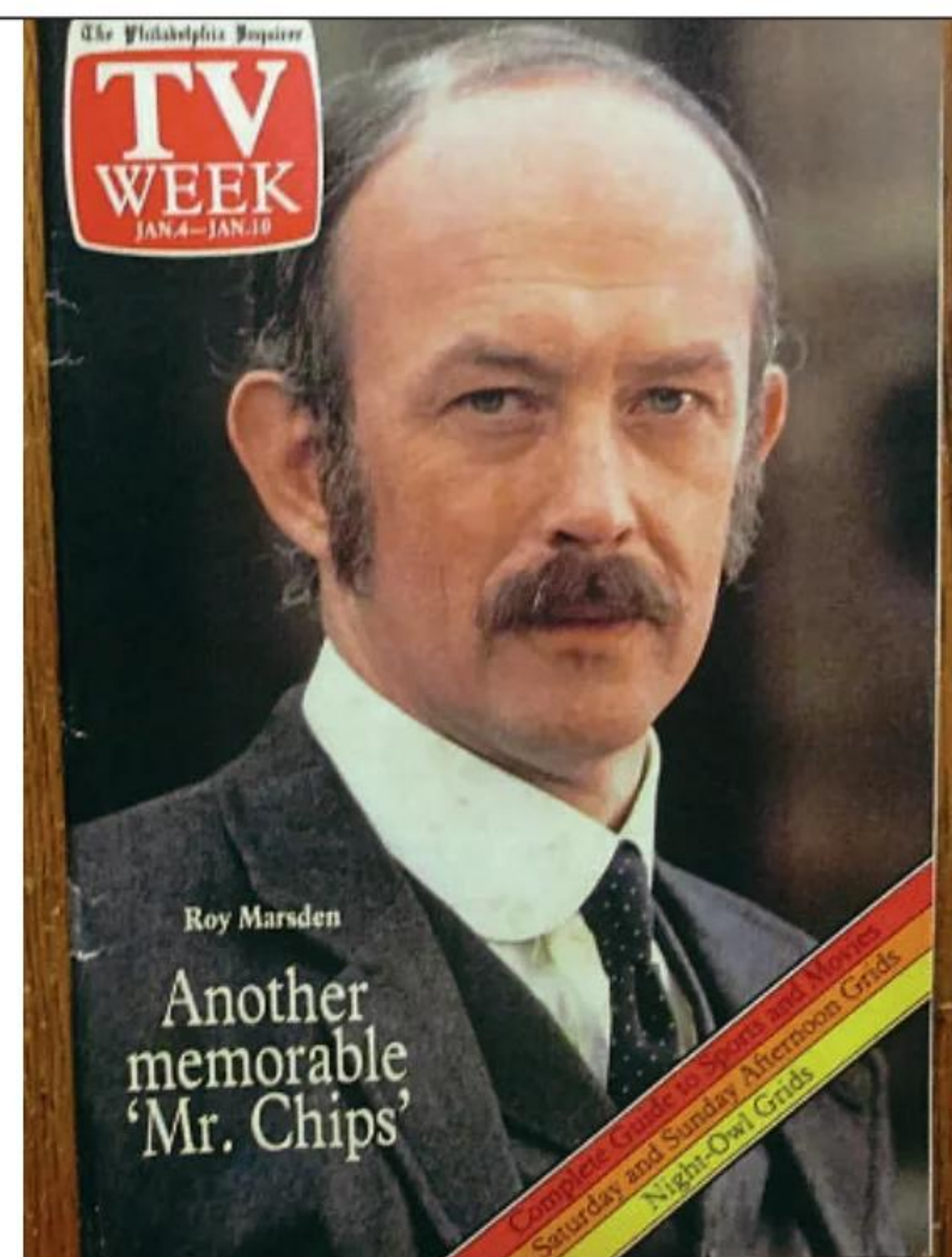
What particularly impressed me then as it has since is the capacity of such a short book – I find, I can usually read the whole thing in little over half an hour – to effortlessly convey the passage of over 50 years. I have now read the book many times since and am always left with this strange time-distorting effect as if I have just read a much longer and denser novel.

The story is simple. Chipping (we never learn his first name) is a schoolteacher born in 1848 who takes up a position at Brookfield, a minor public school in 1870 after experiencing discipline problems at his previous placement. He is initially ambitious and expects to move quickly on to other things but, as so often in life, as the years roll by, he finds his niche and grows increasingly comfortable with the notion of staying where he is.

He is rather stiff and serious as a young man but as he advances into



middle-age, grows more prone to jokes and clever asides and, by the early 20th century, has become an almost universally well-regarded school institution. Revealing too much more than that would risk spoiling the book. More things do happen, but that is essentially the novella in a nutshell. As he looks back on his long life, Chips is at one point unsure "whether he has been laughing or crying." It is a stirring, powerful and sentimental book and the reader may be left feeling much the same way themselves.



Above: Mr Chips was partly based on William Henry Balgarnie one of James Hilton's teachers from The Leys School, Cambridge. Right: Adam Dalglish star Roy Marsden played a "tough" version of Chips in a 1984 adaptation for BBC One's Classic Serial strand.

Over the years, Chips sees pupils and headmasters, some good, some bad, come and go. The world around them changes too. Chips is a conservative figure to start with and remains so to the end, but his horizons broaden. He is born into a world entirely free of motor cars or aeroplanes and where even the idea of a woman reading Ibsen or riding a bicycle seems quite racy. By the time young Linford visits him in 1933, women can not only vote, but serve in the cabinet, and planes and airships are not only widely used for transport but frequently serve as agents of death and destruction.

It is not really any sort of spoiler to reveal that the First World War casts a huge shadow over the book. Although the war breaks out only as Chips is reaching old age, it is clear from the start that the conflict had wrought a terrible toll on the many hundreds of boys he has been teaching over the years. Barely an anecdote goes by without Chips sadly recalling the boy involved "was killed in Egypt, I think" or that "later Chips heard that he had been killed at Passchendaele" and the war ultimately transforms his life.

Such accounts would, of course, have enormous resonance to anyone reading the book in 1934, a mere 16 years after the end of the so-called "war to end all wars." Not a single reader would have been entirely untouched by the human cost of the war, even those child readers who even then would have had no memory of it themselves.

Today, we live in a different world. No one at all now can remember the Great Exhibition of 1851 (which, we are told, Chips attended as a child) or incidents such as the Relief of Ladysmith or the delayed coronation of Edward VII. Very

few indeed would even remember the news events briefly alluded to towards the book's end ("What do you think of Hoover, sir?" "Do you think we shall ever go back to gold?") Most readers will have not taught in a school (although many will have done) and a majority will have had no first-hand experience of the sort of public, all-male school which Chips teaches at.

“The book remains massively relatable because everyone has some personal experience of school life.”

Despite these things, the book remains massively relatable simply because virtually everyone has some personal experience of school life. We may not all be able to bring to mind someone exactly like Mr Chips from our own schooldays, but we can surely all think of someone pretty similar.


Author James Hilton was never a teacher himself. As a boy, he attended The Leys School, Cambridge where William Henry Balgarnie (1869-1951) taught. Hilton himself admitted, "Balgarnie was, I suppose, the chief model for my story." Balgarnie had joined the school in 1900, the same year Hilton was born. The old master died there in 1951, aged 82, having lived out his final years in modest lodgings opposite the school. Other sources of inspiration seem to have been a Mr Topliss who taught Hilton Latin, history and English, another entirely different moustached master at The Leys known as "Chops", as well as Hilton's own father, John Hilton, who served as a

popular, rather eccentric headmaster of a Walthamstow school.

James himself must have been a bright boy in class, going on to Christ's College, Cambridge and having his first novel, *Catherine Herself* (1920), published while he was still an undergraduate. Today, in addition to Mr Chips, he is best remembered for the novel *Lost Horizon* (1933), which introduced the concept of the fictional utopian realm of Shangri-La, and *Random Harvest* (1941).

As some of his works were adapted for the big screen, Hilton soon followed the likes of Graham Greene, John Steinbeck and F Scott Fitzgerald into writing for the exciting new world of cinema. Among other things, he wrote dialogue for Hitchcock's *Foreign Correspondent* (1942) and shared an Oscar for his writing on the screenplay of *Mrs Miniver* (1942). Sadly, Hilton was not destined to have the long life of Mr Chips and died of liver cancer at his home in California in 1954, aged just 54.

In addition to the 1984 TV version, which I already mentioned, *Goodbye, Mr Chips* has been filmed twice, first in 1939 with an Oscar-winning performance from Robert Donat and again perhaps less successfully as a musical starring Peter O'Toole in 1969. A decent TV version starring Martin Clunes was produced in 2002.

Ninety years on, *Goodbye, Mr Chips* remains a powerful read. If anything, its poignancy today is enhanced by the fact we now know the world of Mr Chips was lurching towards another devastating global conflict, a war in which the boy Linford who Mr Chips meets at the very end of his life and who would be 18 by the year 1940, would have most likely been a combatant. 



Open to Interpretation

Claire Saul explores recent developments at two of the country's oldest castles

Our nation's castles have stood for centuries, some modified over time, others now only fragmentary ruins. Some have become popular visitor attractions or private homes – occasionally both – carefully managed for modern-day comfort and convenience and/or to entice footfall while upholding health and safety requirements, all the while balancing the need for heritage conservation and protection.

Sitting high and overlooking the famous white cliffs and playing a vital role in the defence of the country for more than 900 years, Dover Castle is one of more than 400 historic sites cared for by English Heritage. It was one of the south-east's Top 20 paid-for visitor attractions last year and this year hopes to swell numbers further with Dover Castle Under Siege, a new visitor experience which recounts the story of the most testing times in its long history.

Opening up the castle's northern defences, including the medieval Spur tunnels and Georgian casemates, Dover Castle Under Siege revolves around the castle's position as the "key to England" in the face of determined sieges from

English rebels and the forces of a French prince during the 13th century First Barons' War, which evolved after the sealing of Magna Carta at Runnymede, Surrey in 1215.

The new-look castle also enables visitors to explore the network of underground tunnels, partly rough-hewn following the great medieval sieges, and partly lined in Georgian brickwork, in anticipation of attack by Napoleon Bonaparte's army. The tunnels served the defensive barbican, later renamed the Spur, rebuilt in the aftermath of the sieges. They allowed the castle's garrison to get quickly on to the barbican to defend it, unseen by an attacking force. This is the first time that visitors have had access to the Spur. They can admire the view of the castle from the perspective of the attacking French and baronial army.

The tunnels were expanded during the Georgian era, making them fit for contemporary warfare. The castle's new interpretation peels back their historical layers, to reveal the medieval stone masonry. Day-to-day life in the castle during both periods of history is also being explored in a new exhibition, looking at aspects such as the ordeal

of living through extended sieges and waiting for invasion, and the physical hardships of crowded conditions and rationed food.

In addition to explaining the historical context behind the sieges, the exhibition contains immersive film, light and soundscape to position visitors within the fighting, while hands-on elements include laser-activated crossbow shooting. A dressed Georgian barrack room includes cooking facilities, uniform and equipment, plus some clothes that the young and young-at-heart can try on themselves. Outside, a new play area offers siege games, catapults and siege engines, plus climbing walls and mining tunnels.

