

FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH – December 2023. Edition No. 108



Hello. I hope you are okay. I've got further physical health problems, but I won't bore you with them here. Anyone can contribute to this publication as long as it is in a non-sexist, non-homophobic, and non-racist way.

The photography competition runs until the last day of the year at 12 o'clock GMT and the theme is 'people'. There are two £50 prizes at stake. If you want to enter the competition, advertise, contribute to the magazine

in any way, or are interested in making a small donation to help with the running costs of the magazine, you can do so at: dean@fthm.org.uk

Please 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

Just because Christmas is just around the corner, don't go around the bend spending money like a fool – remember there is life after Christmas – but maybe not after death. A friend will do you a huge favour, so make a mental note to return it sometime. A small, pumped-up man will astound you with his problem-solving skills.

Make sure you eat plenty of nice cake.

Sagittarius 23 Nov – 21 Dec

A man dressed as Father Christmas will present you with an offer that is too tempting to refuse, but which will prove costly tomorrow. Alcohol is still a huge problem, but it is not a good time to moderate when everyone else is swimming around like drunken fish. You will receive a good windfall which will allow you to have a great festive season. Give to the poor?

Capricorn 22 Dec – 20 Jan

A gay person may come onto you at the office party when they are full of drink but be gentle with them if you're not interested. You may fall for a much older person, so be prepared for some negative reactions from your family and peers – but follow your own mind and heart. It is a good time to shower a loved one with gifts from the heart and not just from a fat wallet.

Aquarius 21 Jan – 19 Feb

A bra-less woman will promise you two things this Christmas, but beware, as everything nice has a cost attached. Three wise men may come into your life and make you feel like a donkey with their logic, but you may wonder if it all was just a dream after all. Make sure your chimney is clean if you want Santa to come down it as he is very big on hygiene. Love more.

Pisces 20 Feb – 20 Mar

Somebody who is old enough to be your grandad may come into your life this month and embarrass and annoy you. You are spending too much time in bed while life is passing you by – there is no meaning to life, but do, do more! Now is the time to stop window shopping and part with some actual money – which may be hard for someone like you to do. Bake bread.

Aries 21 Mar – 20 Apr

You may be well aware how western society operates, so maybe live in your own little bubble in order to survive, but be grateful you weren't born in a country like North Korea! A friend, who is like the food police, will get on your nerves, so take what they say with a pinch of salt. Start to do more to keep in touch with your loved ones. Eat like a greedy pig now. Share.

Taurus 21 Apr – 21 May

You would make a good refuse collector as you tend to talk a lot of rubbish – stop dropping verbal litter and get something done. An old man may give you a valuable object, but will you appreciate its true value or let it go for a cheap song? A busker will annoy you with his second-hand, amplified offering, but just bite your tongue and walk on by. Make a donation.

Gemini 22 May – 21 Jun

At this time of year, it's easy to be completely hedonistic but this year, take time out to consider the most vulnerable in society. If you want to meet that special one, get a job as a barista in a café? A young person may blow your mind with their perfect figure but think twice before getting involved. You're losing the battle of the bulge, so grow fat gracefully.

Cancer 22 Jun – 23 Jul

A computer geek will bamboozle you with technical jargon, but do you really want to be like him – unable to communicate with normal people? Your diet needs some work as you risk falling ill if you continue to eat a lot of junk food. Beware of the 'homeless' man, who is not really homeless, but is just begging for alcohol/drug money. Buy a new, posh house if you can.

Leo 24 Jul – 23 Aug

A man who has never done any manual work will annoy you this week with his patronising manner, but we both know he is no better or worse than anyone else – pity him. New ideas are hard to come by so do something else until you feel once again inspired to be creative. Also, a silly, old woman will annoy you with her rudeness but maybe she can't help herself?

Virgo 24 Aug – 23 Sep

If it snows, someone with a lot of dandruff will enter your life and shower you with love, which will make everything seem worthwhile. A friend, who is normally the clown of your crowd, will be very down this week and will need you to put a smile back on their face. Stop being a hypocrite and practice what you preach. You may be an idiot, but you are doing well.

Libra 24 Sep – 23 Oct

It is a good time to get a dating app if you want to meet someone who will tolerate you and your crazy ways. Drink lots of water to dilute the vast amount of caffeine that you consume, even if you spend a lot of time at the toilet. If you're flushed with money and want to waste it, then take up serious gambling. A man with a moustache will tickle your fancy. Dance more often.

