

Nil Desperandum

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Isolated but not alone



Copyright Neil Moralee 2011

Picture Credit: "Some times you talk a load of old rubbish!" by Neil. Moralee is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Index:

1. Wisdom you can't buy for all the money in the world
1. Wong Number?
1. Admission to the Carlton Club
1. Watch and Laugh
2. The Titanic was on fire for days before it sank
3. Maritime Mysteries
4. Pandemics, then and now
4. Should we all be wearing not one, but two face masks?
5. Maslow, Music, Movies and Motivation
6. Cockney Column
7. Cockney rhyming slang
8. What is a Proverb?
8. Cockney Money-Slang
8. How Britain fought Hitler with satire
9. The Bible: who wrote it and why?
10. The Book: A Cover-to-Cover Exploration of the Most Powerful Object of Our Time
10. Democracy vs. Republic
11. The House of Rothschild: How did they become so powerful?
12. One of my all-time favourite films...
'A Few Good Men'

Continued:

12. A Baird Man or a Good Man?
13. Making a Difference...
13. Poor Vision
14. The Lost Colony at Roanoke Island
14. Having a Whale of a time
15. Is this the best medicine of all?
15. Pub Talk...
16. The Priory, Haywards Heath's first Roman Catholic Church
16. Eyes in the back of their butts...
16. More humour by Mark Twain
17. In days gone by ...
18. Chemistry facts to surprise you
18. Which face mask or covering is best to wear?
19. The man who almost conquered the world
20. The Mysterious Burial at Sutton Hoo: was it King Raedwald?
21. Franklin's Lost Expedition
22. Chromebook – your next computer
23. Fond Memories
24. Finish with a smile, with Dilbert's help



Wisdom you can't buy for all the money in the world

See how many of these you can relate to or agree with:

- If at first you don't succeed, destroy all evidence that you tried.
- A conclusion is the place where you got tired of thinking.
- Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it.
- No one is listening until you make a mistake.
- Success always occurs in private, and failure in full view.
- The colder the X-ray table, the more of your body is required on it.
- The hardness of the butter is inversely proportional to the softness of the bread.
- The severity of the itch is proportional to the difficulty of the reach.
- To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism; to steal from many is research.
- To succeed in politics, it is often necessary to rise above your principles.
- Two wrongs are only the beginning.
- You never really learn to swear until you learn to drive.
- The problem with the gene pool is that there is no lifeguard.
- Monday is an awful way to spend 1/7th of your life.
- The sooner you fall behind, the more time you'll have to catch up.
- A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory.
- If you must choose between two evils, pick the one you've never tried before.
- Change is inevitable... Except from vending machines.
- A fool and his money are soon parting.
- Money can't buy love. But it CAN rent a very close imitation.
- Plan to be spontaneous tomorrow.
- If you think nobody cares about you, try missing a couple of payments.
- Attempt to get a new car for your spouse - it'll be a great trade!
- Drugs may lead to nowhere, but at least it's the scenic route.
- Everybody repeat after me: "We are all individuals."
- Love may be blind, but marriage is a real eye-opener.
- Hell hath no fury like the lawyer of a woman scorned.
- Bills travel through the mail at twice the speed of cheques.
- Hard work pays off in the future. Laziness pays off now.
- Borrow money from pessimists--they don't expect it back.
- Half the people you know are below average.
- A conscience is what hurts when all your other parts feel so good.
- If at first you don't succeed, then skydiving definitely isn't for you!



Wong Number?

Why don't the Chinese have a telephone directory? Because there are too many wings and too many wongs and they might wing the wong number.



Picture Credit: "I01 uses for a yellow pages" by zstephen is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Admission to the Carlton Club

Young Ponsonby is finally admitted to the Carlton Club in St. James Square after years of trying to obtain a membership.

He walks into the lounge where he sees Lord Curzon - so he goes over to say hello despite having nothing in common with him. Ponsonby says, "I say Curzon, I walked past your place last night".

Lord Curzon replies, "Thank you".