Dover Castle still retains its regular visitor temptations, of course, including the story of Henry II in the great tower, and from World War Two an underground hospital and the castle's role in Operation Dynamo, the effort to evacuate allied troops from the beaches and harbour of Dunkirk.

Dover Castle Under Siege recounts the story of the most testing times in the castle's long history.



Dover Castle, Castle Hill, Dover, Kent
CT16 1HU (0370 333 1181, english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/dover)

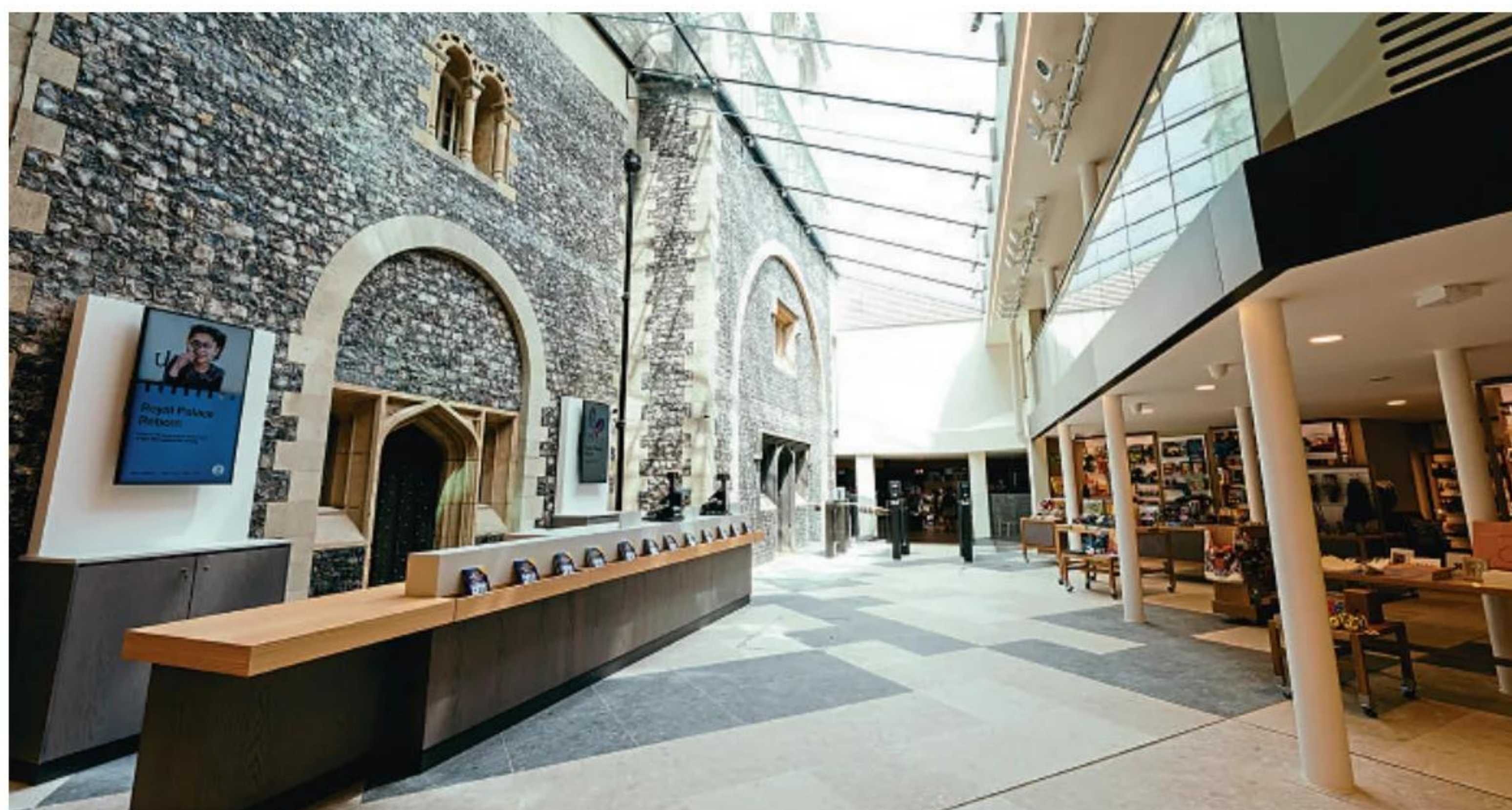
Royal Palace Reborn

Norwich Castle's mighty stone keep was built by the Normans as a royal palace more than 900 years ago and spent at least 500 years as the county prison. Today the castle site, located on the largest man-made motte in England, incorporates both the Grade I-listed medieval keep and a museum and art gallery housed in the converted buildings of the Georgian-era prison.

The ongoing Royal Palace Reborn project at the castle marked an important milestone this summer, when the castle opened its new entrance to visitors, completing the first phase of an £18m project. A 1960s building has been transformed into a light-filled glass atrium providing a spectacular view of the keep which has been hidden for decades. A new shop and restaurant have opened, plus a state-of-the-art education room for school groups and learning activities.

On completion of the project, visitors will be able to explore every level of the castle, from basement to rooftop battlements. This will include the recreated great hall and Norman royal apartments, the new British Museum Partnership gallery showcasing more than 1,000 medieval artefacts and treasures, and accurately recreated Norman room spaces. Interactive and immersive audiovisual experiences will evoke medieval Norwich, while a new rooftop terrace will offer panoramic city views.


During the extensive redevelopment, the building has revealed many secrets



Left: Visitors to Dover Castle can explore the network of underground tunnels, expanded during the Georgian era to make them fit for contemporary warfare. **Top:** At Norwich Castle, a 1960s building has been transformed into a light-filled glass atrium providing a spectacular view of the Grade I-listed medieval keep which has been hidden for decades.

and sensitivities, including prison-era features and remains of wells and heating systems. Some of these discoveries have required modifications to the planned works to minimise the impact on the historic fabric of the medieval structure.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime project," says Norfolk Museums Service, "and we have to ensure that we are treating

this unique building with the care and respect it deserves so the finished development and interpretation does full justice to one of the most spectacular palaces in medieval Europe." 

Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery, Castle Hill, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 3JU (01603 493625, norwichcastle.norfolk.gov.uk)

Picturesque Portsoy

Six historic and currently disused buildings in Portsoy have recently passed into community ownership, meaning the 17th century Aberdeenshire harbour is now protected for future generations. New custodians, the North East Scotland Preservation Trust, plan to develop the properties to further enhance the setting and rare historic harbour, for the benefit of local residents and visitors alike.

Funded by a legacy from local benefactor Tom Burnett-Smith and supported by the Architectural Heritage Fund, it is intended that four underused or disused buildings at

the heart of the harbour – the marble warehouse, the marble workshop, the granary building and the rag warehouse – will be developed to complement two existing and operational holiday cottages which were also part of the legacy.

The picturesque harbour has been a filming location for productions such as *Peaky Blinders* and the remake of *Whiskey Galore!*

North East Scotland Preservation Trust, Portsoy Marble, Shorehead, Portsoy, Aberdeenshire AB45 2PB (07831 580165, nespt.org)





BEST OF BRITISH

puzzle page

Twenty Questions

How well do you know Britain – Past and Present? Test your knowledge with our October quiz

- Who played the elder Edward the Seventh in the 1975 television series of the same name?
- Which peer and companion of honour was head of arts at London Weekend Television from 1982 to 1990?
- Who illustrated children's books written by her husband, Allan, including Burglar Bill, Funny Bones and The Jolly Postman?
- Which composer's work includes the scores for the films Cry Freedom, The History Boys and The Company of Wolves?
- Which comedian, writer and presenter, a former doctor, won the Perrier Award for Best Newcomer at the 1992 Edinburgh Festival Fringe?
- Which star of the TV series Chancer was nominated for an Oscar for Best Supporting Actor for the film Closer?
- Which coin, when it was introduced in October 1969, was the most valuable coin in general circulation in the world?
- Which former Spooks actor has won Baftas, Primetime Emmy Awards, Screen Actors Guild Awards and a Golden Globe for his role in the comedy-drama Succession?
- Who developed the geodetic airframe used in the Vickers Wellesley, Wellington, Warwick and Windsor bombers?
- Who was the star of the ITV sitcom Rising Damp and the BBC's The Fall and Rise of Reginald Perrin?
- Who played headmaster Morris Cromwell in the sitcom Please Sir!?
- Who wrote the songs The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face and Dirty Old Town?
- Which director of films such as Born Free and Black Beauty also directed the Southern Television series Worzel Gummidge?
- Who was the manager and husband of Cilla Black?
- Who was the oldest British royal in history?
- Who played Phil Archer in BBC Radio 4's The Archers?
- Which singer-songwriter became the first woman to win an Ivor Novello award for the song Won't Somebody Dance With Me?
- Which star of All Creatures Great and Small and Loose Women played the mother in Oxo adverts of the 1980s and 90s?
- Who replaced Sir Robin Day as the chairman of BBC One's Question Time?
- Who played George Mole, father of Adrian, in Thames Television's The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole and The Growing Pains of Adrian Mole?

And I quote...

Which keyboard player, part of a synth-pop duo, was described by The Guardian as being "possibly more famous for not doing anything than almost anyone else in the history of popular entertainment?"

