

## **FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH – April 2018, edition no 40.**



Hello. I hope you are okay. Here is the fortieth edition of this magazine and I hope you will find something of interest in it – you could always contribute something yourself (not offensive/racist/sexist) by sending it for consideration to us at: [deancharltonmag@gmail.com](mailto:deancharltonmag@gmail.com)

Please note that we are now offering free adverts on our advertisements page or inclusion in the magazine itself for a suggested donation of £5 per month or £50 per year – the first twenty advertisers will receive two years for the price of one!

I hope you are pleased with how the magazine is evolving, but if not, please tell us how you think we can improve it. Best Wishes, Dean.

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**Notably 20% of Advertising Revenue will be donated to the [Watermark Fund in Calderdale](#)**

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## MY NOT VERY SERIOUS STARS



### **Scorpio 24 Oct – 22 Nov**

You will realise this month that your gambling is getting out of hand and that you need to do something about it – before you end up losing your home. A member of the opposite sex will compliment you a lot but do wonder what they are after. Your personal problem will not go away just because you bury your head in the sand.

### **Sagittarius 23 Nov – 21 Dec**

A new hairstyle is worth considering if you want people to stop thinking of you as the ‘ugly one’. A man with tattoos on his face will surprise you by showing how sensitive and caring he is. The ghost of a nasty, old aunt may visit you on the third Wednesday of the month and offer you the winning lotto numbers for the following week – but can you trust her to tell you the truth when she lied all the time when she was alive?

### **Capricorn 22 Dec – 20 Jan**

Someone with nice legs will soon walk into your life and turn your head – but don’t waste time thinking of asking them out as they are clearly out of your league. It is a good time to start buying more less unknown brands of food and keep your wallet in a fat healthy state. You may suffer from gout again this month. Stop sniffing glue in the garage.

### **Aquarius 21 Jan – 19 Feb**

You may realise that your romantic future lies with a very plain person who is absolutely beautiful inside. A feeling of hopelessness may sweep over you this month, but this will not last and you will soon be back seeing things more objectively. A Manchester tart may be just the tonic that you need to perk you up. Stop using second class stamps.

### **Pisces 20 Feb – 20 Mar**

It is time you tried to bring your cholesterol down if want to see your children grow up and give you grandchildren. Someone with mental health problems may need your help so don’t

turn your back on them as you could soon be in their position. A man with a silly moustache may try and sell you some sardines but politely decline.

### **Aries 21 Mar – 20 Apr**

You must really stop being so selfish and greedy and learn to share with others close to you. Your boss will be a pain this month but make allowances for her as she may have problems that you're not aware of. It is a good time to reduce your dairy intake and try other alternatives if you want to grow more hairs on your chest. Take a trip to the coast soon.

### **Taurus 21 Apr – 21 May**

Something magical may happen to you this month and you will have the fairies in your local woods to thank for this. A 'star' you meet will shock you with their extreme flatulence and make you realise that we are all basically the same. An old friend will do you a big favour and reassure you that good still exists in this cynical world of ours.

### **Gemini 22 May – 21 Jun**

Money will be in short supply at the moment, but don't worry as this may just be the incentive you need to start a life of crime. You should really spend less time in public toilets otherwise people will start to talk. It is a good time to eat more currant teacakes with jam and no butter. Buy a new toilet seat and get rid of the plastic that bites into your buttocks.

### **Cancer 22 Jun – 23 Jul**

An unexpected email will change your life forever. Your celibacy is ridiculous and impressing hardly anyone at all – so stop it and live a more normal life! Be very wary of a self-proclaimed feminist as she may just not like men very much. Consider changing the lettuce you use for your salads to one that is more nutritious.

### **Leo 24 Jul – 23 Aug**

Pineapple may be the key to your happiness this month. You will once again think you have seen aliens at the bottom of your garden – but don't worry as it may be true! Remember to take your loyalty card to the large café you frequent and then you may get a free drink next year. Buying a new dress would do you the world of good and help the economy.

### **Virgo 24 Aug – 23 Sep**

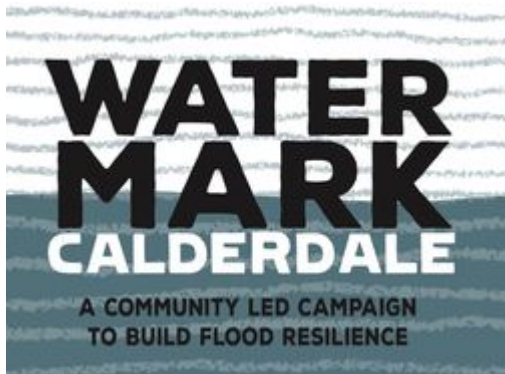
It is a good time to question whether religion is doing you any favours as you always seem to be in a state of guilt. A man who used to be a woman will make you feel very cherished and special. Maybe you should invest in some rare hens as this will not only supply you with regular free range eggs, but also give you a new interest. Eat plenty of dark chocolate.

