

FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH – December 2022. Edition 96.



Hello. I hope you are well and have a happy and peaceful Christmas.

This e-magazine continues to evolve satisfactorily although there is always room for new blood. If you want anything to be considered for publication or want to donate to the running costs of the magazine/are interested in advertising, you can do so in a non-homophobic, non-racist, or non-sexist way, by contacting us at: dean@fthm.org.uk Please also note that our website address is: www.fromthehorsesmouth.org.uk Best wishes, Dean.

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MY NOT VERY SERIOUS STARS



Scorpio 24 Oct – 22 Nov

Even though you have a face like a slapped arse, you will find love this month and you will be the happiest you have been in a long time – but don't blow it by farting out loud on the first date. If you want Father Christmas to come down your chimney, now is the time to be extremely good so that you have something nice

in your stocking on Christmas morning.

Sagittarius 23 Nov – 21 Dec

This Christmas, you will receive a gift that will both amuse and bemuse you, but be careful who you show it to otherwise they may get the wrong idea about you. A woman with B/O may shower you with gifts but can you thank her in a physical way? Now is the perfect time to lay down the foundations for a good year next year. It is time to drink some coconut water.

Capricorn 22 Dec – 20 Jan

Someone you are in love with can't respond at the moment, but be patient as you never know what is just around the corner. You are a lovely person and will soon receive gifts that express people's love for you. Also, a welcome gift voucher will allow you to buy something you have long wanted. Be more honest and stop looking like mutton dressed as lamb though.

Aquarius 21 Jan – 19 Feb

Your mental health may have been poor recently but that's about to change. You may have some time on your hands at the moment so why not look for a vintage caravan and make plans to go and live in Benidorm in the spring? Christmas is nearly here so, take the opportunity to show everyone that you are not as mean as they think you are. Wear knickers.

Pisces 20 Feb – 20 Mar

If you are still feeling 'fat', maybe avoid mirrors and shop windows until you feel better about yourself – nobody else shares your view though and loves you as you are. Christmas is a time to be merry and remember people less fortunate than yourself, so, give a little and get drunk as a skunk. A man with a bee in his bonnet will come buzzing around you so stand up to him.

Aries 21 Mar – 20 Apr

Now is the time to stop blaming other people for your failures and accept that you are the architect of your own downfall. Grow a pair and rebuild. Logically, the relationship you crave will happen before long as you are a lovely caring person. Someone who doesn't normally give you the time of day will start being nice to you, but what are they after?

Taurus 21 Apr – 21 May

Although things are tough financially and life is bowling you some unplayable balls, do treat yourself occasionally to help you bat on until your wicket improves. Ironically, a good friend will ask to borrow some money but only lend what you can afford to lose – if you want to. Stop watching so many soaps on T.V. and start living yourself. Buy some new false teeth.

Gemini 22 May – 21 Jun

It is a good time to take up ballroom dancing as you have agile feet and it may be a good way to meet interesting people and dance with them. You may have hearing difficulties, so, stop being vain, and get your ears tested. Life may be like a slippery mountain that you are destined to climb time after time thanks to the snakes but enjoy the good bits of the climb.

Cancer 22 Jun – 23 Jul

Someone you trust will let you down badly this week, and to make matters worse they will steal your expensive shampoo – but just wash them out of your hair and move on. If you are one of those people with spare disposable income, then, why not book a foreign holiday to give yourself something to look forward to? Feed the baby crocodile you keep in the bath.

Leo 24 Jul – 23 Aug

The ghost of a roman soldier may interrupt your nocturnal activities next Thursday, but don't worry as he will only want to be a spectator and not interfere. A waiter in a local café will make it clear that he wants to serve you more than a black coffee – what will you do? Next year follow your heart and invest in your creativity as you are going places! Steal a glass eye.

Virgo 24 Aug – 23 Sep

It may be cold this month, but you will feel real, genuine warmth from some strangers you meet and you will be glad you weathered your latest emotional storm. They say you can't teach an old dog new tricks, but in your case, it is more a case of you being a lazy sod. Take a chance on someone who seems to be a good and kind person even if they are a bit ugly.

Libra 24 Sep – 23 Oct

Next year will be a good one for you and everything you need will fall in your lap – but not everything you want. A woman with large assets will offer to read your palm and tell you things that these stars cannot. A text will offer you the chance to better yourself but is it a genuine opportunity or another scam? Consider having a nose job to improve your looks.