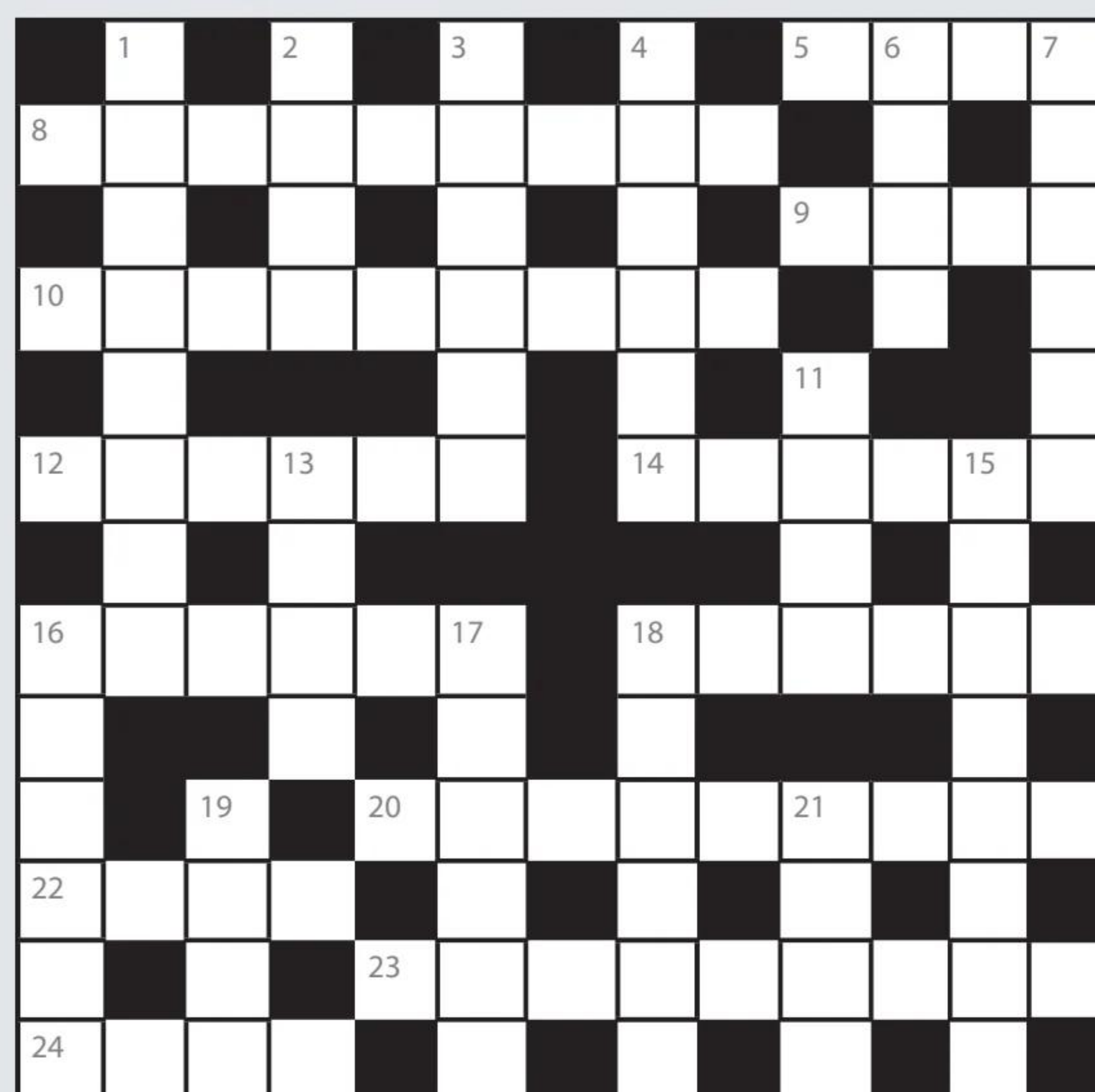
Dialect Detective

Britain has many wonderful regional dialects. Can you spot the correct definition for each of these examples?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Culp (<i>Norfolk/Suffolk</i>) | 3. Puthery (<i>Warwickshire</i>) |
| a) A small arch | a) Hot |
| b) A smelting house | b) Poultry |
| c) A hard and heavy blow | c) Surly |
| 2. Kiver (<i>Norfolk</i>) | 4. Slotch (<i>Lancashire</i>) |
| a) A cover | a) To grasp |
| b) A saddler | b) A greedy clown |
| c) A young cat | c) A snail |

Cryptic Crossword

Compiled by CADOC



Across

- Did Tommy Handley feature in this information technology higher degree? (1,1,1,1)
- Were you this (for dancing) when hearing Joe Loss's signature tune? (2,3,4)
- Acker, leader of band – and kind! (4)
- 10, 18 and 22 Across. Reading Best of British, say, more women and I partly are confused. (1,4,4,6,4)
- Was Australian bowler sick in shelter? (6)
- "Alas! poor I knew him, Horatio" (William Shakespeare) (6)
- To-do list, scrag end always includes it. (6)
- See 10 Across
- October date? Ah well, one is drunk! (9)
- See 10 Across
- At this point abstainer is found in use as torch bearer (9)
- Scottish town working around airline (4)

Down

- Now, heaven knows – this goes wrote Cole Porter (8)
- Hot type of food perhaps for a crunch match by the sound of it (4)
- Eg mud's splattered – causing this? (6)
- This Firth has youth leader in a slow spin (6)
- Riot involved The Bachelors, for example (4)
- Old gun causing Warner and Charlton to lose their heads (3-3)
- Before morning, doctor has snifter in 24 Across (4)
- Lion's upset – it used to make me wince getting up in the winter (4)
- Blimey, fishing tackle to reveal ice-cream – just one (8)
- Space mission needed a mint with a hole including learner (6)
- Is long story about a Wimbledon champion? (6)
- Glenn, unwell in French sea, but he often played 8 Across (6)
- Initially every night something awful, this entertainment (1,1,1,1)
- But her war-time service never got the bird (4)

What is it?

**Wash cycle.
This will keep your trousers clean.**



The solutions to this month's puzzles are on page 72



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THE UK's **TOP NOSTALGIA** MONTHLY

BEST OF BRITISH

PAST AND PRESENT



SIMON STABLER,
EDITOR

Best of British is the UK's premier nostalgia magazine, covering every aspect of life from the 1930s to today. Packed with features that celebrate classic entertainment, transport, food and drink, and more, not to mention Postbag and the Yesterday Remembered memoir section, a subscription to *Best of British* is always going to be great value.

WHAT OUR READERS SAY ABOUT *BEST OF BRITISH*



Excellent variety of nostalgia, information and illustrations – my favourite magazine in fact.

MR C KENNETT, DUNSTABLE



The range of topics covered in the magazine never ceases to amaze me. Keep it up.

PETER J GASKIN, IPSWICH



I have been reading your great mag for years, keep up the great work.

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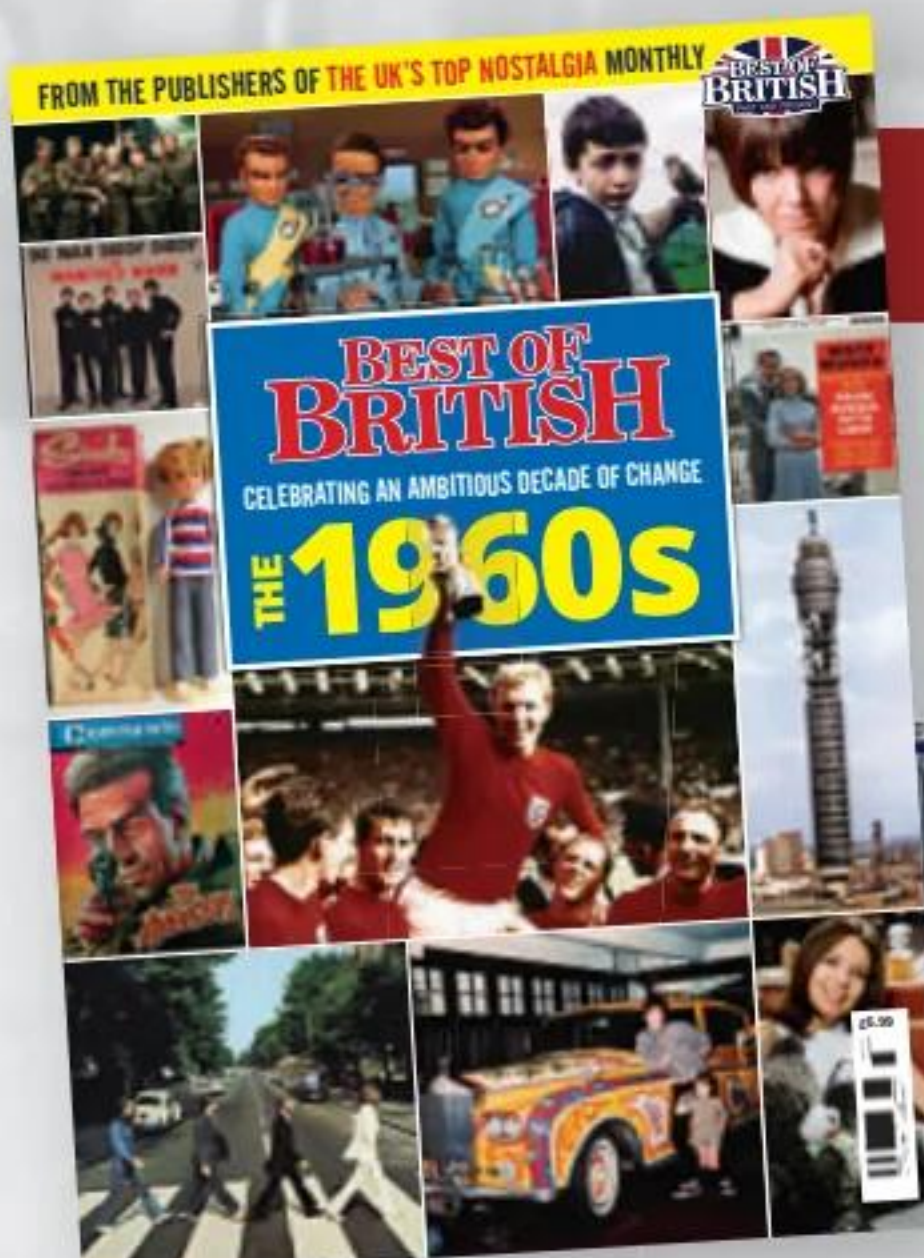
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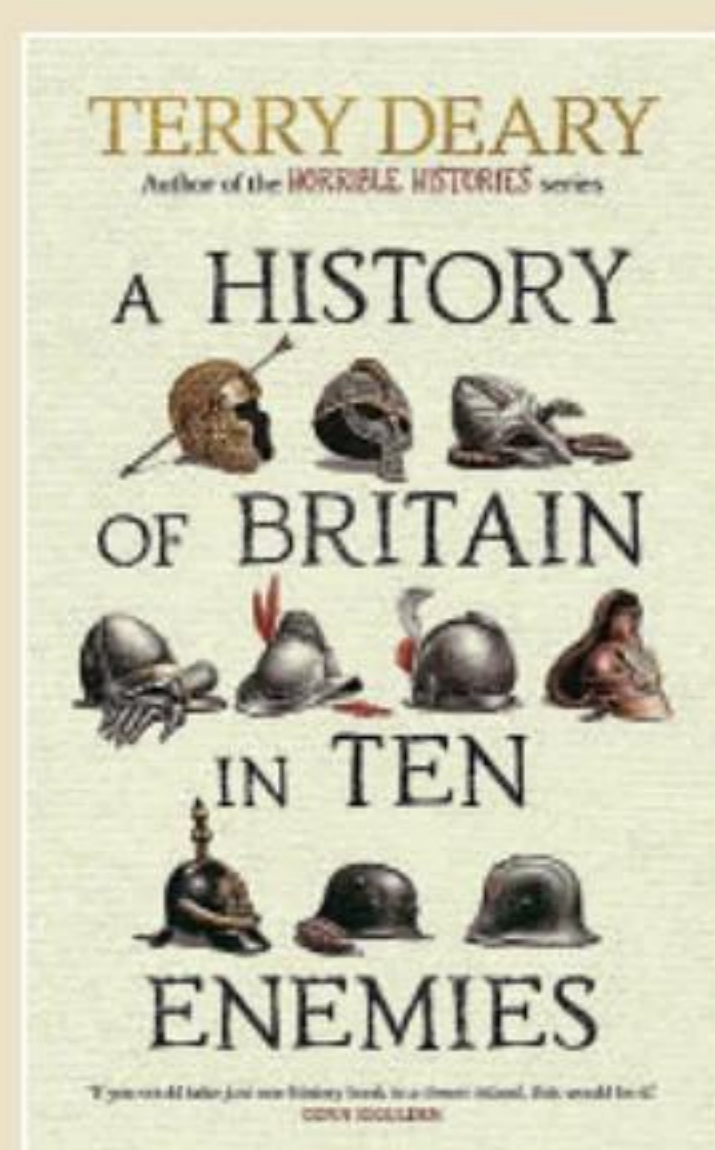
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Bookshelf