## Libra 24 Sep – 23 Oct

You should now embrace the café culture and give drunkenness a rest for a while. A single mother may impress you with her vivaciousness and spirit - but do you really want to take on her twelve kids? It's again a good time to question your sexuality if you seem to always be hanging out with people of your own sex. Change your tomato ketchup for a cheaper one.

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## **KATIE KIMBER TALKS ABOUT THE CHARITY WATERMARK**



**Can you tell me a bit about what you do for Watermark?** I manage the Watermark Flood Fund, a project with the Community Foundation for Calderdale. Watermark Flood Fund is a resilience fund for future flooding in Calderdale.

The original flood fund was started after the 2015, Boxing Day floods and the Community Foundation raised over £3.2 million in the biggest flood appeal to date.

**Where did that money come from?** From all over: After Boxing Day 2015 the generosity of the general public was phenomenal, donations came in swathes and we got some help from government match-funding; there was a huge pot of money which went out in emergency grants to enable households and businesses to get back on their feet. From that, Chris Sands created the Watermark Flood Fund and presented the idea to the Community Foundation For Calderdale.

**Why did he want to create Watermark?** Chris wanted to create a resilience fund so that instead of solely raising money in a flood appeal, you are proactive and fundraise before anything happens, then when it does happen, money can be released, where needed, straight away.

**Do you think it will happen again?** Due to the challenging landscape of Calderdale it's a real possibility that it could happen again.

**Why are people hanging around here if they know they are going to be flooded at some stage?** People have roots here and they want to stay here. Some people are unable to move as they can't sell their property because of the flooding risk. Also, the Calder Valley is a beautiful place to live and there is a lot of resilience work being done to combat flooding.

**Why are there floods here?** We're in a really challenging landscape in that the Calder Valley is in a basin bottom and so water finds itself there. At the moment, there are lots of projects going on that will help this alleviate the problem, tree planting by Treesponsibility and other natural flood management methods by Slow The Flow Calderdale alongside large scale interventions by Environment Agency and Calderdale Council.

**Where are people planting trees?** In lots of different spots like Gorphey reservoir which is a project run by Yorkshire Water and Treesponsibility. Work is being done so that the hillside

will retain water rather than there being a freefall of water down. Then there's work being done at Hardcastle Craggs by Slow The Flow and they are doing a series of leaky dams so that water will flow into contributories before landing in the river Calder.

As a fund we recognise that flooding is a serious issue here and that if it does happen again, is the generosity of the general public going to match the community needs? So, we fundraise now and people like yourself (who are going to give 20% of your local advertising revenue to Watermark) are doing things for us on a regular basis. We have a number of shops and businesses that have a Watermark product and when it is sold, a percentage goes to our fund. At the moment, we have £237,000 in our pot.

The longer we are without flooding, the bigger the pot becomes bigger in preparation for when it is required. We've also got the support of a couple of national companies who contribute to the fund – so there are lots of different people willing to help us.

**Have you had any help from the local media?** We've done things through the Halifax Courier and through the Hebden Bridge Times.

**Have you done anything on television?** Chris Sands has done a couple of things with Look North and we've had some publicity through Radio Leeds. Community Foundation also helps to promote our work as well.

**So, is the Watermark charity solely dedicated to flooding?** The Watermark grant aid is earmarked for flooding so if we were to have a flood tomorrow, our fund would go out as emergency grants, so that in that period of time where people have to leave their homes empty-handed, they would be given a grant depending on the volume of needs and how much is in the pot at the time – but it will be distributed immediately.

**Where are you based?** We have a base at the Town Hall in Hebden Bridge and we also have a base at the Community Foundation headquarters in Halifax. I am a freelancer so I tend to work at home; I have a contracted number of hours with the Community Foundation to work for the Watermark Flood Fund Project.

Recently, we have been awarded a grant from Calderdale Council so that we can continue our great work, we don't take money for wages from the fund – we're externally funded for me to work on the project. We feel quite strongly that the money in the pot is for householders and businesses at times of extreme flooding.

**How can people support Watermark?** If they are a business or shopkeeper, they can help by selling a Watermark product or service and then when it is sold we can agree how much money goes into the fund. People can donate or run an event for us and can contact me at:

[info@watermarkfund.org](mailto:info@watermarkfund.org)

In return for their help, they have a webpage on our website which advertises them as a business with all their details and what they do as a business and how they support Watermark. It's a two-way relationship and we market themselves as well as ourselves through things like social media.

So, there are lots of ways to see what we're doing and to contact us. We have a fixed 'pop-up' shop here in the Town Hall in Hebden Bridge and this is another way of raising money and awareness for the fund. We also have an online shop too – so there are lots of ways people can donate.

**Do you constantly apply for grants?** Not really although we asked the local council as it seemed a natural thing to do as they are doing a lot of flood work in the valley, and they recognise the importance of our work. We're all on the same team!