INTERVIEW WITH COFFEE & VINYL ENTREPRENEUR MARK RICHARDSON



Firstly, please can you tell us a little bit about yourself? Yes. I'm Mark Richardson and I'm the owner of Loafers Vinyl and Coffee in the Piece Hall in Halifax. It's a record shop, bar and coffee shop. It's also a music venue I suppose and a community meeting place.

Can you tell us where you were born and brought up and a little bit about your family perhaps? I was born in St James Hospital in Leeds in July 1979. I believe Gary Numan was number one in the

charts when I was born with "Are Friends Electric?"! I grew up in Leeds and lived in a village called Oulton for fifteen years and then moved to Methley, which is just outside of Leeds, before moving over to Halifax in the year 2000 and I've been here since really. I had a good upbringing, plenty of music and sport. I'm a big Leeds United fan. I always had a massive interest in music, culture, travel and fashion. I always wanted to do something involving one of those interests. I went to Royds School, I did ok with my qualifications.

Did you enjoy school? I did, for the sport and the craic and buying CDs and vinyl, when I could afford to.

So, was Royds your secondary school? Yes. Prior to that I went to Oulton and Woodlesford Primary School. I had a good time there. Made some good friends there, as it was a nice village school in a good community. Then I moved to Royds and had a great time there. I did quite well, could've done better. I loved the sport, social element and the sixth form as well. I'm still in touch with a lot of the people I grew up with there.

Do you have any brothers or sisters? I have a sister Emma who is 40. She lives in Rothwell still where we grew up. Different to me, a bit quieter, I guess. But she's a good sister. I've got a good family and my grandparents are still alive, well two of them are, June and Terry, and they live over in Leeds. I have three children of my own. Noah, Nell and Luke aged fourteen, ten and four. They're all like chalk and cheese as well. Then there is my wife Sarah, she is the

co-owner or co-director of Loafers. She does all the hard work! You know the accounts, paperwork and stuff like that.

When you left school, did you know what you wanted to do and, what did you actually do when you did leave? I didn't know what I wanted to do, even though I wanted to set up a record shop. I thought "that's never going to happen" and I went to university in Cheltenham and studied Sports Science. I only stayed for eight months because, I had been working at Royal and Sun Alliance Insurance for a year before I went to uni and, I missed the money and couldn't settle into the student lifestyle so I came back to Leeds and Royal and Sun Alliance, where I worked for another twenty years. I'm still in touch with the uni guys but, as I said, I just couldn't settle into the uni lifestyle. I had a good twenty-year career in insurance. I didn't really want to do that but it was kind of what happened still with the belief that one day I would do what I do now. I had a great twenty years at RSA Group, as it is now. I met some great friends and had a great career. I started in household claims and then fell into the complaints world. I worked my way up the ladder and became a manager.

Did you find the complaints role interesting? I really did yes. Initially you had a little bit more time to look into things. It involved complaints relating to large fires, thefts, subsidence, things that weren't going right and service issues. Then there were policy issues, which I found quite interesting because I had to listen carefully and look after the customer. Then when I went into managing teams, it became a lot more numbers driven and regulated more rigidly. At that stage I found it a bit tougher and it was more about managing people, which I did enjoy but they were so heavily targeted it felt like I was moving away from what I had originally joined it all for.

How did your time at RSA Group come to an end and what came next? So, the last few years, as I said, was very numbers driven and we managed people really closely, rather than the customer sometimes! Due to regulations and the like. I had a feeling that the number of staff in our area of the business was going to be cut and I was made redundant in 2017. At this stage I had a little brainwave and I thought that my dream could become a reality with the Loafers idea. Many people told me to hold fire and that I needed to find the right location and that it would be a big risk but, I went for it and I put my redundancy money into the business.

How did the actual opportunity itself for Loafers come about? Well, Loafers was always going to be its name, going right back to my mid-teens when I had the plan but not the opportunity I suppose. I had a walk round Leeds, looked at the Corn Exchange and a few other venues and then, at the last minute, took a walk to the Piece Hall which I knew was being regenerated during the period between 2014 to 2016 having been closed for a number of years. I just thought "oh let's have a look" so I walked into the building and took a tour and thought "we can do it here!" Again, some people were sceptical saying it could be a white elephant and it wouldn't work in Halifax. But I had this real idea that it was just going to take off because it had so much potential as a cultural destination and music venue and retail space, and I went for it and I opened Loafers, in a smaller space than currently, in 2017.