David Brown checks out the latest releases

BOOK OF THE MONTH



A History of Britain in Ten Enemies

By Terry Deary,
Bantam, hardback,
£20

If there is one date in British history that all students can remember it is likely to be 1066

and the Battle of Hastings, when William the Conqueror claimed the English throne by defeating King Harold. Harold had promised he would let William become

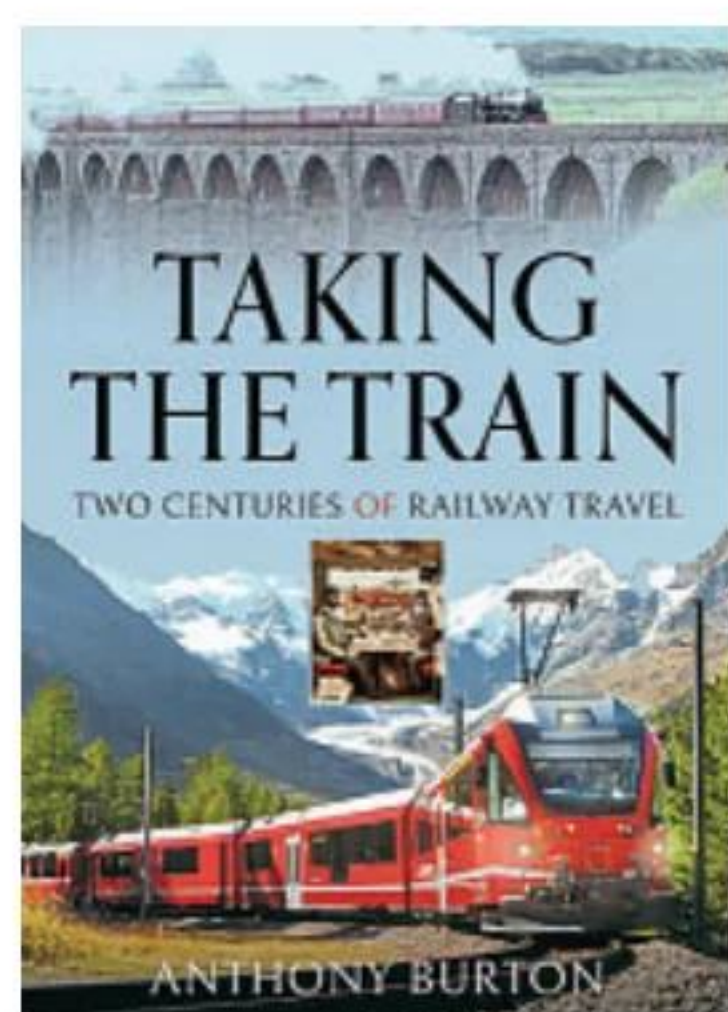
king when Edward the Confessor died, but hung on to the crown, which resulted in the Norman invasion heading for the British shores.

The date of the battle is not to be questioned but what actually happened certainly can. Many believe that Harold got an arrow in the eye from an illustration in the Bayeux Tapestry, but other accounts suggest fatal wounds inflicted by no less than four knights. Then, 50 years later, there is a further suggestion that it was indeed an arrow that did for Harold.

There's a lot to consider in every aspect of British history and who better

than Terry Deary, author of the Horrible Histories series that has inspired many young people to consider that studying history could actually be fun. This book is aimed at adults and if we can remember some of the humour contained here, we might just take on board some of the serious stuff too.

In ten succinct chapters, we learn a lot about Britain's enemies: Italy, Saxony, Scandinavia, France, Spain, The Dutch Empire, United States, Russia, Ireland and Germany, including how the Welsh could scare off invaders and that Hitler could have been stopped by a bullet back in World War One.



Taking The Train

By Anthony Burton,
Pen & Sword,
hardback, £25

Subtitled "Two Centuries of Railway Travel", this readable volume offers a broad study of the

development of passenger transport on rails from the early days when horse drawn vehicles – some little more than open wagons with basic seats in them – took travellers for relatively short journeys through to the era when long distance travel in luxurious comfort was the civilised option.

It certainly covers a lot of railway history within 178 pages, but don't be put off by the fact that Chapter 2 is titled Intercity, since the author explains that neither Liverpool or Manchester were officially cities when the groundbreaking line between them was built. Contemporary illustrations show that the L&M had some of those open wagons, though examples are depicted with canopies over the top. First class carriages look more like stagecoaches, but we're informed that they were comfortably upholstered, though far from perfect.

If the development of railways throughout the UK was fast to catch

on, the idea quickly spread abroad with British engineering to the fore until countries brought their own ideas into play. Transcontinental travel became a possibility with a desire to provide fine dining and luxurious conditions for well-healed travellers.

The requirements of the commuter are also considered, the idea of excursion travel, the railways in wartime, plus the passion for railway nostalgia. Worth catching.



Boats: Steamers, Icebreakers and Ghost Ships

By Jan Van Der Veken,
Prestel,
hardback, £19.99

Just glancing at the cover, you can't help but be drawn

into the wonderful, illustrated world of its author and illustrator.

Belgian artist Jan Van Der Veken has developed a style of his own that blends the retro appeal of comic artwork of the best 1950s comic books onwards, while incorporating a contemporary twist. Each spread features an excellent image or images that tell you most of what you need to know about the featured

subject, be it the type of marine vessel, ways of the sea, ice breakers, deep divers, morse code, flags, lighthouses, lightships, superstitions and much more. Along the way we discover how ships float and how submarines work.

Sample spreads include a comparison of the three-masted research vessel Belgica of 1884 against its 21st century equivalent; the rafts used by Norwegian adventurer Thor Heyerdahl and the ill-fated March 1987 voyage of the MS Herald of Free Enterprise. There's also the story of the legendary Italian-built Riva speedboats, including the one Ferruccio Lamborghini had fitted with two V12 engines as used in his sports cars.

The images are accompanied by compact but highly informative text sections which explain a lot without getting too technical or scientific. If you want to know more about the ways of the sea and the boats that ply it, there are some very wordy volumes to expand your knowledge, but this colourful approach allows you to literally dip your toes into the subject matter.

This book will find great favour among young readers eager to learn about boats and the sea, but it will also attract a wider age group happy to enjoy its splendid sense of style.



Brawn BGP 001/02 By David Tremayne, Porter Press, hardback, £69

I grew up in a town with a company that constructed Grand Prix racing cars up until 1977, which at its peak in the 1960s had a staff of around 110. When the Brawn racing team was set up in the wake of Honda's shock withdrawal from F1 in December 2008, the "heart-breaking decision" was made to cut the workforce from 700 to 400. Motorsport in the 21st century is certainly a very different beast.

This autobiography of 2009's World Championship winner is subject 18 in Porter Press's excellent Great Cars series. Spread over 320 pages with more than 300 images, this is a highly detailed study of Brawn BGP 001/02's history.

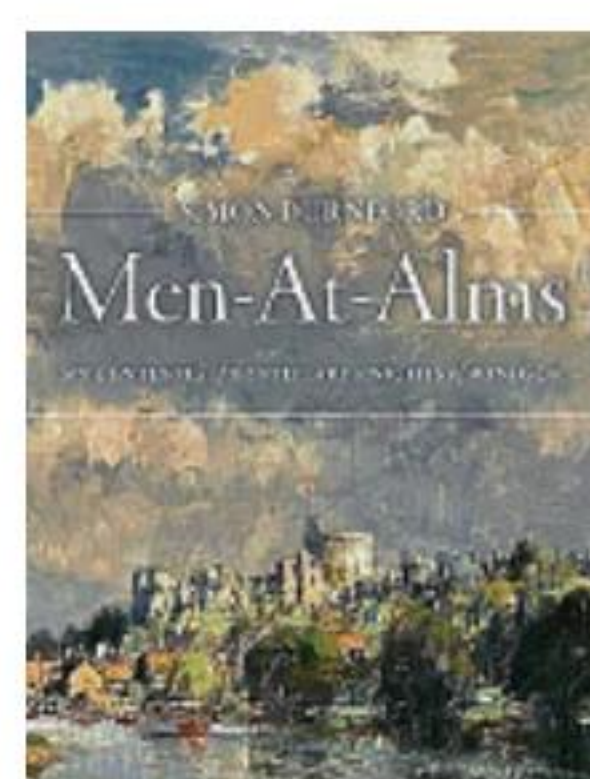
Team members provide some great memories and in-depth information about the car and its engine, together with previously unseen documentation.

Brawn effectively took over the Honda team and soon proved to their critics that they were certainly not underdogs achieving nine podium finishes and winning six of the first seven races in 2009. Brawn won the Constructors' Championship, while

Jenson Button gained the Drivers' World Championship in a year that proved to be both the team's debut and final appearance.

The reasons for the car's success can be discovered within these pages and while both the Brawn team and Button moved on at the end of the Championship year, Ross Brawn has preserved BGP 001/02, enabling photographer John Colley to provide some excellent close-up images of clever items such as the inboard rear suspension.

Readers buying this book via the website porterpress.co.uk can claim a 10% discount using the code BOB10



Men-At-Alms

By Simon Durnford, Zuleika, hardback, £45

Subtitled "Six Centuries of the Military Knights of Windsor", this fascinating read reveals the

extraordinary history of a civilised group of royal servants who continue to this day to carry out special duties evolved from a 14th century act of chivalry.

You may not think of knights as being impoverished, but it happened. For example, if imprisoned by enemy forces, they would

have to find funding to gain their freedom, leaving them privileged but poor.

It was King Edward III that created what were officially known as the Alms Knights in 1348 – and what parochially became known as "Poor Knights" – to balance the creation of the Order of the Garter. Since then, more than 650 Alms Knights have been appointed, that were renamed in 1833 by William IV as the Military Knights of Windsor.

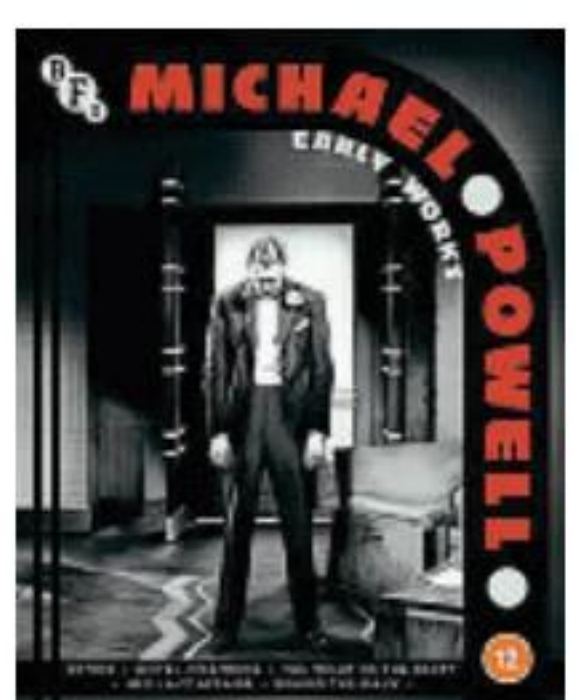
Their duties included daily prayers and taking part in services in the name of their monarch for which they received a small salary and a Windsor address.