We are funded until March 2019 with the council, and then we will have to look at other means of funding so we can continue our work.

## WHY I AM AN ATHEIST



**Written by Kate Cullen**

I used to believe. I enjoyed believing. There was a 'being' I was informed, who knew me inside out, created me, even loved me, protected me, forgave me, comforted me, knew what I was thinking and never left my side. This 'being' surrounded me with all the good which I was informed and believed was in its intrinsic nature.

It was an optimistic, trusting outlook and I actually believed it for many years.

I ignored the evidence all around me. I lied to myself and refused to accept what I was seeing because I had stubbornly willed myself to be blind to it all and believed what I'd been told. What I saw did not tally with the omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent loving 'god' I had been brainwashed to believe in.

I read the Bible. I was, in fact, a Sunday School teacher, so strongly did I refuse to accept reality and let it speak for itself.

Then, after many years of self – deception and being desperate to believe in this 'being' and a world where everything was perfect, good and true, it happened.

It was sudden. It took only hours. I hadn't even consciously been thinking about life, its origins or the evidence I saw all around me, which I could no longer deny.

I suddenly knew that the truth was far from the wishful thinking I had been so determined to keep believing in. As far apart, in fact, as any two things could be.

Omnipotent, omnipresent, loving – this 'being' who knows whenever a sparrow falls and dies and who apparently looks after us, its' supposed creation, better than it does the sparrow because it loves us so much more than a sparrow?

Every shred of evidence I now saw goes against this 'belief'.

Where was the 'loving father' when little Jamie Bulger needed it? Where was the 'omnipotence' and 'omnipresence' when Holly and Jessica needed it?

What about the Aberfan disaster? People born with deformities?

Does this perfect, loving being make catastrophic mistakes when (and if) it is creating its beloved offspring so that some are born blind, limbless, and a host of other equally cruel disabilities?

Nature is kind. The fittest survive to maintain a healthy stock. The weakest are taken for food to help other species.

Emotions don't come into it. The essential thing is simply survival. The eskimos leave old grandma out on the ice and move on. She has had her turn and accepts it's now turn for the younger family members to take over. No mourning, no fussing. Out she goes with complete acceptance of her lot.

The freedom and relief I feel from the complete abandonment and negation of any idea of a 'god' is beyond words.

No more 'invisible friends'.

No more blind belief, when all evidence is to the contrary. At last the scales have dropped off.

Life is no less glorious, no less of a miracle, no less of a privilege to experience.

Now, I know that I need not wonder where the 'being' was when little Jamie, Holly, Jessica, Baby P and the multitude of other victims of evil were suffering and screaming out for help.

There was no help for any of them because the 'help of the helpless', the 'loving father', omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent proves itself consistently to be a MYTH.

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## **THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MY CARIBBEAN ISLAND AND ENGLAND**



**Written by Brenda Condoll**

The island I come from is called Nevis and is only about 35 square miles whereas England is a much bigger country. Nevis is situated in the West Indies, the Eastern Caribbean, and it has a much hotter climate than England though it does experience storms and hurricanes which can cause devastation.



In Nevis they grow West Indian produce like yams, sweet potato, dasheen, tanjas, bananas, mangos, pawpaw and many more. However, things like cloth, rice and flour have to be imported and are very expensive.

The infrastructure in Nevis is much less developed than in England and only a few lucky people have money. People from Nevis often have to go abroad to work and send back money to those left behind.

England is a much busier country with a developed benefits system and good healthcare. I like that we have four seasons in England (Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter) and cold weather doesn't bother me.

I don't intend to return to Nevis as it is very poor and life in England is better for me. My mother recently died in England and I would like to follow suit.

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## **GRAHAM MYNOTT'S DESERT ISLAND DISCS**



### **Songs:**

Bruce Cockburn - All the Diamonds in the World

I first heard this as a teenager and have always loved the melody and the lyrics. Has to be on this list...besides the song talks of the sea so it's doubly appropriate.

Vaughan Williams - The Lark Ascending

Also has a double hit. My father is a great classical music listener so I grew up with it throughout my childhood. This will remind me - but in particular this piece was played at my grandmother's funeral and will always bring family memories flooding back.

Bing Crosby - Don't Fence Me In

This song stands for a genre of music which I have always loved - the crooners. It's a great song, has a wonderful deep resonant note from Bing which I will attempt and fail endlessly on my island, generally sing along and it'll remind me of Jane too.

Tesfa-Maryam Kidane – Heywete

Ethiopique - ethio-jazz and blues is quite simply magical music and this is my current favourite song. Simple as that really.

Ruben Gonzalez – Tumbao

The whole Afro-Cuban All Stars thing a few years ago brought Cuban music to me and Ruben was the star. He's an extraordinary pianist and when he was "rediscovered" he was an old man. Still plays like a dream and this is a wonderful tune.