When you first opened Loafers, what did you do, what did you sell? The plan was to open a vinyl record shop, sell good, simple ground coffee and seminal artwork. I wanted to create this haven for music lovers. At the time my dreams were humble. A simple idea to have a place to meet to have a coffee and buy a record and just see what happened. Initially it was

just going to be me taking a wage from it and seeing whether it worked and, on the opening day, on Yorkshire Day in August 2017, there was a massive buzz in the place and I just thought “this is going to be bigger than I thought” and I think we had something 10,000 people in the Piece Hall that day. We were run off our feet and, it was quite scary to be honest. It was overwhelming and that day, or the day after, I thought there’s a music culture in Halifax and we’re re-opening a tin for it. A week later I said to Sarah, “you’re going to have to quit your job in insurance and come and help me!” That felt like a real awakening for me, the Piece Hall and the people of Calderdale really. This gem of a building had reopened its doors again. It looked amazing and it had that feel about it and, here we are five years later in a bigger space with, just hundreds and hundreds of regular customers.

Do you have plans for further expansion? I really feel like we’re in a space now where we could expand because we have a great community. We have a loyal customer base, hundreds and hundreds of visitors from all over the country come to visit the Piece Hall and I’d love to expand my offering, more food, more live music, so there is that potential or a second business somewhere else. It’s just choosing the right time to do that.

Do you currently have any plans for this other business interests away from Loafers? I’d love a second Loafers in a destination away from here but deciding where that might be is going to be tricky as, I absolutely love it here and me being here is key to our success really. I think people come for us because of what myself and Sarah have done here so, because we are so key choosing that is going to be tricky and I do love being in the Piece Hall most of the time. There is definitely potential for that though.

I presume you do have social media channels and the like where people can contact you with regards to Loafers? Yes. From the very beginning we built the brand through social media with Twitter, Instagram and Facebook and I’ve kept it as simple as that. We’ve built up a really good network and community on social media. Then in Covid times, we built a really good website, which has improved our offering because people buy a lot of records through it. That actually helped us grow a lot with not having a website initially. It was meant to be a visit and browse experience but it became so important to have that online presence during the pandemic and now, that website offering has grown massively and it has been important in terms of everything we sell really from artwork to coffee to records to branded stuff. It’s a really good channel of income for us. (See end of interview for links to the appropriate social channels & website)

I believe you have live events here as well? Yes. Because we’ve got this extra space since moving downstairs (Loafers was originally on the first floor in the Piece Hall) with an outside area available, we’ve probably done about thirty gigs now in the past three years. We did a few smaller ones in the old shop, which were brilliant. The Inspiral Carpets came in. Steve Pilgrim, loads of different bands and local people/musicians.

Have you got any particular highlights from these performances? Yes. I mean one of the people who walked in one day was Andrew Lloyd-Webber. That was pretty cool. It took me a little while to recognise him. But he loved the shop. Then down here in our new location we’ve had The Orb, Youth, Chris Helme, a Tim Burgess book signing, the lads from Stone Foundation, Dan Sealey, Hannah Who, Ocean Colour Scene lads. Obviously, we’ve got Paul Weller’s piano in the shop now, through our contacts, Steve Pilgrim has played a few times, Andy Crofts, The Sundowners, BC Camplight and Chris Hawkins, from 6 Music is a regular

visitor. We collaborate with him a lot. The opportunities we have are just growing all the time.

Where do you see yourself in say five years' time? I would absolutely love to be here, established as a business and a brand. Doing more shows, more records, breweries want to put their beers on tap here and be a big part of the success of this building. As an independent business it's great and we're making a living from that but, being part of the live stuff, the Piece Hall do and the bigger events, it's fantastic to have a say in that and be part of that because it's such an amazing experience for everyone.

Away from Loafers, do you have any other ambitions or things you want to achieve? It's still Loafers related but, I'd love to have a little record label or a radio station. I think we could build it as part of our brand and what we do. That would be cool and is something I've been thinking about. Away from that, I'd love to do another London Marathon because I've done five and, I think I've got one left in me.

Have you done a lot of running in the past Mark? Yes. Well, it was a way of keeping fit. When I used to work in insurance, I'd go to the gym in my lunch hour and I suppose it was quite a stressful job I had, managing people and dealing with complaints so, I'd go running and training quite a bit. I got into doing marathons for charity, which was great fun, and half-marathons and triathlons. I used to do loads of stuff and it was good for my mental health and wellbeing, I really enjoyed it.

The mental health aspect is so important, isn't it? It is and I think running a business now has got trickier, especially in the current financial climate so, it would be nice to get back to doing a bit of running because it really does make me feel better but, it's just time with having a young family as well.