The author is certainly knowledgeable about the subject matter being a retired consultant in aviation medicine who was installed as the 655th Military Knight of Windsor in 2016. His father had been a naval officer, with all the privilege that entailed, who exchanged military for humbler holy orders.

In a book of just over 300 pages, there are no less than 628 footnotes, adding additional information, period flavour and plenty of good humour. You can discover more about characters such as Casanova and Vlad the Impaler, plus unravel the Yarmouth Herring connection.

All profits from the sale of the book go to the Military Knights of Windsor charity.

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT



Michael Powell Early Works

Blu-Ray, BFI, BFIB1523

While British film-maker Michael Powell is best known for his work with Emeric Pressburger on masterpieces such as *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* (1943) and *The Red Shoes* (1948), there were earlier films that fans will like to see to discover how his skills developed.

The BFI has rounded up five recently remastered films of Powell's early 1930s productions on a two-disc Blu-Ray set together with copious extras.

Powell directed more than 20 short feature films in six years, of which, 13 are known to survive. Five of the films are featured here, representing the years 1931-1936.

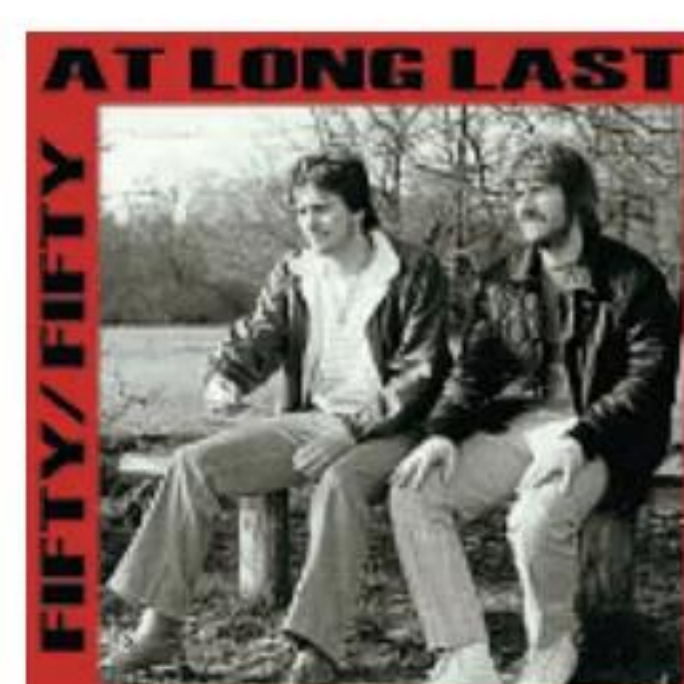
The first is the theatrical *Rynox* (1931), where a company boss is threatened by a stranger. The ensuing mystery incorporates many of the director's influences and subtle touches.

Our second feature is *Hotel Splendide* (1932), which packs in further influences and subtleties with a tight plot running for just 53 minutes. The action takes place at an

inherited small hotel where the big attraction is some jewels buried in the garden.

The first of two presentations from 1935 is *The Night of the Party*, a whodunnit centred around a dinner party and the subsequent court appearance. Also from 1935 is *Her Last Affaire*, with further hotel-based action including the wonderful Googie Withers as a maid who discovers a body.

Finally, there is *Behind the Mask*. This mystery originally appeared in 1936, though this version is the 1944 abridged presentation running for 56 minutes. You have to keep your wits about you to work out exactly who some of the characters are and what their interests and intentions are.



At Long Last

By 50/50 (5050music.co.uk), released across all streaming platforms

That the recently issued debut by 50/50 is titled *At Long Last* seems very appropriate since most of the music was originally written in the 1980s.

Not surprisingly, there is a strong 80s feel to the music of songwriters Richard Haines

and Dave Cowles, who primarily wrote songs and music for other artists to record. Together they wrote more than 100 songs with Richard playing all the instruments together with producing and recording credits, while Dave wrote material and sang the vocals in their home studio.

Recording a lot of their material between 1979 and 1985, they signed with a music company and a couple of singles were released in 1982. They felt that their music was not being given sufficient exposure and lost interest in their musical union.

Richard and Dave remained friends and were able to regain control of their music, which has led to them finally being in a position to release some of it to be enjoyed by a larger listening audience.

Richard's son Greg has remastered and restored their creative catalogue and the first releases appeared from July onwards with more material due to appear throughout the year.

At Long Last, *A Picture of Love*, and *My Head Wasn't Invited* are currently available on all streaming services. *Shot in the Dark*, *At Odds*, *Well You Surprise Me!*, *100% Velocity* and *To Those Who Wait* will follow over the coming months.



OUT & ABOUT

Places to go, people to see

Kith and Kinship: Norman Cornish and LS Lowry

Experience rarely seen and often overlooked works by two of the greatest northern artists of the 20th century, Norman Cornish and LS Lowry, at an exhibition at The Bowes Museum, County Durham. Running until 19 January, Kith and Kinship: Norman Cornish and LS Lowry celebrates the region's distinctive industry, emotive landscapes and playful recreation activities. Featuring 35 rarely seen or previously unseen works among the more than 50 paintings, drawings and sketches on display, one of the many highlights includes a newly discovered self-portrait of Norman Cornish, uncovered at the museum during conservation work ahead of the exhibition opening.

01833 690606, thebowesmuseum.org.uk

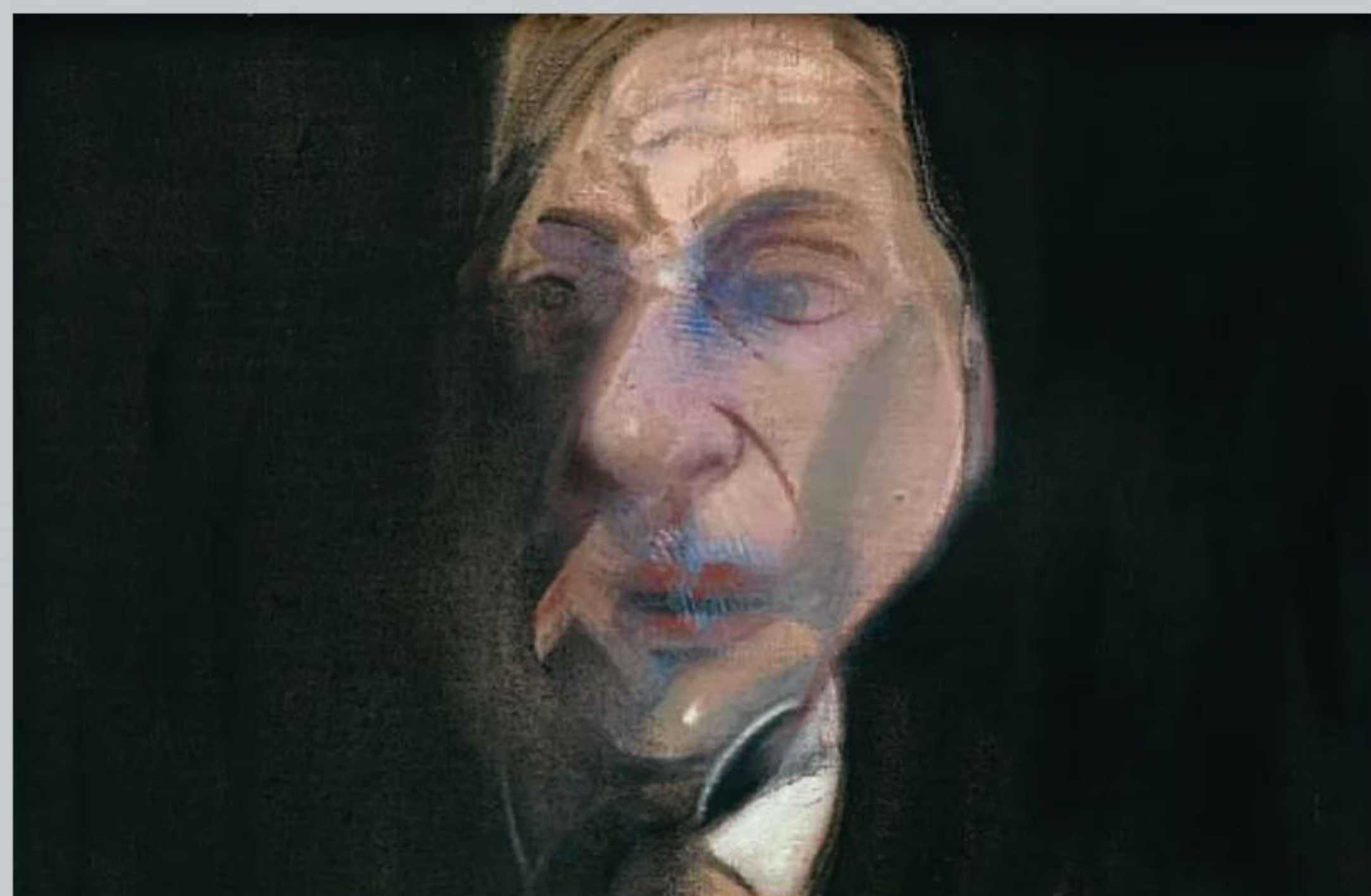


The exhibition features rarely seen works including Lowry's A Cricket Match, which is part of a private collection.

Francis Bacon: Human Presence

An exhibition of portraits by Francis Bacon, which brings together rarely seen works from private collections around the world, opens at the National Portrait Gallery on 10 October. The first exhibition in nearly 20 years to place its focus on the artist's portraits, Francis Bacon: Human Presence will chart the artist's career through more than 50 paintings. Bringing Bacon and his sitters to life in an unparalleled way, the paintings will be displayed alongside rarely seen photographs and portraits of Bacon from the gallery's collection, captured by leading 20th century photographers including Cecil Beaton, Arnold Newman and Bill Brandt. Running until 19 January, the exhibition is complemented by a programme of talks, tours, film screenings and a practical art workshop.

020 7306 0055, npg.org.uk



Study for a Self-Portrait, 1979 by Francis Bacon.

Answering the Call

Delve into the contribution Commonwealth nurses gave the National Health Service at the Glenside Hospital Museum, Bristol. Running until 14 December (museum open 10am-1pm on Wednesdays, 10am-4pm on Saturdays) Answering the Call uses individual histories provided by nurses who travelled from Commonwealth countries to work in the newly formed NHS. Supported by Historic England, a team consisting of ex-nurses, students and community members documented the nurses' experiences and then participated in using stitch, print and sculpture to create a display of work that gives an insight into their contribution to psychiatric hospital care.

glensidemuseum.org.uk



Among the work on display is Teresa Searle's artwork telling the journey of nurse Rachel Obi.

NOT TO BE MISSED

Gainsborough Model Railway Society

(6 October, 1.30-5.30pm)
See authentic replicas of famous locomotives such as Flying Scotsman, Papyrus and Mallard at work on one of the country's largest model railway layouts. Based on the East Coast Main Line from London King's Cross to Leeds Central, the railway has more than 1,200ft of track and needs 10 operators.

Gainsborough, Lincolnshire
01604 67430,
gainsboroughmodelrailway.co.uk

Access the Collection – A Stitch in Time

(04 October-01 November)
Explore and enjoy a display of quilts and related artefacts from

Larne Museum's collection, including a signature quilt from Cairncastle National School dated August 1887.