The O'Jays - Love Train

Have to have some disco and this is my pick. Have a listen and a wee shimmy on my desert island.

Boomtown Rats - She's So Modern

A bit like the disco choice - have to have something punky and for po-go-ing around to. It has to be this. "She's so 1970's"

Eric B & Rakim - Paid in Full

And finally need one more genre to cover: hip hop. Like all of the others so many songs but this is top of the tree today.

### **Book:**

Italo Calvino -If on a Winter's Night a Traveller.

Such an inventive book which starts loads of stories off and then stops. It's complicated. Plenty of stories to finish then on my island.

### **Luxury:**

A frisbee. No question. So useful - tray, hat, digging tool, weapon. Plus, you can play with it. I used to play a sport called Ultimate played with a frisbee and it'll bring back memories of that. Maybe I'll finally learn to pediddle (spin it endlessly on your finger) in my spare time and I'll be great a freestyle, disc golf and MTA (maximum time aloft) by the end of my stay.

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## **LIFE AT EIGHTY**

**Written by June Charlton**



I received fourteen cards this birthday which was the same as last year – four of them said ‘eighty’ and the rest were more discreet.

People ask me if I feel any different now that I have reached eighty years old. Apart from being celiac and having mild osteoporosis I feel fine. Mentally, I feel

as I always have done and have a young outlook on life which I think helps me to keep well.

I've always tried to look after myself by following a good diet, walking and cycling.

I also like to keep a nice, clean house.

I hope I can keep healthy as long as possible and keep visiting cafes we like and occasionally a restaurant. We go to Selby and visit the abbey every Monday and we catch up with people we like to talk to. Selby is a place I would recommend you to visit.

All in all, nothing has really changed since I reached the milestone of eighty and I plan to continue leading a healthy and full life for as long as I can.

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## STEPHEN MATTHEWS TALKS ABOUT STOODLEY TRAINING MENTORS



**Stephen, can you talk a bit about yourself?** Yes. I originally trained as an industrial chemist and because the company I worked for needed a computer system installing, I got into computers. From there, I became a programmer, but then

thirteen years ago, I had an accident and fell on my head. The result was that I got brain damage and it took me some time to almost fully recover - but not enough that I can program a computer. However, I am in a position to help people get started with computers and familiarise themselves with other forms of current technology.

My company helps people who have never used computers, tablets and mobile phones etc. before to become more confident around them.

**What is your company called?** Stoodley Training Mentors.

**Is it a voluntary organisation?** No, but we do pay our mentors just above the living wage although some of the work is done on a voluntary basis.

**Where are you based?** We are based at Hebden Royd Methodist Church in Hebden Bridge.

**What kind of people come to you?** People from all backgrounds with all technological needs.

**Are most of your clients elderly?** Yes, because originally, I got a grant from an organisation called Staying Well which aims to reduce isolation in the over 55s – they've now extended this to the over 18s because being socially isolated is just as much a problem to younger people.

Since then, we've had some funding from Todmorden Council and Hebden Royd Council but that has now run out and as a result, we now have to make a small charge. We've been unable to secure any more funding.

The main thing is that we approach anyone who comes to us with patience and we don't expect them to know anything at all; we go at their pace and don't mind how long things take to 'click'.

**Are people frightened when they start?** Yes, some people have never used a mouse and feel worried and even stupid. Some people are frightened of breaking the computers but we tell them that the only way to do this is to hit them with a hammer or pour sweet tea over them!

People are also worried about being ripped off online but we encourage them to be vigilant and contact us immediately if they have any doubts – and if something looks too good to be true, then it probably is.

**When do you have computer lessons?** On a Monday morning though we go to people's homes if required to do so.

**Can anyone attend a session?** Yes, people of all ages can come for help. It is a great feeling when you know you have helped someone on their way. One client, with our help, managed to write her life story and self-publish it as a little book.

**What are your long-term hopes for the project?** To continue as we are; our hope is for individuals to see us and get to the point where they don't need us anymore – we're a stepping stone but are there further down the line if people need to refer back to us.

**How can people contact you?** At:

Email: [stodleytm@gmail.com](mailto:stodleytm@gmail.com)

Website: [www.stodleytm.org.uk](http://www.stodleytm.org.uk)

**Landline: 01422 847827**

**Mobile: 07716265668**

**Are your clients all local?** So far, it's all local as we concentrate on the Upper Calder Valley as places like Mytholmroyd have been neglected from a technological point of view. It is essential people know how to use technology as things like Council Tax are now paid online

– which is daunting for many older people. Also, it is important to note that Barclays bank is closing in Hebden Bridge “because more people are banking online or with phone Apps”.

This is small consolation to those people who are not computer literate who over the past few years have lost: Yorkshire Bank in Todmorden, Halifax and Hebden Bridge, Nat West in Hebden Bridge etc. The only support these banks offer is that customers can go into the Halifax branches to learn how to use the banking App (which assumes knowledge of IT, funds to buy equipment and install broadband etc.).