JUNE'S WORLD



Hello everybody. I hope you are all keeping well. What I'd like to write about in this article is when I was a very young girl. I might have mentioned before that I used to live next door to my grandparents so every day, after school, I was round there. In the summer holidays, I sometimes went with my grandma to Stockton-on-Tees. My grandma had family there, so she frequented the place often, but my grandad never went with her. I think they must have led separate lives. My grandad was more of a homebird than my grandma. She used to go and stay with my 'uncle' Frank, but I got to know when I was older that he was her "bit on the side" as people called it.

Anyway, I'll now write about when I was 10 years of age (I'm 85 now), when both my sister, Iris, and I longed for a doll's house for Christmas, which was only a few weeks away. My mother said she would try and get us one (you could then get Provident cheques and pay it back weekly). Typically, we forgot all about it and thought we would be happy if we got some checks, which were little squares like a dice – you set them out in rows and threw a little ball up in the air to get as many of the checks as you could; the winner is the one with the most checks at the end of the game. They were simple games which cost next to nothing to buy – older people who read this magazine may know what I am talking about. We also liked to play hopscotch and skipping, with two people swinging the rope and four others jumping over it. It was great fun! Another thing we liked to play was piggyback, when one person would bend over and others would try and stay on their back without falling off.

Anyway, like I said, it was getting closer to Christmas which was when I loved looking at people's houses to see if they had put up any trimmings. My grandma was very proficient at making things to sell which were often of better quality than products found in the shops. Even though we were poor and living in the Potteries, Castleford, we made an effort to make trimmings and pompoms that we put on the tree that my dad had got from some place or other – we didn't care. I also made trimmings, to put on the ceiling, out of coloured paper.

Eventually, it got around to Christmas Eve and my uncle Alfie, who lived next door, got me to go Carol Singing with him. He was very crafty and went missing in action unless there was money, cake or a bun at stake. We made quite a bit of money from people who had been out drinking and were in the Christmas spirit. Alfie was fair with me and gave me a share of the money we made.

A bit later on Christmas Eve, my sister, Iris, and I were very excited and went to bed early after we had left Father Christmas a mince pie and something to drink. When we got up early the next morning, we spotted two men's stockings which contained sweets, a comb and other bits and pieces – but the best was to come! We went into the other room and could hardly believe our eyes as there was a beautiful doll's house. We were beside ourselves, but little did we know that the excitement was going to be short-lived. When I was walking to school after Christmas, I was horrified to see our dolls house in my dad's friend's window – he was called Big Wady. As you can imagine, I ran home crying and forgot all about going to school. My dad had callously exchanged our dolls house for two barrows of coal. I said I would never

forgive him for doing this and I lost a lot of respect for him for doing something so cruel. His excuse was that we needed to heat our home, but I suspect he did it when he was drunk. However, being naïve kids, we eventually fell for his reasoning - hook, line and sinker.

Until next time, June. X

A BIRTHDAY

My heart is like a singing bird
Whose nest is in a watered shoot;
My heart is like an apple tree
Whose boughs are bent with thickset fruit;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
That paddles in a halcyon sea;
My heart is gladder than all these
Because my love is come to me.

Raise me a dais of silk and down;
Hang it with vair and purple dyes;
Carve it in doves and pomegranates,
And peacocks with a hundred eyes;
Work it in gold and silver grapes,
In leaves and silver fleurs-de-lys;
Because the birthday of my life
Is come, my love is come to me.

Christina Rossetti (1830 - 1894)

FORMULA 1 STOCK CAR RACING



Written by Graham Townsend

So, what is Formula 1 Stock Car Racing? Well, it is a form of short oval racing for open wheeled vehicles using V8 engines. The first meeting took place at New Cross Stadium, London on 13th April 1954 and the sport will be celebrating its 70th anniversary in 2024.

Racing takes place on shale- or tarmac-surfaced tracks. The sport predominantly takes place in the UK. For our US readers, the closest comparison I can make is with NASCAR racing, although one main difference is that full contact is allowed in Formula 1. Racing in the UK is administered by a body known as BriSCA (the British Stock Car Association) and the drivers are represented by the BSCDA (British Stock Car Drivers Association). Racing also takes place in Mainland Europe, especially in the Netherlands and Belgium. Each year a world

championship is held and drivers from those countries are usually invited to come to the UK to test their mettle against the best domestic drivers. New Zealand also has short oval racing, although the cars vary somewhat from what you will see over here, and drivers from there are also invited to take part along with competitors from the US and occasionally South Africa.