Larne Museum & Arts Centre, Larne, County Antrim
028 2826 2443,
midandeastantrim.gov.uk/events

Mary Anning: Fossil Hunter of Jurassic Sea Creatures

(Until 12 October)
Explore the life and legacy of Mary Anning, the pioneering fossil hunter who unearthed the secrets of Jurassic sea creatures, beginning along the coast of Lyme Regis.

Peterborough Museum, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire

01733 864663,
peterboroughmuseum.org.uk

City of Rivers

(Until 03 November)
Bringing together stories, objects, artwork, film and photography to chronicle Sheffield's relationship with its waterways. Drawing on contributions from people across the city, it reflects on connections to them in work, leisure time and impact on the natural habitats they represent.

Weston Park Museum, Sheffield, South Yorkshire
0114 278 2600,
sheffieldmuseums.org.uk/visit-us/weston-park-museum

Ralph STEADman: INKling

(Until 17 November)
Giving dedicated Ralph Steadman fans, as well as the uninitiated, the chance to see the varied and distinctive sides of his remarkable work and career.

The Historic Dockyard, Chatham, Kent
01634 823800, thedockyard.co.uk

The Holly Johnson Story

(Until 27 July 2025)
Celebrating Holly Johnson's creative genius, charting his personal life and extraordinary music career over four decades.

Museum of Liverpool, Pier Head, Liverpool
0151 478 4545,
liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/museum-of-liverpool

ATTRACTION OF THE MONTH



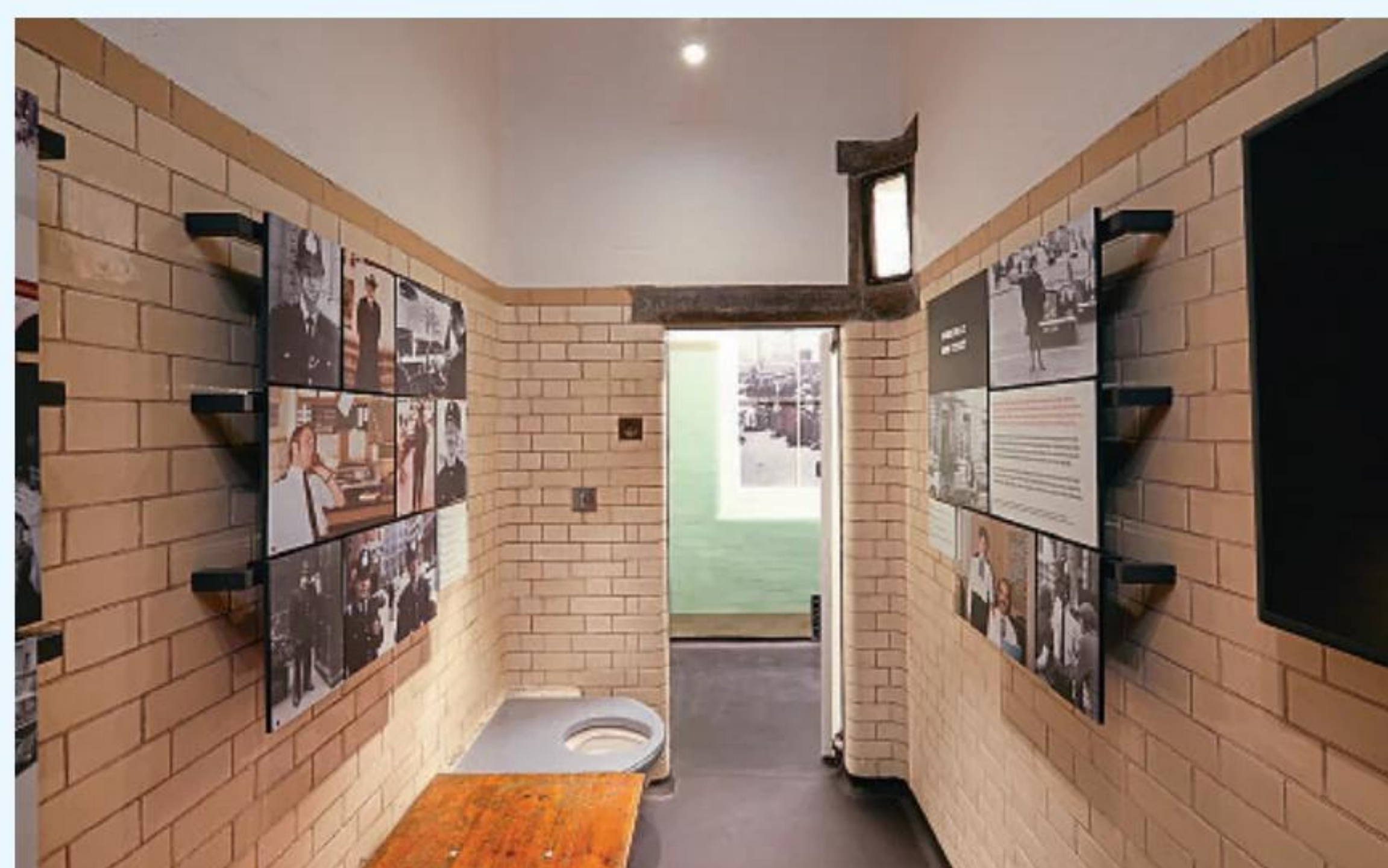
**BOW STREET
POLICE
MUSEUM**

Housed in the former Bow Street Police Station, the museum covers the history of policing in the Covent Garden area from the mid-18th century to its closure in 1992. Among the memorabilia on display are truncheons, whistles, badges and report books, while visitors can enter cells and offices including "the tank" – where those arrested for drunken behaviour were kept for the night before being taken to the magistrates' court which was based on the site until 2006. Here you can see the original dock from court No 2, along with sketches by William Hartley depicting prisoners such as Oscar Wilde and Dr Crippen. Free activity sheets containing

trails for children and their families are available, while the museum hosts evening talks and walking tours.

What to eat: Visitors can use their online booking or physical ticket to redeem a 10% discount at the Royal Opera House Café (020 7212 9254, rbo.org.uk/visit/eat-and-drink), or the Bow Street Tavern (020 7379 0154, bowstreettavern.com).

Disabled access: The main entrance includes one small step up from street level, and four medium sized steps up into the museum's main gallery. Step-free access is available via the main entrance of the NoMad London Hotel, and staff there are happy to guide you to the museum. Some wheelchair users may find it difficult to access the 19th century police cells. Written transcripts, including large print versions, of the audio-visual displays are available for visitors who need them. Guide and assistance dogs are welcome in all parts of the museum, an induction loop is located at the reception desk. BSL tours are available throughout



the year, while groups can arrange a tour by contacting the museum.

An accessible toilet is located next to the reception desk. Blue Badge parking spaces are available on Bow Street, and a map of additional parking spaces in the area can be seen at bluebadgeparking.com. Visitors with disabilities can book a ticket for a carer or companion free of charge for regular museum admission.

How to get there: A three-minute walk from Covent Garden Underground station and seven minutes from Holborn, there are several bus stops in the area and travel

information can be found at tfl.gov.uk/plan-a-journey or by calling 0343 222 1234.

Opening times and admission: Open Friday to Saturday, 11am-4.30pm. Admission is £6 (adult) £4.50 (concessions) and £3 (local residents/National Art Pass). Under 12s and carers admitted free. Groups of eight or more are charged at £4.50 each. Check website for cost of talks and tours.

Bow Street Police Museum, 28 Bow Street, London WC2E 7AW
(bowstreetpolicemuseum.org.uk)



DIARY DATES

GREAT BRITISH EVENTS

SOUTH WEST OF ENGLAND

Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Wiltshire, Channel Islands

SOUTH EAST OF ENGLAND AND LONDON

Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Kent, Middlesex, Surrey, Sussex, Isle of Wight

WEST OF ENGLAND

Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Oxfordshire, Shropshire, Worcestershire

EAST OF ENGLAND

Cambridgeshire, Essex, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk

MIDLANDS

Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland, Staffordshire, Warwickshire

NORTH OF ENGLAND

Cheshire, County Durham, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Merseyside, Northumberland, Tyne & Wear, Yorkshire, Isle of Man

WALES

SCOTLAND

NORTHERN IRELAND

WEST OF ENGLAND

01 THE COURTYARD'S SPECTACULAR TEA PARTY – DEMENTIA FRIENDLY (2PM)

This fun and nostalgic dementia friendly event will brighten up anyone's day. Full of music, tea, cakes and dancing. Tickets £4 including refreshments. Booking essential.

The Courtyard, Hereford, Herefordshire
01432 340555, courtyard.org.uk

06 AUTUMN RUNNING DAY & MIDLAND RED 120

Celebrating 120 years since the Birmingham and Midland Motor Omnibus Company was founded. Lots of home and visiting Reds will be running.

The Transport Museum, Wythall, Worcestershire
01564 826471, wythall.org.uk

11-26 OXFORD INTERNATIONAL SONG FESTIVAL

Titled Cities of Song, evening recitals, lunchtime, rush-hour and late-night concerts will explore significant cities that have influenced the development of song across the centuries.

Oxford, Oxfordshire
01865 591276, oxfordsong.org

19-20 O GAUGE GET TOGETHER

A celebration of railway modelling in 1:43.5 scale. See some of the UK's award-winning O Gauge layouts and dioramas, and shop until you drop with a selection of the best suppliers.

Severn Valley Railway, Kidderminster, Worcestershire
01562 757900, svr.co.uk

25-26 GHOSTLY GASLIGHT (6-9PM)

A spine-tingling and spooky evening full of Victorian-inspired horror, hauntings and nightmarish goings-on as you explore the Victorian Town under the cover of darkness.

Blists Hill Victorian Town, Telford, Shropshire
01952 433424, ironbridge.org.uk

EAST OF ENGLAND

05-06 AUTUMN SHOWCASE

Up to six locomotives and a DMU operating a frequent timetable utilising historic rail vehicles in the care of the railway and the Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway Society.

North Norfolk Railway, Sheringham, Norfolk
01263 820800, nnrailway.co.uk

13 1930s FARMHOUSE – APPLE DAY (10.30AM-3.30PM)

Head to Union Farm to meet Mrs Beech and learn about the 1930s farmhouse. She might need some help with chores, or simply have a natter while working. Included in admission.

Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse, Dereham, Norfolk
01362 860563, museums.norfolk.gov.uk/gressenhall-farm-and-workhouse

19-20 DOG FRIENDLY DAYS

Your dog can join you on a journey back through history exploring the Medieval Wall Walk, Victorian Prison and Magna Carta. Castle grounds free to enjoy. All other admissions apply.

Lincoln Castle, Lincoln, Lincolnshire
01522 554559, lincolncastle.com

27 STEAM RAILWAY DAY & VINTAGE & BYGONES EXHIBITION & FAIR

SOUTH WEST OF ENGLAND

05-06 THE GREAT WESTERN BRICK SHOW 2024

Incredible models and inventions built by LEGO® fans such as railway layouts, buildings, space craft, cars, trucks, aircraft and more. Plus, discover museum displays and exhibits.