There’s a whole generation who haven’t grown up with computers and technology moves so fast!

**What are your personal hopes for the future?** If I could get funding, I would like to pursue this project full-time, but as it is, I have to do three other jobs: I work part-time doing social media for North Halifax Community Partnership, I do some cleaning at the church and I work in a charity shop mainly on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

**What inspired you to start Stoodley Training Mentors?** Just to help people who needed help with technology in this part of Calderdale.

One of our key tag-lines is ‘open your world’ through technology like Skype and Facebook – even if you can’t physically leave your home, you can still be part of the community.

**Have you anything you would like to add?** Never be frightened of technology as it is just another tool for you to use. If you need help and contact us, we will be an objective source of information and help you to improve your quality of life through technology.

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## TWO POEMS BY RUTH MINICH

These two poems were written following our daily journey to work on two very different mornings in February. We travel from the west to the east towards the rising sun so everything is back lit, almost as a silhouette in winter, it is as though the morning has put on a show just for us, and we are travelling through an ever-changing living picture. There are not many people on the Teesdale roads at 6.30 am. My apologies if the poems seem “out of season” in this month’s magazine....

### **Teesdale morning**

The morning is still but not quiet.

Not quiet, as blackbird, thrush and robin lift their throats, shouting their stories to the ever-brighter light.

The light slowly warms to its reply in orange, apricot, yellow and grey, caressing the birds and the bare black trees.

Black trees stretch their many elbowed arms and crooked fingers out to sky and fields and the misty hills

And the mist blanketing the river will have to go now, as will the streaks of white below the mossy wall,  
The mossy wall where trickles of light creep between stones, back lighting their lacy splendour.  
Lacy as the white snow across brown fields, and the white sheep and the white stones wait and the brilliant orange disc rises from behind purple hills and warms them.

### **Almost monochrome**

Jack Frost visited last night  
And cast his bitter glitter on hills, trees, and fields  
until all flash white, with black trees and black road  
And pencil etched hills below a white grey sky.  
Only the green man wraps his ivy body around his favourite tree  
and waves to the ever-green Scots pines.

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## **CAN'T SEE THE WOOD FOR THE TREES**



### **Written by Michael Blackburn**

This is an idiom which is a group of words which don't mean what they say like 'It's raining cats and dogs'. We know it doesn't mean what it says but it leads us to the wonderful world of trees.

We might think that the largest and heaviest living thing on earth at 180 metric tons is the Blue Whale. No so! It is a minion compared

to the largest living thing on earth which is the General Sherman giant sequoia tree in a Californian National Park which weighs 1900 metric tons. General Sherman might be the heaviest but at 274.7 ft it is not the tallest that prize goes to another Californian sequoia named Hyperion which is 379.7 ft tall, twice the height of Nelson's Colum. The tree in the world with the widest girth is a Montezuma cypress in Mexico which is 119ft in diameter. It would take 10 medium sized cars nose to tail to surround it.

There are believed to be 60,065 species of trees in the world but only 50 are native to the U.K. For the rest of this article we will concentrate on the U.K. trees.

Our earth is estimated to be 4.5 billion years old. In comparison, at only 8,000 years old, the age of Britain is miniscule. This is due to the ice age which covered not only Britain but the whole of the continent which we know as Europe. The ice retreated twelve to thirteen thousand years ago and five thousand years later the sea level rose cutting off the U.K. from the mainland and making us an island. Before the sea had risen human pioneers, plants and animals had settled and become indigenous.

The ice age had scoured the land so it was like a fresh canvas for flora to become established. The first trees were Birch due to the fact that they could tolerate the cold and they differed from other trees in that they are wind pollinated. Other trees require insects for pollination.

I'm not much good at poetry but at school I do recall learning 'The silver birch is a dainty lady...'. I'm glad I remember that as I have just discovered that it was written by Edith Nesbit 1858-1924 who was a prolific writer, including 'The Railway Children'. The 'Silver Birch' poem goes on to name seven other trees so will help guide me through this research. Thank you, Edith. I'm sorry it has taken me seventy plus years to recognize your great talent.

The hardy British Oak tree must get an early mention. With about 1,000 very ancient Oaks, Sherwood Forest has the most important concentrations of these gnarled majestic survivors in Europe. Probably the forest's oldest surviving tree is Parliament Oak which is thought to be well over one thousand years old.

Oak was and still is prized for strength and durability. The Oak has always had a close association with the Royal Navy, whose ships were constructed from oak timbers until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. To understand the value of oak to the Navy we learn that during the reign of Elizabeth I, Spain asked one of its Ambassadors to sneak to the Forest of Dean and set fire to it which would have given the Armada the advantage. It seems that political skulduggery is nothing new!