You mentioned you're a big Leeds United fan, has football played a big part in your life as well? Yes. I'm a massive Leeds fan. Growing up, it was my dad's fault. He took me to Elland Road in 1987 to see Leeds versus Plymouth. John Sheridan scored a penalty and I thought "this is great", watching the crowd and everything. I loved the white kit, well I still love the white kit, I think it's great. I used to go there quite a bit. I played a lot of football growing up.

Were you a decent footballer? Yes. I represented Leeds Centre of Excellence. I used to play in the same team as former England goalkeeper Paul Robinson and Mark Jackson, who is one of the current first team coaches actually. I was good but, I just wasn't hard enough. I had the ability but other lads outgrew me. I used to get knocked about a bit so, I started playing a bit of golf. I still enjoy that as well. I love sport generally and, eventually, I'll find a bit more time to play. It's my ambition to do that away from Loafers in the future.

Is there anything else you want to mention at all? Only just my pride for what the Piece Hall is as a destination. It's a beautiful place and it has worked wonders for the economic climate in Calderdale and Yorkshire. I'm so proud when anyone visits, new or old customers, of what we've got here. It's an absolute gem and I feel blessed that we're here as a business.

Thank you for your time today, Mark! It's been a pleasure.

Loafers' website: <https://www.loafersvinyl.co.uk/>

Facebook: [loafersvinyl](#) Twitter: [@loafersvinyl](#) Instagram: [loafersvinyl](#)

GRAHAM TOWNSEND'S MONTHLY QUIZ



Questions:

- (1) The birthplace of John Adams, 2nd President of the United States, shares its name with which English town in Essex?
- (2) In which Spanish city can you visit the Alhambra Palace?
- (3) British businessman Matthew Benham is best known as the owner of which English football team?
- (4) Keith Levene, who died in November 2022, was a founding member of which English punk rock band?
- (5) Nut was a goddess in which mythology?
- (6) Treasure hunter Allan Quatermain is the main character in some of which writer's novels?
- (7) Benito Mussolini, FDR and Adolf Hitler all died in which year?
- (8) In which Christmas pantomime would you see the character Widow Twankey?
- (9) What do Americans call a tramp?
- (10) Allegedly, which cartoon character was banned in Finland because he wears no trousers?
- (11) Who composed "A German Requiem"?
- (12) According to the Bible, how old was Methuselah when he died?
- (13) What is another word for hemicrania?
- (14) Which of NASA's Apollo missions first landed men on the moon?
- (15) Which country did England defeat in the 2022 World T20 Cricket World Cup Final?
- (16) What is the third prime number?
- (17) J Edgar Hoover became director of which organisation in 1924?
- (18) Who banned Christmas in England between 1649 and 1660?
- (19) In which country is the city of Trier?
- (20) Which English band's last album was "Urban Hymns"?

Answers:

- (1) Braintree (2) Granada (3) Brentford (4) The Clash (5) Egyptian (6) H Rider Haggard (7) 1945 (8) Aladdin (9) A hobo (10) Donald Duck (11) Johannes Brahms (12) 969 years old (13) Migraine (14) Apollo 11 (15) Pakistan (16) Five (17) The FBI (18) Oliver Cromwell (19) Germany (20) The Verve

BRENDA'S WILDLIFE CORNER

Puffins



Puffins are seabirds and can be divided into three species: The Tufted and Horned Puffin which live in the North Pacific Ocean and the Atlantic Puffin which can be found in the North Atlantic Ocean.

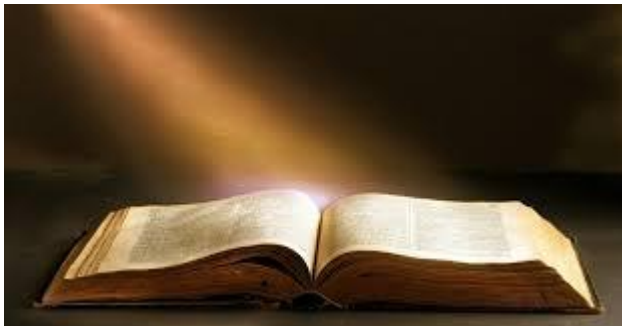
They feed by diving into the water and their short wings are adapted for swimming at speed. Puffins feed on fish and zooplankton but feed their chicks primarily on small fish several times

a day. Interestingly, they can carry more than one fish at a time and thus forage further afield. They breed in large numbers on cliffs or offshore islands, and nest among rocks or burrows in the soil. All puffin species are black or black and white, have a large build and a big beak that is brightly coloured in the breeding season – they shed parts of their bill after the breeding season which leaves them with a smaller duller beak.