The vehicles use almost exclusively Chevrolet engines these days. In the past, drivers employed other engine types such as Jaguar, Ford and Buick.

Drivers are graded according to their ability and these grades are used to determine where each competitor starts on the race grid. The lowest graded racers start at the front and the highest ranked drivers at the rear. Grades are indicated by roof colour. The lowest grade ('C' Grade) drivers carry a white roof on their cars. Next come the yellow roof ('B' Grade) drivers, followed by the blue roof ('A' Grade) and red roof (Star Grade) drivers. Behind all these come the Superstar Grade (red roof with flashing lights), and then the National Champion (silver roof) followed by the World Champion (gold roof).

The season in the UK currently runs from the end of March to mid-November. Drivers score ranking points at every meeting to go towards their grading. Some meetings are designated as a World Championship Qualifying Round and the points scored at those meetings determine the line-ups for the semi-finals. Usually, the top 48 drivers qualify for those races and the top 10 finishers in each semi-final progress to the final. There, they are joined by the overseas competitors who take part in qualifying races to determine where they start on the grid for the final. The final normally takes place in September and the venue rotates from year to year.

The sport was probably at its peak in the 1970s and 80s, with large crowds seen at most tracks. At that time, the majority of tracks were in the North of England. However, that has changed significantly over the last thirty years or so, and they are now distributed more evenly across the country. Sadly, the total number of tracks has declined quite a lot during this period.

The current World Champion is Tom Harris. He has won the title four times to date. John Lund has won the most world titles with eight. Lund still races at the ripe old age of 69 at the time of writing.

Formula 1 Stock Car Racing is an exciting sport to watch. The action often includes spectacular high-speed rollovers. Although, safety is paramount and there have been very few serious injuries or fatalities over the years. If you get chance to go and watch Formula 1 Stock Car Racing, I would recommend that you do so. You won't be disappointed, I'm sure!

BRENDA'S WILDLIFE CORNER



Bat

Bats are the only mammals that are capable of proper, sustained flight and are arguably more agile in flight than a lot of birds. They are able to fly as their long digits are covered with a thin membrane. Many bats live off insects, while others are nectar-eaters or fruit-eaters and vampire bats feed on blood. The size of

bats depends on species, with the smallest being Kitti's hog-nosed bat, which has with a 6-inch wingspan, and the largest is the giant golden-crowned flying fox, which has a wingspan of 5 ft 7 inches.

Most bats are nocturnal, which may be to avoid predators, and can be found all over the world, with the exception of very cold environments. They are considered to play an important role in their ecosystems as they pollinate flowers and disperse seeds – a lot of tropical plants benefit in this way from bats.

Some bats are used as food across Asia and the Pacific Rim, although some fruit growers consider them to be pests. It can be said that they benefit humans in some ways e.g., by consuming insect pests and by eating mosquitos which suppresses transmission of certain diseases. In addition, they can provide fertiliser which has been mined from caves. Unfortunately, they can carry diseases like rabies, and it can be dangerous for humans to come into contact with them. In some cultures, they may be symbolic in a positive way, such as for rebirth or long life, but in Western culture they are often associated with darkness, vampires, witchcraft and death.

It is interesting that some microbats (whose eyesight is particularly poor) and a few megabats (who have eyesight to rival humans, if not better) are able to emit ultrasonic sounds to produce echoes and can thus gather information about their environment. Some people think that bats may avoid flying in the daytime in order to avoid overheating as their bodies readily absorb radiation. In fact, they use saliva to cool themselves when temperatures are very high.

Some bats live in colonies of more than a million to lessen predation, while some prefer to lead a solitary life. It's true to say that bats are noisy mammals, and the males use their vocals to attract females.

Most male bats mate with a lot of females, although promiscuity exists in both sexes in species like the Mexican free-tailed bat and the little brown bat. Bats tend to mate in late summer or early autumn; after copulation a mating plug is left by the male to prevent other males' sperm from entering, thus protecting his paternity. In most species, female bats give birth to a single pup per litter and, in monogamous species, the father is active in looking after it. Perhaps surprisingly, the lifespan of bats is three-and-a-half times longer than that of similar sized mammals and some have been recorded to live for over 30 years!