The history of our forests tells us that William the Conqueror not only had the nerve to conquer us but also stole our woods! He introduced 'Forest Law' which claimed the huge woodlands of Oak, Hazel and Birch as the hunting grounds of kings. During the reign of Richard, the Lionheart in 1198, anyone stealing or killing a deer or bore could be punished by removing their eyes or even more severe penalties which we prefer not to mention!

One of Britain's greatest trees is a Lime tree said to be 2,000 years old. It is in the National Arboretum at Westonbirt, Tetbury, Gloucestershire.

England's oldest oak is not in a forest but on a grassy meadow near the town of Bourne in Lincolnshire. Thought to be 1,000 years old it has a hollow trunk of about 12 metres, the inside of which was once used as a tearoom with a door built in. It can be visited at Bowthorpe Park Farm.

A bruised and battered Yew tree can be seen on the West Bank of the River Derwent in Derbyshire. It is said to have inspired the nursery rhyme 'Rock a Bye Baby'.

I must mention an Elm tree which was in the grounds of where I used to work. Its trunk was massive but what amazed me was the huge branches which must have weighed a ton but which grew at right angles to the trunk. It must have had very deep roots to enable it to bear the weight and withstand the wind. It might seem strange but I got immense enjoyment and amazement from just standing looking at it.

Finally, we mention Conifers. At the 120- hectare National Pinetum at Bedgebury, Tunbridge Wells, boasts the tallest tree in Kent among its 12,000 trees and shrubs. This grand Fir tree is a mighty 51 meters tall.

Ref. Wikipedia

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**KATE CULLEN'S MONTHLY QUIZ**

1. How many sides has a twenty pence piece?
2. How many strings does a violin have
3. What special feature do words or phrases which are palindromes have?
4. What Shakespeare play title is it considered bad luck for actors to mention?
5. Which country has the bullet train?
6. What type of bird would you find in a gaggle?
7. Can a hummingbird fly backwards as well as forwards?
8. What is topiary?
9. Which snooker player is nicknamed ' the whirlwind '?
10. By what name is Gordon Sumner better known?
11. What was the colour of the first postage stamp?
12. Who sailed in the Mayflower?
13. What did Queen Victoria celebrate in 1887?
14. The Gunpowder Plot was an attempt to assassinate whom?
15. Which British engineer is associated with the invention of the jet engine?
16. Which female scientist won a Nobel prize for chemistry for her work investigating radioactivity?
17. Which clothing device did Whitcomb Judson invent in 1892?
18. What colour flame is produced when a substance containing copper is burned?
19. What is the main ingredient used in making glass?
20. What nationality was Galileo?

#### Answers

1. 7
  2. 4
  3. They are spelled the same backwards as forwards.
  4. Macbeth
  5. Japan
  6. Geese
  7. Yes
  8. The art of clipping shrubs or trees into ornamental shapes.
  9. Jimmy White
  10. Sting
  11. Black
  12. The Pilgrim Fathers
  13. Her golden jubilee
  14. King James 1
  15. Sir Frank Whittle
  16. Marie Curie
  17. The zip fastener
  18. Bluish green
  19. Sand
  20. Italian
-



## THE TRUE MEANING OF NURSERY RHYMES CONTINUED

### Nursery Rhymes



Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,  
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.  
All the King's horses, And all the King's men  
Couldn't put Humpty Dumpty together again!

Humpty Dumpty was a large cannon! It was used during the English Civil War (1642 – 1649) in the siege of Colchester which was strongly fortified by the Royalists and was laid to siege by the Roundheads. The huge cannon was placed on the city wall.

The Roundheads also had a cannon which succeeded in damaging the wall beneath Humpty Dumpty which caused it to tumble to the ground. The Royalists attempted to raise Humpty Dumpty to another part of the wall but it was so heavy that 'all the King's horses and all the King's men couldn't put Humpty together again'. The outcome was that after an eleven week siege the Royalists surrendered to the Roundheads.

I had a little Nut Tree.  
Nothing would it bear  
But a silver nutmeg  
And a golden pear.  
The King of Spain's  
Came to visit me  
And all for the sake  
Of my little nut tree.

This nursery rhyme refers to the marriage between Spain's Catherine of Aragon and Prince Arthur the son and heir of King Henry VII of England. But Henry VII died within a year of the marriage so Catherine was married-off to the heir apparent Henry VIII.

The nut tree is the source of wealth of England that King Henry was willing to trade with Spain. Nutmeg refers to the spices that English trade with the Far East was bringing in, and pears are shorthand for England's agricultural produce.

These commodities are England's silver and gold, in that Henry was hoping to use it in order to acquire some of the wealth that Spain was accumulating as a result of its explorations in the Americas. Henry regretted that he had turned down the chance to finance Christopher Columbus's voyage in 1492. As far as England was concerned 'all the fruit from my little nut tree' was a price well worth paying for a share in the wealth of the Americas.

The decision had far-reaching consequences. The break-up of the marriage of Catherine and Henry VIII led to the English Reformation and religious conflicts which cost many lives during the decades that followed.