Unfortunately, puffins are a hunted species for their eggs, feathers and meat. The Atlantic Puffin population was decimated in the nineteenth century due to habitat destruction and exploitation for food. The Atlantic Puffin is part of the Icelandic diet where they don't have any legal protection and, in fact, the fresh heart of a puffin is consumed as a delicacy in Iceland.

* Ref. Wikipedia

BIBLE TALK



Sent by Peter Smith

Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil;
Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness;
Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.

Isaiah 5:20 (NKJV)

It often happens that people who join the military and kill some of their fellow human beings are praised, while those who refuse to put on a military uniform are abused.

SOME SEASONAL RECIPES FROM JUNE CHARLTON



Black Beer Cake

Ingredients:

6 oz of self-raising flour
2 oz of ground almonds
12 oz of dried fruit
4 oz of margarine or butter
4 oz of sugar
1 beaten egg
4 Fl. oz of stout or Guinness

Method:

Simmer fruit, sugar and stout together in a fairly large pan for 20 minutes and allow to cool. Add the beaten egg, ground almonds and self-raising flour. Turn into greased 7" tin and bake for 2 ½ hours at 375F.



Christmas Pudding

Ingredients:

4 oz of self-raising flour
8 oz of fresh white breadcrumbs
8 oz of brown sugar
8 oz of chopped suet
8 oz of currants
8 oz of sultanas
8 oz of raisins
4 oz of mixed peel
1 oz of ground almonds

4 eggs
Rind of one lemon (finely grated)
1 teaspoon of almond essence
½ teaspoon of ground ginger
½ teaspoon of mixed spice
½ teaspoon of cinnamon
Pinch of salt
Pinch of grated nutmeg
½ pint of milk or barley wine

Method:

Butter basins. Sieve flour, salt and mixed spice. Add breadcrumbs, brown sugar, chopped suet, currants, raisins, sultanas, mixed peel, ground almonds and lemon rind. Beat the eggs with almond essence and add to the mixture. Add liquid and mix very thoroughly.

Pour in prepared basins and cover with a piece of greased greaseproof paper and a pudding cloth. Leave. Place in a pan (with a tight-fitting lid) containing enough water to come

half-way up the basin. Cook for required time. When adding water to maintain the level, it must be boiling. When cooked, cover with a new piece of paper and store until required. Reheat by using the same method of cooking.



Turkey Terrine

1lb of cooked turkey meat, white or dark
½ lb of streaky bacon rashers
1 medium onion
Any remaining stuffing, cranberry sauce etc.
1 level teaspoon of chopped parsley
¼ pint of gravy
1 large egg beaten
Salt and pepper

Method:

Brush a 2lb loaf tin with melted fat. Cut the rind from the bacon, then line the base and sides of the tin with the rashers. Mince the turkey, onion, stuffing and cranberries into a bowl. Beat in the parsley with the bread sauce, gravy and a beaten egg. Season the mixture really well, then turn into a lined tin and smooth the surface. Cover with foil and cook the terrine on the centre shelf of a medium hot oven Gas mark 5/375 F for two hours. Leave in a tin to cool overnight. Serve with salad or a pate with hot crusty bread.

ALBUM REVIEW – PALOMINO – BY FIRST AID KIT



Written by Graham Townsend

This is the fifth album from the Swedish duo which comprises of sisters Klara and Johanna Soderberg. I was intrigued to learn more about them after downloading “My Silver Lining”, probably their most well-known song, a few years back. This intrigue was heightened when they played a gig at the Piece Hall in my hometown of Halifax, West Yorkshire this past summer.

There are eleven songs on the album and the running time is just over thirty-nine minutes. “Palomino” has peaked at number three in the UK Album Chart at the time of writing. This equals their best chart performance in this country. Previous album “Ruins” also reached this position in February 2018.

“Out of My Head” gets us off to a rousing poppy start. This is up there with the best songs I have heard from them to date. It was released as the second single from this album.

“Angel”, which comes next, was the first single to be released. It slows the pace slightly, but only a little bit and the more traditional folk roots show through here, especially at the beginning of the track. Another thoroughly enjoyable song though.

“Ready to Run” features some lovely harmonies between Johanna and Klara. This is possibly my favourite track on the album.

“Turning Onto You” is more of a ballad although, it picks up nicely towards the end. There are more good harmonies here. There are hints of Stevie Nicks/Fleetwood Mac in this one. This was the third single released from the album.

“Wild Horses II” focuses on the folk element of the band. You can feel the Americana here. It seems to be at the heart of a lot of the material they produce.

The lyrics of “The Last One” concentrate on relationships. This comment can also be levelled at “Fallen Snow”.