* Ref Wikipedia

AN EXCERPT FROM LYNNE'S LIFE



Looking back, it seems crazy to me that there was ever a choice. Sadly, I was at the crossroads of my life, and I picked the wrong option. I left school aged 15 years and became a dress maker. Then, the chance came to turn my obsession with dancing into a job. Having been a British professional dancer as a child, a new partner wanted to dance with me at adult level and the prospect of a real career dancing was spreading out in front of

me. The trouble was that, in those days, as in earlier times, parents were strict and my life at home was not ideal. Women were all too often faced with the prospect of being told what they would or would not do by parents - and tip up their wages for the privilege. Marriage was seen as an escape. I met my future first husband in 1973, after being introduced by a friend and his brother. Foolishly, marriage seemed a more secure option than risking a life dancing. Now here is the irony: the young man that wanted to be my new dance partner found another person to dance with him and became a champion! Another door closes.

Life as a married woman started in 1975. My husband and I both worked and lived in Wheatley, Halifax. Taking the Pill seemed to be the sensible option so that we could save and put money by for the future. However, being an epileptic, the doctor forgot to tell me that my medication could affect the efficacy of the pill. So, it was that I got pregnant and had my first child, a lovely daughter, – meaning that my job had to be sacrificed, as most women tended to do this in those days and I was no exception. Everything ticked by as normal. I looked after my daughter and did the shopping and the housework as I was expected to do. Then, in 1978, we moved to a bigger house on the Bradford side of Queensbury. There was no indication of what was to come, an event that would change my life - and not for the good.

A family party was held for one of my brothers to celebrate his 21st birthday. Once again, I was pregnant and only three weeks away from giving birth. Out of the blue, with no warning, my husband took me to one side on the dance floor and said to me that he needed a divorce. This was a big enough shock in itself and I began to feel unwell. However, he had not finished, the reason for this, he continued, was because he was, in fact, gay. Consequently, I collapsed to the floor. Both my Mum and Dad were, to put it mildly, old fashioned and told me, as they helped me up, not to make a fuss and tell no one about this. They then bundled myself and my daughter into a taxi. Upon reaching my home, I very soon moved into labour and my neighbours took me to hospital. Having a baby on my own with the knowledge that my husband had married me knowing he was gay, was one of the harder times of my life.

Epilepsy took its toll on me in the coming days as the divorce got closer. But taking a cocktail of medication made everything seem unreal. Stumbling almost literally into court the divorce was granted. How, to this day, the court decided that a pregnant woman, holding a baby in her arms and crying for help, could be instructed to move out of her house and allow her husband to move back in, is beyond all reason and very stupid - and against every precedent of the past, at that time and now. So, I moved myself and my two children into a damp, mouldy flat in the middle of Bradford, where I knew no one. It was a bad place. I put nappies on the line outside and looked out of my flat window and found that someone had stolen them. The flat was so damp and so mouldy that we had to sleep in the front room with the fire constantly on. I laid on the sofa, my daughter in her cot and my son in his pram. Even though we were in this plight, my ex-husband never came near us and never even bought his children presents or gave them birthday or Christmas cards. He just chose to move to London with his new male partner.

Luckily, my grandmother, upon learning how bad my flat was when I visited her, asked her rent collector lady about finding me alternative accommodation. Neither of them could understand why my parents had done nothing. Four months later, we were moved in to a two-bedroomed house in Norland, Halifax. Life was to take a few more turns yet, but at least we were somewhere that was liveable.

Just as a matter of interest, my ex-husband was to go on and set up a restaurant in Huddersfield and tell his children that he had sent maintenance. Why is it liars are so often believed, whilst honest people are not?

BIBLE TALK



Sent by Peter Smith

We should not envy rich people.

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

(Mark 10:25 - NKJV)

Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you.

(James 5:1 - NKJV)

SNOOKER



Snooker (originally a derogatory term to describe a first-year military personnel or someone inexperienced) is a sport that was created by army officer Neville Chamberlain, in India, in 1875 – when he combined two games called black pool and pyramids. It is a cue sport played on a rectangular table that measures 12 ft x 6 ft. The table is covered in a tightly woven woollen cloth called baize and is 2 ft 10 inches from the floor the top of the cushion.