STEAM – Museum of the Great Western Railway, Swindon, Wiltshire
01793 466646, steam-museum.org.uk

07 HISTORICAL WALK: UNLOCKING BRISTOL'S STORIES (2.30-4.45PM)

Taking in plaques, buildings and statues, complemented with stories of campaigns, protests and poetry in Bristol's rich and diverse history. Free but booking requested.

M-Shed, Bristol 0117 352 6600, bristolmuseums.org.uk/m-shed

10-31 CELEBRATING ORCHARDS (10AM-4PM)

Enjoy apple activities and join the ranger team at weekends to press apples and learn about traditional cider-making.

Killerton, Broadclyst, Exeter, Devon
01392 881345, nationaltrust.org.uk/killerton

12 MODEL SHOW 2024 (10AM-4.30PM)

Annual military and transport themed model show filled with incredible model-making talent guaranteed to appeal to enthusiasts and anyone with a passing interest alike.

REME Museum, Chippenham, Wiltshire
01249 894869, rememuseum.org.uk

20 BEHIND THE SCENES – COLLECTIONS TOUR (1.30-2.30PM)

Join a member of the archive team for an exclusive look behind the scenes. Learn how the collections are managed, maintained and moved across the site. Booking essential.

The Box, Plymouth, Devon
01752 304774, theboxplymouth.com

SOUTH EAST OF ENGLAND AND LONDON

06 AUTUMN HISTORIC GATHERING (10AM-4.30PM)

View more than 150 pre-1972 vehicles and engines. Chat, learn and reminisce with volunteers and vehicle owners. Ride on vintage buses and a steam train. Booking essential.

Amberley Museum, near Arundel, West Sussex
01798 831370, amberleymuseum.co.uk

12 AUTUMN FAIR (9.30AM-1PM)

Local charities will be selling Christmas gifts and cards, CDs, DVDs, jewellery, chutneys, jams, cakes, books, toys and games, model railway accessories and collectables.

United Reformed Church, Geddes Place, Bexleyheath, London
020 8310 5018, bexleych.wixsite.com/bexley-charities-78

12-13 AUSTIN COUNTIES CAR RALLY

A variety of these amazing classic cars will be parked across the Tenterden Town Station site. Free entry with train tickets. £1 platform tickets for station entry can be bought on arrival.

Kent & East Sussex Railway, Tenterden, Kent
01580 765155, kesr.org.uk

20 LONDON BUS MUSEUM TRANSPORTFEST 2024 (10AM-5PM)

Featuring extensive bus displays, including rarely seen early examples, as well as wonderful examples of other commercial transport such as taxis, military and emergency vehicles.

Brooklands Museum, Weybridge, Surrey
01932 857381, brooklandsmuseum.com

26-27 WORKING WEEKEND

Experience all sorts, from seed fiddles, tractors and a flour mill, through to spinning and weaving, woodturning, vintage fire engines and buses, bicycles and more.

Rural Life Living Museum, Tilford, Farnham, Surrey
01252 795571, rural-life.org.uk

Eastern Counties Bus Preservation Group shuttle services from Stowmarket station to and from the Mid-Suffolk Light Railway station at Brockford.

Mid-Suffolk Light Railway, Brockford Station, Wetheringsett, Stowmarket, Suffolk
01449 766874, mslr.org.uk

MIDLANDS

05 LIVING HISTORY SOCIETY DAY (11AM-3PM)

Living history society Sir John Savile's Household will be demonstrating and showing fashion, food, crafts and arms and armour from the reign of Richard III. Free but ticketed.

Leicester Guildhall, Leicester, Leicestershire
0116 253 2569, leicestermuseums.org/leicester-guildhall

12-13 73RD BRITISH NATIONAL PLOUGHING CHAMPIONSHIPS & COUNTRY FESTIVAL

Two busy days packed with competitions for many types of plough and styles of ploughing, plus vintage tractors and craft marquee with a wide variety of stalls.

Thoresby Estate, Ollerton, Newark, Nottinghamshire
01302 852469, ploughmen.co.uk

13 MIDGET AND SPRITE CLUB VISIT (10AM-3PM)

The Midget and Sprite Club will be displaying some vehicles. Browse the cars and chat to owners. Model tram 1:8 scale layout with the Robert Whetstone Tatra tram will be operating.

The National Tramway Museum, Crich Tramway Village, near Matlock, Derbyshire
01773 854321, tramway.co.uk

17-20 MIDLANDS MODEL ENGINEERING EXHIBITION (10AM)

Featuring more than 30 clubs and societies displaying hundreds of exhibits covering a wide range of modelling skills. Also nearly 40 leading model engineering specialist trade suppliers.

Warwickshire Event Centre, near Leamington Spa, Warwickshire
01926 614101, meridienneexhibitions.co.uk/events/midlands-model-engineering-exhibition

30 FASCINATING FUNGI (10AM-3PM)

Find out about the fascinating world of fungi and the species that live around Thinktank. Drop-in session included in admission price. No booking required.

Thinktank, Millennium Point, Birmingham
0121 348 8000, birminghammuseums.org.uk/thinktank

NORTH OF ENGLAND

01-31 FLYING SCOTSMAN VR EXPERIENCE

Celebrate 100 years of the world's most famous steam locomotive with a stunning new Virtual Reality immersive experience. Booking requested.

National Railway Museum, York, North Yorkshire
033 0058 0058, railwaymuseum.org.uk

05 CLASSIC DRIVE & RIDE-IN DAY (10AM-4PM)

Join the proud classic vehicle owners as they bring their private vehicles to display at the museum. The event is open to classic cars, trucks,

vans and motorcycles.

Lakeland Motor Museum, Ulverston, Cumbria
015395 30400, lakelandmotormuseum.co.uk

12 THEATRE TOURS (10.30AM)

Take a guided tour of England's third oldest continually operating theatre. You may even see the ghost. Booking essential.

Lancaster Grand Theatre, Lancaster, Lancashire
01524 64695, lancastergrand.co.uk

19-20 NORTH WEST BIRD WATCHING FESTIVAL (8AM)

Watch the spectacle of thousands of geese leave the roost. Then head for breakfast in Mere Side Cafe. Open until 7pm on the Saturday to welcome the geese back.

WWT Martin Mere, Burscough, Lancashire
01704 895181, wwt.org.uk/wetland-centres/martin-mere

20 ISLE OF AXHOLME RUNNING DAY (10.30AM-4.30PM)

Organised by Doncaster Omnibus & Light Railway Society, attractions include displays of vintage cars, buses and lorries; motorbus tours; trolleybuses rides, and the usual attractions.

Trolleybus Museum at Sandtoft, Doncaster, South Yorkshire
01724 711846, sandtoft.org/wp

WALES

04 BEHIND THE SCENES TOUR – THE SCIENCE CENTRE (2.30-3.30PM)

Learn all about the National Seed Bank of Wales and the efforts being made to save some of Wales' most threatened flora. Take a look at the molecular lab. Booking essential.

National Botanic Garden of Wales, Llanarthne, Carmarthenshire
01558 667177, botanicgarden.wales

05-06 APPLE HARVEST CELEBRATION AT ERDDIG (10AM-5PM)

Celebrate Erddig's annual apple harvest with a host of activities across two weekends the whole family can enjoy. Free (admission applies), no need to book.

Erddig Hall and Garden, Erddig, Wrexham
01978 355314, nationaltrust.org.uk/erddig

12 BROTHER THOMAS THE CELLARER (10AM-4PM)

Step back in time with Brother Thomas and learn what life was like as an abbey monk. The sympathetic brother will give you inside information about the monks' rituals.

Tintern Abbey, Tintern, Monmouthshire
0300 025 2239, cadw.gov.wales

19-20 MEET THE MARCHERS (10.30AM-4PM)

Discover a day in the life of the Tretower household and the differences between now and what day-to-day life was like in the 17th century for the Marcher Stuarts.

Tretower Court and Castle, Tretower, Powys
0300 025 2239, cadw.gov.wales

24-27 DRAGON'S BREATH (6-10PM)

A special after-dark event where the garden and its unique features will be brought to life through an immersive fire trail.

National Botanic Garden of Wales, Llanarthne, Carmarthenshire
01558 667177, botanicgarden.wales

SCOTLAND

05 MUSEUM LATE: GAME ON (7.30-10.30PM)

A night of grown-up fun and games with music, bars and gaming throughout the galleries, meet-the-expert sessions, food and drink on sale, and the chance to explore some galleries.

National Museum of Scotland, Chambers Street, Edinburgh
0300 123 6789, nms.ac.uk

11-13 STEAM, STEEL, ROAD & RAILS GALA

Featuring steam trains and vintage vehicle rally with classic cars, buses, traction engines and stationary engines. Subject to overhaul, British Railways 2-6-4T 80105 will return to steam.

The Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway, Bo'ness, West Lothian
01506 825855, bkrailway.co.uk

19 KELVIN HALL BUILDING TOUR (10.30-11.15AM)

Join volunteer tour guides for a free 45-minute tour to learn about the history of Kelvin Hall and take a look at how the building is being used today. Booking essential.

Kelvin Hall, Argyle Street, Glasgow
0141 276 1450, glasgowlife.org.uk/museums/venues/kelvin-hall

22 GROWING UP IN CORSTORPHINE IN THE 1950s (10.30AM)

This lecture by retired teacher Gordon Roberts will take the form of a personal reminiscence of growing up in the 1950s and early 60s in this Edinburgh suburb. Booking essential.

Lauriston Castle, 2 Cramond Road S, Edinburgh
0131 336 2060, edinburghmuseums.org.uk

25 BEHIND THE SCENES TOURS (NOON-1PM)

Find out about the collection of aero-engines and propellers on a curator-led tour of the Object Store. Free add-on to general admission ticket. Booking required.

National Museum of Flight, East Fortune Airfield, East Lothian
0300 123 6789, nms.ac.uk

NORTHERN IRELAND

04, 18 & 25 GEORGE BEST HOUSE TOUR (2PM)

Step inside George Best's family home as it would have been in the summer of 1961 when the 15-year-old left to follow his dreams in Manchester. Booking recommended.

16 Burren Way, Belfast
028 9045 1900, georgebesthouse.com

19 HOMES IN FOCUS: THE OLD RECTORY (11.30AM-12.30PM)

Join curator Victoria Millar at the Old Rectory to learn about the building's distinguishing features and discover what life was like for early 1900s occupants. Booking essential.

Ulster Folk Museum, Cultra, Holywood, County Down
028 9042 8428, ulsterfolkmuseum.org

● Details correct at time of going to press – please confirm with event organisers before travelling.

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PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

Twenty Questions

1. Timothy West who was born on 20 October 1934.
2. Melvyn Bragg who was born on 6 October 1939.
3. Janet Ahlberg who was born on 21 October 1944.
4. George Fenton who was born on 19 October 1949.
5. Harry Hill who was born on 1 October 1964.
6. Clive Owen who was born on 3 October 1964.
7. The 50p piece.
8. Matthew Macfadyen who was born on 17 October 1974.
9. Sir Barnes Wallis who died on 30 October 1979.
10. Leonard Rossiter who died on 5 October 1984.
11. Noel Howlett who died on 26 October 1984.
12. Ewan MacColl who died on 22 October 1989.
13. James Hill who died on 7 October 1994.
14. Bobby Willis who died on 23 October 1999.
15. Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester who died on 29 October 2004.
16. Norman Painting who died on 29 October 2009.
17. Lynsey de Paul who died on 1 October 2014.
18. Lynda Bellingham who died on 19 October 2014.
19. Peter Sissons who died on 1 October 2019.
20. Stephen Moore who died on 4 October 2019.