“A Feeling That Never Came” was the fourth single from the album and we are back to the pop we experience in the opener. It is up there as a contender, in my opinion, for favourite song alongside the aforementioned “Ready to Run”.

There aren't any what I would call bad songs amongst those collected here.

The title track, curiously, the final track of the album (you don't often get that) is a decent melodic effort to finish things off and the Fleetwood Mac vibes are back.

There is a nice blend of pop and folk rock mixed in here. It is more up-tempo than I had anticipated, perhaps with the exception of “Nobody Knows” which is quite haunting in places. It is a track that makes me think of the TV series “Twin Peaks” for some reason. Fans will be happy with what they hear here and I am sure this will sell well worldwide.

MY STAR RATING = ***1/2 out of 5

BLACKBURN



Blackburn is an industrial town located 8 miles east of Preston and 21 miles north-northwest of the city of Manchester, in England. It is multiculturally diverse with (according to the 2011 census) a population of 117,963 made up of 30.8% of people from an ethnic background. It is also well-positioned for commutes to Salford, Liverpool, Bradford and Leeds.

Textiles have been produced in Blackburn since the middle of the 13th century when people wove wool in their homes in a domestic system. Interestingly, the arrival of Flemish weavers helped develop the woollen cottage industry in the town, which coincided with the industrialisation and expansion of textile manufacture. By 1650, the town was known for the manufacture of “Blackburn checks” and “Blackburn greys”. From the middle of the 18th century to early 20th century, Blackburn changed from being a small market town into a major weaving force and its population rocketed from less than 5,000 to 130,000. Cotton textile manufacturing expanded rapidly with people spinning cotton into thread and weaving it into cloth at home – merchants supplied the cotton and arranged for the resulting cloth to be bleached and dyed.

Significantly, spinning mills were built in Blackburn with there being 24 purpose-built ones constructed by 1824.

However, spinning declined between 1870 and 1900 as the sector transferred to elsewhere in Lancashire. In the town, in the 18th century, people mainly undertook weaving by handlooms working from their own cottages. But the introduction of power looms in the mills after 1825, resulted in a decline in handloom workers near to the town, although quite a few of them managed to make a living working in the outlying rural areas. But, inevitably, the improvements in power looms led to many people transferring from the cottage industry to factories. Unfortunately, this also meant about 60% of weavers in places like Blackburn and Oswaldtwistle were made unemployed. The high level of unemployment in Lancashire had consequences and on the 24th of April, 1826, power looms were attacked in Accrington with 212 power looms being destroyed and it only stopped through the intervention of troops who arrived to quell the riots.

By the end of the 20th century, the cotton industry had declined in Blackburn which had a knock-on effect for other industries like brewing, building and engineering. In 1908, a slump saw the cessation of 43 mills and a quarter of the town's looms being unused. Another nail in the coffin during the 1st World War, was the suspension of trade with India which resulted in India raising its import tariff to 14% and the loss of work in places like Blackburn. Then in 1926, The General Strike resulted in suspension of half of the town's mills with 12,000 people being left unemployed. A further 26 mills closed down between 1930 and 1934, but there was a brief boom in the textile industry between 1948 and 1950 although at that time 20-25 looms only needed to be operated by 1 weaver. This boom did not last and the cotton industry continued to decline with only 25% of the town being employed in textiles in 1951. The number of looms then fell from 79,405 in 1907 to 2,100 in 1976.

Now let's take a brief look at the general history of Blackburn. In 1086, it was recorded as Blacheborne in the Domesday Book, and two urn burials were discovered from the Bronze Age in the hills around the town. There is also presence of a sacred spring which might have been used during the Iron Age and there is evidence of prehistoric activity in the town centre. A Roman military road also crossed the river Blakewater, but it is unclear whether it was built before a settlement there. Christianity was also adopted in the area by the end of the 6th century.

The Domesday Book also proves that the area was a royal manor during the days of Edward the Confessor and William the Conqueror. It is possible that a church was built during the late 11th or early 12th century in the vicinity. But it is important to note that the town's importance declined when Clitheroe became the regional centre. There was also a settlement in the town centre, where other medieval domiciles could be found.

Today, the major employers in Blackburn include Thwaites Brewery, Blackburn College, Darwen Borough Council and East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust. In addition, numerous business parks are littered around the town and there is also Drumstone Trade Park.