The object of the game is to pot designated balls struck by the white ball (by using a cue that must be at least 3 ft in length) into one of six pockets, which are located at each corner of the table and in the middle of each long side. The balls have the following values: 15 red balls (1 point each), a yellow ball (2 points), a green ball (3 points), a brown ball (4 points), a blue ball (5 points), a pink ball (6 points) and finally a black ball that is worth 7 points. When a frame begins, the white ball is placed in the 'D', the red balls are racked in a tightly packed equilateral triangle and the coloured balls are put on their designated spots. Chalk is used on the tip of the cue and rests and extensions are available to a player to assist him/her with a difficult shot.

Each player takes a turn to strike the cue ball (white) in order to pot other balls in a predefined order, and the aim of the game is to accumulate more points, in a frame, than your opponent (a score-board like an abacus is usually used) without committing a foul – otherwise you are penalised. When you gain points by potting successive balls (red then a colour), it is called a “break”. At the end of a frame, there might not be enough points for you to win the frame, in which case, you may concede the frame or lay a snooker – leaving another ball between the cue ball and the object ball. If scores are tied at the end of a frame, a tiebreaker occurs when the black is “re-spotted” and returned to its designated spot and (after a toss) an effort is made to pot it and thus win the frame.

The rules of snooker were first governed by the Billiards Association and Control Club and now by the World Billiards and Snooker Association.

Snooker was initially played in the UK, by the military and the gentry, and was considered a “gentleman’s sport” until Joe Davis helped turn it a proper professional sporting activity. But, it was not until the early 1960s that it began to grow in the UK, then gradually overseas. The modern era really took off when the sport was televised on the BBC programme Pot Black. Interestingly, as snooker was exposed to a wider audience, it was very reliant on tobacco advertising e.g., Embassy sponsored the World Championship from 1976 to 2005. Unfortunately, such advertisements were banned in the early 2000s which meant an immediate reduction in the number of professional tournaments.

Happily, the sport has become popular in Asia with players like Ding Junhai and Marco Fu coming through the ranks, and here in the UK the BBC has also dedicated more hours to the sport - 400 hours in 2007.

Barry Hearn then appeared on the scene and became very influential in the promotion of snooker, resulting in an increase in professional tournaments (44 in the season 2019-2020). Referees have also played an important role in the modern game and people like John Street, Len Ganky and John Williams have become well-known within the sport. There has also been an emergence of female referees and with Michaela Tabb being the first woman to referee a World Championship final in 2009.

In the modern era, prominent players have been: Ray Reardon (1970s), Steve Davis (1980s). Stephen Hendry (1990s) and currently Ronnie O’Sullivan. They have enjoyed participating in lucrative tournaments including The World Championship, The UK Championship and The Masters.

Not only do women now compete professionally, snooker is now played people of all ages and ability – you may really like it if you haven’t already played it – but it is difficult for most people!

Ref. Wikipedia

LETTERS PAGE



Dear Editor

I was in a café this morning when there were three dogs present who which were all noisily trying to communicate with each other. Interestingly, one of the dogs pulled on its lead and almost caused its owner to drop her tray of drinks. How can any reasonable person say that it is okay for dogs to be taken into cafes especially during a busy time. I am a dog lover

but dogs don't belong in a café.

Trevor Spade, Manchester

Dear Editor

I have just enjoyed watching a religious programme on TV even though I don't believe in God. Having witnessed what joy religion can bring to people, I would never try and take this away from them. Everyone to their own.

Jennifer Smith, Weymouth

Dear Editor

The idea of democracy is a good one, but I don't think we have seen it in real terms as voting options are so limited. I am also of the opinion that major decisions should be resolved by referendums so that we can all have a say – even though this system can fail as was the case when people were deceived into leaving Europe by certain prominent politicians.

In addition, I would be happier if political parties were scrapped and everyone stood as an independent.

Henrietta Stuart, Gosport

Dear Editor

Do any other people think it is odd that some people never think they have enough money? In Britain, we have a Prime Minister who is stinking rich who can't or won't sympathise with poor people. We all can't be the same but the gap between the rich and the poor should not be so obscenely wide.

Also, when people at the top of society refer to God, I think it is a joke as they wouldn't act the way they do towards other people if they believed in the caring God that religious people preach about. Who do they think they are kidding?!

Frank George, London

Dear Editor

It is clearly great that women's sport is on TV more. I am genuinely pleased that women's football is shown on a regular basis, but I can't help thinking that it is light years behind the men's game. **Penny Marshall, Plymouth**

THE WHO



This short article has been written with help from Wikipedia and YouTube.