Little Jack Horner

Sat in the corner,

Eating a Christmas Pie;

He put in his thumb,

And pulled out a plumb,

And said. What a good boy am I!

Thomas Horner was known to be a steward to the Abbot of Glastonbury during the reign of Henry VIII. The story goes that he was entrusted to take some title of properties to Henry VIII as a bribe so the Abbot could keep the main monastery. The deeds were said to be held and sealed in a pie. Thomas Horner, later known as Jack, stole a deed and said "What a good boy am I".

That the deeds were held in a pie is unlikely though they would have been hidden in some other concealed way. The property which Jack stole would have been taken from the Catholic Church by Henry VIII who didn't keep all the land himself but distributed it among supporters so he could then rely on their loyalty.

Little Miss Muffet,

She sat on a tuffet,

Eating her curds and whey;

Along came a spider,

Who sat down beside her,

And frightened Miss

Muffet away,

Said to have been written by Dr Thomas Muffet, an English physician and entomologist (study of insects) regarding his stepdaughter Patience.

Mary, Mary quite contrary,

How does your garden grow?

With silver bells and cockle shells

And pretty maids all in row.

The origins are steeped in history and refer to Mary Tudor or Bloody Mary who was the daughter of King Henry VIII. She was a staunch Catholic. The 'garden' refers to graveyards which were increasing in size with Protestants martyrs.

The 'silver bells and cockle shells' were instruments of torture. 'silver bells' were thumbscrews which crushed the thumb between two hard surfaces by the tightening of a screw. 'cockle shells' were believed to be instruments of torture which were attached to the genitals!

The 'Maids' were the origin of the guillotine. Beheading a victim was fraught with problems. It could take up to eleven blows of an axe to sever the head, the victim often resisted and had to be chased around the scaffold. This led to the invention of the guillotine, also known as 'The Maiden', which was copied from one used in Halifax since the 16<sup>th</sup> Century.

Researched by Little Bo-Peep.

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## LETTERS PAGE

**Dear Editor**

In what profession other than football can a manager do so badly they get sacked only to be offered an equally or better well-paid job by another club or national team?

Also, how can someone deemed unfit to continue managing a national team manage, to then, secure a top job with a premiership side?

**Jade Wilson, Coventry**

**Dear Editor**

In the last edition of the magazine, someone commented that religion was in effect a collection of fairy stories. Well I disagree and would argue that the existence of God is totally plausible and explains our existence on this planet. Has he even read the bible?

God has a reason for everything that happens and all will be revealed at the end of our lives – you are in for a lovely surprise!

**Toni Swales, Leeds**

I am writing to say that the government of the UK should stop giving countries, who have a space program, foreign aid i.e. India.

We should also be less willing to take in endless refugees from countries who arguably would not help us if we were on our knees.

**Sarah Copeland, London**

**Dear Editor**

I am a big fan of rugby league but have to admit that scrums are ridiculous (when the ball is just fed to your own side) and that the Grand Final is nothing but a money- making mechanism – Castleford were the best team by far last season!

**Julie Lockwood, Castleford**

**Dear Editor**

I think you have done amazing to abstain from alcohol for over twenty years – I couldn't do it for twenty days!

**Steve Walsh, Birmingham**

I would like to say that many people who go to church are hypocrites and don't pursue a Christian lifestyle. Of course, some people genuinely believe in, and worship God, and should be respected for doing so – these people do a lot of good in the world. But as for the hypocrites...

**Don Winton, Cardiff**

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## **THREE MORE GOOD RECIPES FROM JUNE CHARLTON**



### **Sticky Toffee Pudding**

Ingredients:

- 4 oz of dried dates, stoned and chopped
- 7 oz boiling water
- 1 teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda
- 2 oz of butter, softened – plus extra greasing
- 2 oz of soft light brown sugar
- 2 beaten eggs

4 oz of rice flour  
1 teaspoon of baking powder

To serve: handful of chopped pecan nuts

Toffee Sauce: 7 oz of butter  
10 oz of soft light brown sugar  
7 Fl oz double cream

Method: Put the dates in a heatproof bowl, pour over the boiling water and stir in the bicarbonate of soda. Leave to soak for 10 mins. Grease and line a 20cm (8 inch) square tin. Beat together the butter, sugar, eggs, flour, baking powder and soaked dates and their frothy liquid in a bowl. Pour into the prepared tin and place in a preheated oven, 180 C (350 F) Gas Mark 4 for 25-30 mins until firm to the touch. Place all the sauce ingredients in a pan while the pudding is cooking and heat through until the sugar has dissolved. Cut the sponge into 8 pieces and serve with some thick cream, the toffee sauce and a scattering of pecan nuts.