If you think you would like to pay a visit to lovely Blackburn, there is a good road network, a new bus station and a recently redeveloped railway station with easy links to: Leeds, Preston, Burnley, Colne and Manchester Victoria. If you choose to fly, Manchester airport is only 28 miles away. The Leeds and Liverpool Canal also runs through the town and it played an

important role in the town's industrial growth with raw cotton being imported via Liverpool in the 19th century.

There are quite a few places of interest for you to see in the town like: Blackburn Cathedral (cathedral status in 1926), Ewood Park (where Blackburn Rovers play their home games) and Queen Victoria's statue which is made out of white Sicilian marble on a grey granite plinth. The Town Hall is interesting in that it was built in two stages with the old and new parts connected by an elevated footbridge and there's the old Technical School with its slate roof and mainly red brick and yellow terra cotta. You could also visit the Wainwright Bridge (opened in 2008), Blackburn Arena and King George's Hall – there is much to see!

If you enjoy spending time in parks, you might enjoy Corporation Park, Queen's Park, Roe Lee Park or Witton Country Park.

Blackburn Rovers are the main football team in the town and, as mentioned previously, they play at Ewood Park Stadium. Blackburn Arena is a 3,200 seat Olympic-sized ice rink which hosts local ice hockey teams. If cricket tickles your fancy, you could go and support East Lancashire Cricket Club. In fact, there is no reason to be bored in Blackburn!

There is a good education system with nine state-funded secondary schools and one independent school. Tauheedul Islam Girls' High School was the first Muslim state school in the north west. Students with health problems and difficulties are also adequately catered for. If you want to experience further education, you could attend Blackburn College or St. Mary's College which is a sixth form college.

So, if you've never thought of going to Blackburn, I hope this article will inspire you to do so – it's a really interesting place to visit!

* With a lot of help from Wikipedia

LETTERS PAGE



Dear Editor

Whilst many people like the British Royal Family, I am not one of them as I believe it is an out-dated institution that needs confining to the annals of history. It is sad that in a 'modern' society that people act in such a sycophantic way to other human beings who are just 'fortunate' to be born into a certain privileged family.

In no way do I think we should all be the same, but I do think that anyone, from any background, should be able to access the top jobs and positions in society. Having said this, who in their right mind would want such a restricted life regardless of how much money involved?

Freda Coleman, Norwich

Dear Editor

I have been quite unwell mentally recently and it is still obvious to me that there is much more support for people with physical ailments. Of course, it is easier to understand physical problems and often you can see them, but I still think there is work to be done to understand and better accept mental health conditions. After all, nobody knows what is going to happen to them in the future – except death!

Mary Robinson, London

Dear Editor

I have just been on a train in West Yorkshire and I was appalled at how cramped it was – to make it worse there were people with bicycles which took up lots of space where people could have been standing. Maybe people should have to pay extra to take their bicycles on trains as they are arguably restricting other people from travelling? Also, I don't like how people take up two seats with their luggage when they have only paid for one seat. I am sounding like a grumpy old man!

Phil Cartwright, Castleford

Dear Editor

I agreed with the views of the man who threw eggs at King Charles in York – but I don't agree with doing this to anyone, whoever they are. However, I think freedom of speech is of paramount importance.

Vivian Moles, York

Dear Editor

Smoking used to be considered a cool thing, but happily, it is no longer viewed in such a way. I don't think there is anything as unattractive as an attractive person blowing smoke out into the atmosphere. Surely you would think that people would be aware of the possible consequences of smoking and then there is the cost! Of course, it is a very hard drug to kick but people should not stop trying to do so – unless they don't want to.

Simon James, Colchester

JUNE'S WORLD



Hello everybody.

Here I am doing my monthly article. I hope you are well and happy, and not letting this bad weather get you down. We had some lovely sunny days when we were going all over to

different places. We're limited to where we go now for three months due to medical reasons, but it will soon pass by.

We've been getting a bus for a while so we're quite used to it. Today, Saturday, we're going to the Freeport at Glasshoughton, near Pontefract, to look for new curtains and cushions. Incidentally, I've not many more Christmas presents to buy as I started buying presents early once I had retired. I'd much rather get them early as I don't like leaving things until the last moment. A lot of people say they do the same thing.

I've bought lots of presents and have wrapped them all up. I've still got to buy the main presents which I will hopefully do today at Freeport. Christmas is a lovely time of year and it's really nice to see the family opening all their presents.

I do hope we get some snow this year especially on Christmas Day, I think last year it snowed for about two minutes which was a bit disappointing. We live near a road so we see lots of people walking by with bags and parcels.

Today, Monday, is our Selby day which we like. We go to the abbey to get a cup of tea and see people with whom we like to talk. They're already advertising holidays for next year – we don't have time to get Christmas over, having said that, it's always nice to have something like a holiday in the sun to look forward to.