The Who was an English rock band formed in 1964 and was hugely successful, selling over 100 million records worldwide.

The principal members of the band (except for Moon) met at Acton County Grammar School and its main lineup became: Roger Daltrey (lead vocalist), Pete Townshend (guitarist), John Entwistle (bassist) and Keith Moon (drummer). Originally, the group developed from The Detours and was then known as The High

Numbers, before returning to being called The Who. Their act has been described as being auto-destructive as they had the tendency to destroy guitars and the drums onstage. They have had a huge influence on punk, pop, hard rock and various bands like The Jam.

The band was very exciting from a visual point of view with Daltrey jumping into the crowd and Townshend with his 'windmill' style of playing power chords and unique use of feedback. Then, there was Moon tossing his drum sticks in the air mid-beat. One could say The Who was helped by constant airplay on pirate radio stations and by exposure on the TV programmes Ready, Steady, Go! And on Top of The Pops.

Although the band had successful singles including: "I Can't Explain" (1965), "My Generation" (1965), "Substitute" (1966), "I Can See for Miles" (1967) and "Pictures of Lily" (1967), it was not until 1969, with the release of the concept album "Tommy" (which contained the single "Pinball Wizard"), that the musicians really became financially solvent. They also greatly enhanced their reputation as a respected rock band by appearing at Woodstock and on The Isle of Wight, as well as by recording a live album in Leeds.

Although the follow up album to Tommy (Lifehouse), was abandoned, it spawned songs like: "Who's Next", "Won't Get Fooled Again", "Baba O'Riley" and "Behind Blue Eyes".

Importantly, in 1973, the excellent Quadrophenia was released, which many people say was a celebration of their mod roots. Then in 1975, a film adaptation of "Tommy" was made, followed by some large tours. In 1976, they semi-retired from live performances. Unfortunately, Moon tragically died in 1978, followed by Entwistle from a heart attack in 2002.

The Who has occasionally reformed to play Live Aid in 1985 and for an anniversary tour to celebrate their 25th anniversary, as well as a tour of Quadrophenia in 1986-87. Although they had Zak Starkey on drums, it was not the same as when Moon was the drummer.

It is clear that The Who was extremely influential in world of music, as they were pioneers of such things as the use of synthesisers, a large public address system, and because of their unique playing styles. They certainly were a great band in their pomp!

RECIPES WITH A CHRISTMAS FLAVOUR FROM JUNE CHARLTON



Christmas Cake (1)

Ingredients:

12 oz of self-raising flour
1 teaspoon of mixed spice
4 oz of ground almonds
8 oz of currants
8 oz of sultanas
8 oz of raisins (stoned)
4 oz of cherries (halved)

4 oz of peel (chopped)
8 oz of butter or margarine
8 oz of caster sugar
4 beaten eggs
8 tablespoons of milk

Method:

Clean and mix the fruit. Beat butter and sugar to a cream in a warm bowl. Beat eggs and milk together. Mix flour, spice and ground almonds. Stir in alternately (a little at a time) the flour mixture and eggs and milk with the butter and sugar. Add the fruit last. MIX THOROUGHLY.

If a darker cake is desired, add 1 teaspoonful of gravy browning.

Use a large round cake tin (8" in diameter) lined with greased paper. Bake for about 4 hours in a moderate oven (350F – 375F/ gas mark 3-4), then in a slow oven 250F – 300F/gas mark 1-2.



Christmas Cake (2)

Ingredients:

1lb of self-raising flour
12 oz of butter
12 oz of moist sugar
6 eggs
2 tablespoons of dark treacle
2 tablespoons of rum

A pinch of salt
½ teaspoon of ground nutmeg
1lb of currants
1 lb of sultanas
4 oz of raisins
2 oz of mixed peel
4 oz of ground almonds
½ teaspoon of mixed spice
2 teaspoons of baking powder

Method:

Beat the butter and sugar to a cream. Add the eggs one at a time together with a tablespoon of sifted flour, beating well after each addition. Fold in the rest of the flour, salt, mixed spices and nutmeg. Stir in the fruit, rum, treacle, almonds and mixed peel. Bake the cake in a double lined and greased 10" tin for six hours in a slow oven.