And I quote...

Pet Shop Boys' Chris Lowe who was born on 4 October 1959.

What is it?

A bicycle chain cleaner.

Dialect Detective

1c, 2a, 3a, 4b



Treasures in the Attic

1. Saturday Night and Sunday Morning book £5,
2. Kodak Instamatic camera £10,
3. Aircraft book £12,
4. Motor coach postcard,
5. This Little Bird single £6,
6. Airfix Railcar £40,
7. Kellogg's sinking submarine £20,
8. STAR ITEM Dinky Mobilgas tanker £300,
9. Wham! badge £10,
10. Speedway star badge £30,
11. Capstan sign £15,
12. Sheet music £5.

CLASSIFIEDS

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The Old Station, Allerston, North Yorkshire

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BACK IN TIME WITH COLIN BAKER



BoB's very own Time Lord celebrates 45 years of "his" official magazine, and recalls a short-lived rival and a futile mission

My connection with Doctor Who Magazine began the day my casting was announced. I do not recall meeting an actual editor of the magazine until some years after I had left the show, when I got to know Gary Russell very well. He was editor in the mid-90s and went on to script edit the Sarah Jane Adventures and Torchwood for the BBC in Wales and became a very good friend. It is a remarkably good magazine, and it is amazing how much material the programme can offer, 40 years after my tenure, to fill its over 80 pages with new and interesting information. It's only when it insists on having popularity polls that I flinch. "List the Doctors from best to worst" is what "Vote for your Favourite Doctor" ends up as when published.

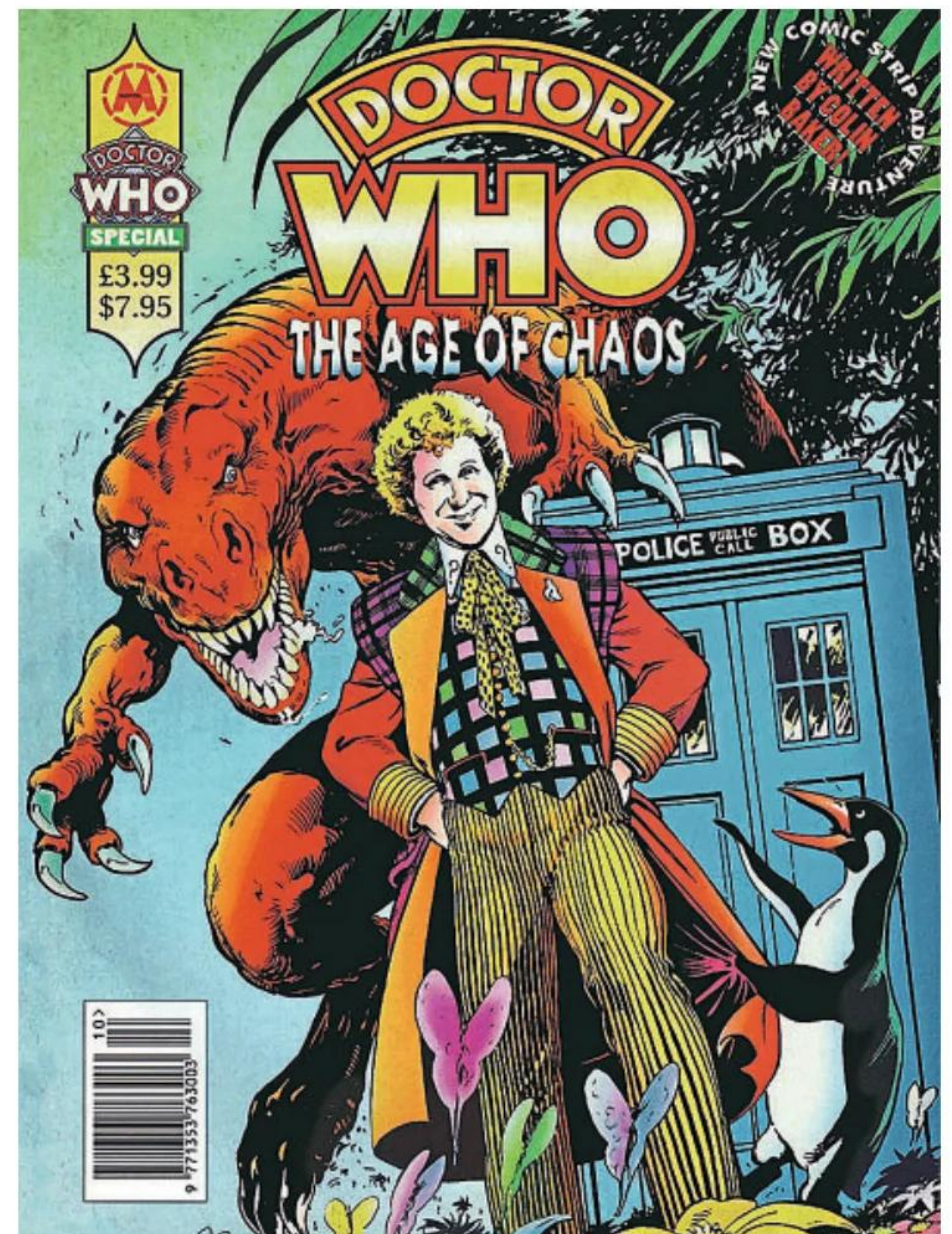
I was asked to contribute to the magazine and wrote three short stories in the 1990s, culminating in a graphic novel, *The Age of Chaos*, in 1994 in which I explored the future of my companion in the series – the wonderful ever youthful Peri (Nicola Bryant) – who left the Doctor in very strange circumstances indeed. It was an experience I thoroughly enjoyed and loved seeing the results imagined by those great comic book artists John M Burns and Barrie Mitchell. It is yet further evidence of the extraordinary success of Doctor Who that the magazine celebrating the show is itself still being published 45 years later. Another record broken.

While I was recording Doctor Who in the 1980s, Chris Barry (the brother of Stephen Barry, a successful theatre director and my then flatmate and best friend) warned me that he was directing a show that had the potential to displace Doctor Who in the ratings – *The Tripods*.

His experience in the genre was extensive, having directed Doctor Who around 10 times including *The Daleks* in 1963. I thought he did a remarkably good job of directing a challenging concept with the limited technological aids of the day. But... for those of you interested in coincidence, it was cancelled after two series by Jonathan Powell and Michael Grade. Now where have I heard those names before? The latter, in particular, is self-confessedly no great fan of science fiction as a genre, sadly for both those programmes at the time.


I have only visited Dover Castle once. It was while I was studying law in London before the lure of the stage distracted me. I shared a flat in Lancaster Gate with three other prospective solicitors and we had, for some reason, started dabbling in mind reading and had some (we thought) modest success in transferring mental images of cards bearing circles, squares and triangles. Basically, we concluded we were right more often than should be the case. I can't remember who decided that we should try it over a longer distance than across our table or why it was I

“I was warned about a show that had the potential to displace Doctor Who in the ratings.”



With a connection stretching back 40 years, Colin even penned a graphic novel for Doctor Who Magazine.

who ended up going down to Dover Castle. But at precisely midday one Sunday, I held up a card and used my remarkable mental powers to beam its image to my flatmates in Bayswater. Every minute thereafter I transmitted a new card. The intensity of my concentrated effort was, I believed, unmatched.

When I returned to my flat several hours later, eager to learn how successful our experiment had been, you may be delighted to learn that my erstwhile friends had "forgotten" about our mission and gone to the pub for the afternoon. Lesson learned. They are all now practising solicitors (and retired) and I am an actor (still). 

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UPCOMING SHOW DATES

STAFFORD
28TH -29TH
SEPTEMBER

G.E.T.S
12TH-13TH
OCTOBER



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"Light, easily manoeuvrable, bright lights and self cleaning along with super powerful suction. What more could you want?!" Anne M ★★★★★

Picks up dirt NO OTHER vacuum can and never needs maintenance

With more cleaning features than ever before, the Gtech **AirRAM 3** represents the pinnacle of vacuum cleaner innovation.

Unique never-seen-before edge-brush technology removes debris from tight spaces, so you can get into dusty corners like no other

vacuum. Vacuum maintenance is a thing of the past as the **AirRAM 3** has a powered self cleaning filter which removes dirt build up to sustain cleaning performance.

Our BEST EVER vacuum. The AirRAM 3.

**SAVE
£100
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DELIVERY**

**WAS £399.99
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£299.99**

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Long Run Time

Clean your whole house on maximum power for up to 30 minutes, with no need for an eco setting.

Strengthened with Aluminium

The AirRAM 3's enhanced floor head is strengthened with premium aluminium parts, to withstand the wear and tear of cleaning up after pets.

Dual - Edge Clean Brushes

The AirRAM 3's unique edge-brush feature lifts and picks up dirt from corners to clean your floors like never before.

Charging Base

Store the AirRAM 3 on its charge base so it's always powered up and ready to go.

Dynamic Steering

With its clever weight distribution and dynamic steering handle, the AirRAM 3 is light on the wrist but super manoeuvrable.

Large Capacity Bin

The easy-empty bin has a 700ml capacity and when it's finally full, simply slide the ejector arm to empty.

Self Cleaning Filter

The AirRAM 3 has a powered self cleaning filter which removes dirt build up throughout the life of the product to maintain cleaning performance.

Patented AirLOC Technology

Improves pick up performance by collecting large debris on the forward stroke, and forming a seal on the backward stroke, to lift fine dust and pet hair.

Anti-Hair Wrap

The soft bristled helical brush bar features Anti-Hair Wrap innovation to stop hair build up.

Self Propulsion Technology

Pulls the AirRAM 3 forward as you clean so vacuuming is virtually effortless.

"Buy one today they are great"

"Surprised at the suction power of this machine – so strong. Just doesn't take the dust off the top of the carpet but cleans all the way down. Love that it cleans edges and corners. Easy to empty and self cleaning filter."

Gloria C ★★★★★

"Superb technology, nice looking too"

"Best vacuum ever...looks good, supremely efficient, no maintenance needed. Enough said..."

Dale M ★★★★★

Introductory offer: Get the **AirRAM 3** for **£299.99** (RRP £399.99) saving **£100** if you order before 31/10/2024.

Order now at **www.gtech.co.uk** call **0800 030 81 16** or scan the QR Code:



Offers valid until 31/10/2024 or while stocks last and cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. 30-day money-back guarantee, excluding £10 collection fee. *Runtimes quoted may vary depending on surfaces cleaned.

Inventor & Owner, Nick Grey

"The team at Gtech are obsessive about good design. Every product is tested, refined and retested in real home environments. The design is not signed off until I am happy that the product will meet or exceed our customers' needs."

Nick

www.gtech.co.uk

★ Trustpilot ★★★★★

Gtech's rating is 4.8 out of 5 after 140,000 reviews