BEATLE'S STORY

Written by Craig Tattersall

After a hard day's night, I wake up and here comes the sun. I open the door and see a red van. "Please Mr postman what does my letter to Lady Madonna say." He read out loud "She loves you!" I wrote to Lady Madonna yesterday saying "Love me do and I wanna hold your hand." Later I took a bus to Penny Lane to meet my friend the paperback writer. We sang ob-la-di ob-la-da to strawberry fields. With the sun shining, the heat and too much drinking I shouted "Help! I can see Lucy in the sky with diamonds!" With a little help from my friends, they helped me on my feet and we bought a ticket to ride the yellow submarine to our weekly meeting at Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club. With the music playing we were all twisting and shouting. I saw my ex-girlfriend. I said "Hey Jude." She said "get back!" Then behind her appeared Lady Madonna who was angry and upset at me. She said "I'm sorry I'm going back to the USSR." Walking down the long winding road that leads to my door. Sitting in my arm chair I thought "let it be." Whilst me and my guitar gently weep.

GRAHAM'S WONDERFUL WORLD OF SPORT



I reckon quite a few sports fans overlook the events that take place in December as they are concentrating on festive celebrations. This doesn't mean there aren't a decent amount of quality events that take place so, let's have a look at what the month has in store for us.

The unique winter edition of the FIFA World Cup reaches its conclusion on Sunday 18th December. Will the victors be one of the favourites like France, Brazil or England or, will we be celebrating success for one of the outsiders like Netherlands or Denmark. You can never rule out the Germans either!

England visit Pakistan for three cricket test matches. The first match commences on 1st December. These will be the first test matches England compete in on Pakistani soil in more than seventeen years.

Boxing sees WBC World Heavyweight Champion Tyson Fury take on Derek Chisora at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium in London on 3rd December. Chisora winning would be a major upset, having been beaten on two previous occasions by Fury.

The PDC Darts World Championship gets underway on 14th December at Alexandra Palace, also in London. The event sees the defending champion, Scotsman Peter Wright, looking for a third win in four years. The final takes place on 3rd January 2023.

The English Premier League resumes, after its hiatus for the World Cup, on 26th December. It will be interesting to see how this break impacts the teams at the top of the table, especially Arsenal who are five points clear of Manchester City, having not been in such a lofty position at Christmas since 2007!

The festive period is also an important time in NFL. There are eleven games on Christmas Eve and there are three games on Christmas Day itself. There is also one match on 26th December.

Fans in the USA are spoiled as they can also watch live NBA action on Christmas Day as five matches take place.

As you can see there is plenty of action for you to pig out on as you wade your way through the leftover treats from the month's celebrations.

* With a little help from various online resources.

ANOTHER FUN QUIZ FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH



Questions:

- (1) What soft fruit is used to make the drink Crème de Cassis?
- (2) Tonic water contains what chemical?
- (3) Where would you find the Sugar Loaf Mountains?
- (4) What system of reading do blind people use?
- (5) What is the French word for 'lounge'?
- (6) What is haggis wrapped in?
- (7) What is the currency of Madeira?
- (8) Who created the Boy Scouts?
- (9) What is Scrumpy?
- (10) Which civilisation worshipped cats?
- (11) What is the Spanish word for 'breakfast'?
- (12) Who composed the music for the musical 'Jesus Christ Superstar'?
- (13) From where did the Dalai Lama flee in 1959?
- (14) What is a hookah?
- (15) What is the sacred book of Islam called?
- (16) In what year did the comedian Tony Hancock die?
- (17) Where do the Gurkhas come from?
- (18) South America is composed of how many countries?
- (19) What is the Isle of Man government called?
- (20) What were Emily Bronte's sisters called?

Answers:

- (1) Blackcurrants (2) Quinine (3) Rio de Janeiro (4) Braille (5) Salon (6) A sheep's stomach (7) Euro (8) Lord Baden-Powell (9) A cider made in the West Country of England (10) Ancient Egyptians (11) Desayuno (12) Andrew Lloyd Webber (13) China (14) A water pipe that is used to smoke flavoured tobacco (15) Koran/Quaran (16) 25 June 1968 (17) Nepal (18) 12 (19) The Isle of Man government (20) Charlotte, Anne, Elizabeth and Maria

Editor's Final Word: As always, thank you for taking the time and trouble to read this e-magazine. Please note that our website is: www.fromthehorsesmouth.org.uk Best wishes, Dean, Brenda, Robert and Graham.