### **Polenta Mini Pizzas**

Ingredients: 1 pint of vegetable stock  
5 oz instant polenta  
1 oz of parmesan cheese grated

Topping: 2 large sliced tomatoes  
3 oz of Parma ham roughly torn  
5 oz Gorgonzola cheese crumbled  
2 oz of toasted pine nuts  
1 tablespoon of olive oil plus extra for oiling  
handful of basil leaves

Method: Put the stock in a saucepan and bring to the boil, then stir in the polenta and parmesan over a low heat. Continue to cook, stirring until thick. Turn out on to a lightly oiled surface and spread out to a thickness of 1 cm (1/2 inch) and using a plain cutter, stamp out 10 rounds a little larger than the sliced tomato on a slightly oiled baking sheet. Top each 'pizza' with a slice of tomato, some ham, Gorgonzola and pine nuts and drizzle over a little oil.

### **Cheesy Herby Muffins**

Ingredients: 6 oz of Gruyere cheese  
3 spring onions, finely sliced  
1 teaspoon of thyme leaves  
1 tablespoon of chopped parsley  
3 ½ oz of rice flour  
½ teaspoon of baking powder

5 oz of fresh breadcrumbs  
1 teaspoon of English mustard  
3 beaten eggs  
2 oz of melted butter  
4 tablespoons of milk

Method: Mix together all the ingredients in a large bowl until just combined and spoon the mixture into the muffin cases. Place in a preheated oven 190 C (170 F) Gas Mark 5 for 20 mins or until golden and firm to the touch. Remove from the oven and serve warm.

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## **THE WAR 1939 – 1945. I remember.....**

**By Michael Blackburn**

....hearing Neville Chamberlin saying “We are now at war with Germany”.

....the siren sounding on the first night of the war and going to the shelter.

....always carrying a gas mask.

....ration books and getting my weekly ration of sweets.

....the searchlights scanning the sky.

....never feeling hungry.

....the sound of bombs dropping destroying a textile mill.

....seeing the shattered mill the next day.

....hearing Hitler’s speeches.

....learning that Field Marshall Montgomery had taken over the army in North Africa.

....learning that he was being successful in fighting Rommel.

....that on the 7<sup>th</sup> Dec 1941 Japan attacked Pearl Harbour which led to the U.S.A joining the war against Germany under General Eisenhower.

....learning of the death of Mussolini and Italy’s surrender.

....during the early bedtime of the 30<sup>th</sup> May 1942 hearing the sound of aeroplanes passing over our house. It went on incessantly for about an hour. Before daybreak I heard them coming back.

....the next day learning that a ‘thousand bomber raid’ had taken place against Cologne.

....that on the 24 the Sept. 1944 my twenty-one-year-old cousin Lieutenant Harry Heenan had died during a tank battle.

....hearing that on the 30<sup>th</sup> April 1945 Hitler had shot himself whilst Eva Braun, his wife of one day, killed herself by taking cyanide.

....reading that on the May 1945 Field Marshall Montgomery accepted the unconditional surrender of the German forces.

....the newspapers showing ecstatic crowds outside Buckingham Palace with the King and Queen and Winston Churchill waving.

....attending a celebratory firework display somewhere near the river Thames.

I now know that Peace is very fragile and wars continue. It is a cliché but we won the war but lost the peace.

## **ANOTHER FUN QUIZ FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH**

### **Questions:**

- (1) Where was John Lennon murdered?
- (2) What is the French word for aeroplane?
- (3) What is the capital of Tasmania?
- (4) What is the chemical symbol for Mercury?
- (5) What is the main ingredient of glass?
- (6) What is a crème brulee?
- (7) What colour was the first mass produced car?
- (8) Who invented the microwave?
- (9) Which planet has the most rings?
- (10) What is the official currency of Italy?
- (11) What is the modern term for manic depression?
- (12) Who was the second man to walk on the moon?
- (13) Where was the artist Rubens born?
- (14) Who managed The Sex Pistols?
- (15) Where does Birmingham FC play their home games?
- (16) Which tribe of North American Indians did 'Sitting Bull' lead?
- (17) Where did the dance the tango originate?
- (18) A Bull Mastiff is what kind of animal?
- (19) What does IVF stand for?
- (20) What does 'transgender' mean?

### **Answers:**

Manhattan, New York, USA (2) avion (3) Hobart (4) Hg (5) silica in the form of sand (6) a rich custard base topped with contrasting layer of caramel served at room temp (7) black (8) Percy Spencer (9) Jupiter (10) Euro (11) Bipolar disorder (12) Buzz Aldrin (13) Siegen, Germany (14) Malcolm McClaren (15) St. Andrew's (16) Hunkpapa Lakota tribe (17) Buenos Aires and Montevideo, Argentina (18) domestic dog (19) in vitro fertilisation (20) a person whose sense of personal identity and gender does not correspond with their birth sex.

### **Editor's final word:**

Thank you very much for taking the time and trouble to read this publication. If you would like to get involved with the project please contact us at: [deancharltonmag@gmail.com](mailto:deancharltonmag@gmail.com) If you would like to advertise in the magazine please also contact us at the above email address.

Best Wishes, Dean.