Yorkshire Teacakes

Ingredients:

2 lb of flour
4 oz of sugar
4 oz of butter
4 oz of currants
1 teaspoon of salt
1 pint of warm milk

1 ½ oz of fresh yeast
1 egg
A pinch of nutmeg

Method:

Crumble the yeast in a little of the warm milk and leave in a warm place until it froths. Sift the flour, salt and nutmeg into a warmed bowl and add the sugar. Beat the egg, melt the butter and stir both into the rest of the milk.

Add the currants and peel as the dough is kneaded lightly, and then cover with a floured cloth. Divide the dough into flat cakes of four or five ounces each; allow them to rise a little on baking sheets or trays before baking in a hot oven. They should be ready in 15 minutes and are delicious split and buttered while still warm.

KRISHNA FRANCIS WRITES...



I'm not religious, but I do have a favourite book of the bible. Ecclesiastes. It is the words of a preacher. The word literally means assembler of the congregation. It has many excellent ideas in it and contains a whole pop song which is not a claim easily made by any other books of the bible except, perhaps, Matthew which has the Lord's Prayer. This was turned into the Millennium Prayer by Cliff Richard. However, that is nowhere near as tuneful and melodious as Turn, Turn, Turn by the Byrds. If you don't know it, go and look it up. It's a really beautiful piece of pop.

Anyway, this is all about a squash that I've just cooked that was about to go off. It was getting a little mouldy, so I stuck

it in the oven and baked it for an hour. No seasoning or anything, I just popped it in and took it out an hour later. Now it's sitting on my kitchen top waiting to become soup. It's golden on the inside with a crusty skin. If I'd have planned a meal, it would have been somehow less interesting. Now it sits there and calls to me. The time to cook it came when I saw it was going mouldy. The time to add seasoning and transform it into something even more tasty awaits. To everything there is a season (seasoning?) turn, turn, turn.

Ecclesiastes first appeared in my life as the epigram onscreen that begins Platoon, as body bags are being loaded onto a plane and we first meet our hero Chris, played by Charlie Sheen. 11:9 Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth. It is all about relishing this moment, not craving something else but enjoying what is here. The book also contains warnings about trusting the expected protocols that we live our lives by. It sounds grander when explained like that. Oddly, the actual chapter and verse is the above one reversed 9:11. I shall include it here as it is so beautiful. *I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.* Time and chance. It's what we are all subject to; the wisest learn to adapt and order themselves in the face of it. I baked a pumpkin, and I will turn it into delicious soup when the moment is ripe. Maybe I'll tell you about it next time. I hope time and chance is good to you in the coming month and Happy Christmas!

ANOTHER FUN QUIZ FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH



Questions:

- (1) Who had a No 1 in the UK with the song 'Tainted Love'?
- (2) What is the French word for 'computer'?
- (3) Who invented the telegraph in 1837?
- (4) Who was the fourth US President?
- (5) What is the Spanish word for 'blackbird'?
- (6) Which Scottish group had a hit with the Beatles' song Ob-La-Di-Ob-La-Da?
- (7) Where are the most soya beans grown?
- (8) What is lithium carbonate used for?
- (9) Who invented the first clock?
- (10) Who is thought to have first used magic mushrooms?
- (11) When was the last Space Shuttle launch?
- (12) Who first wore baseball caps that resemble those worn today?
- (13) Why did football pundit Ron Atkinson resign from his job?
- (14) What is aspartame?
- (15) Who invented solar panels?
- (16) What is the capital of North Korea?
- (17) Which country has the most oak trees?
- (18) What is a stroke?
- (19) When is Shrove Tuesday 2024?
- (20) Which country produces the most pens?

Answers:

(1) Soft Cell (2) Ordinateur (3) Samuel Morse (4) James Madison (5) Mirlo (6) Marmalade (7) United States (8) A medication used to treat bipolar disorder (9) Archimedes during the 3rd century BC (10) North African indigenous cultures as far back as 9000 BC (11) 8 July 2011 (12) Brooklyn Excelsiors in 1860 (13) For being racist about footballer Marcel Desailly (14) A low-calories sweetener (15) Charles Fritts in 1883 (16) Pyongyang (17) Mexico (18) When the blood supply to part of the brain is cut off (19) Tuesday, 13 February (20) China

Editor's Final Word: Thank you once again for taking the time and the trouble to read this magazine. I hope you enjoyed the experience and will maybe consider contributing something to it in the future at dean@fthm.org.uk Best wishes, Dean, Brenda and Robert.