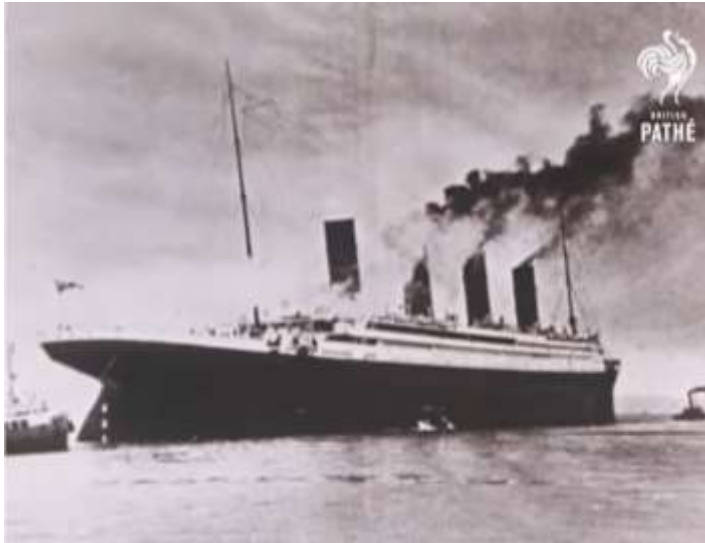
Picture Credit: "Carlton Club" by Leonard Bentley is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

Watch and Laugh

Just click >>
[Here](#) for some Irish humour.



The Titanic was on fire for days before it sank



The picture, above, is a screenshot from a British Pathé video *Did Titanic Really Sink*, which you can view by clicking [here](#).

Another video, [here](#), also from British Pathé, captures some of the only genuine footage available of the *Titanic* prior to it sinking, the rescue of survivors, and The Mackay Bennet leaving Halifax in search of the dead.

The transatlantic *Titanic* was the largest ship of its time, but its life was very short. The first and only voyage of the ship began April 10, 1912 and ended 4 days later. This tragedy occurred on the night of April 14-15, 1912. When the *Titanic* crashed, at least 1,496 people died, making this disaster one of the largest shipwrecks in history. Among the passengers of the ship were some of the richest people in the world, as well as immigrants from Ireland, Great Britain and Scandinavia, who were heading to the United States in search of a better life.

Michelle Kiisa wrote on Quora.com that the *Titanic* was on fire for days before it sank. Almost everyone knows about the claims beforehand that the massive cruise liner ship was deemed "unsinkable". The company that built it was so sure it wouldn't sink that they didn't bother with the necessary number of lifeboats. Regardless of the incident happening over a hundred years ago, its movie-like plot is still evolving. The popular explanation for the sinking is that the ship hit an iceberg.

But new information came to light in 2017 that the *Titanic* was on fire for days as it was sailing, possibly longer than that, according to *The New York Times*, [here](#). [This information is supported in an article in *The Independent* on 1st January 2017, [here](#)]. A coal fire was burning below deck for days and the crew was unable to put it out. The ship sailed along anyway with a fire burning in the hull.

The fire was known about before the ship left Belfast with five men trying to put it out yet the only way to put out a coal fire in a bunker like this was to put the burning coal into the ship's furnace.

Coal fires are not the easiest to extinguish - take for example, the coal fire in **Centralia, Pennsylvania**, a coal seam fire which broke out in a mine in the Northeast United States and has proven impossible to put out and it's been burning since at least 27th May 1962.

The *Titanic* had several bulkheads designed to keep sea water from spreading in case of a hull breach and quite coincidentally, coincidentally, the fire broke out right next to the main bulkhead with temperatures reaching around 1,800 degrees Fahrenheit causing it to be severely damaged. Yet by the time the fire was noticed, it could have been burning for weeks. The ship had been known to travel at full speed regardless of the warnings of icebergs, this could have been because of the excess coal being shovelled into the furnace non-stop for three days but we can't be too sure, yet this could explain why it hit the iceberg at full speed.

When the iceberg hit, the *Titanic*'s designer was aboard the ship and evaluated the strike damage. Even at that time, he seemed to think the ship wouldn't sink—as long as the bulkheads held up. If the *Titanic* could have stayed afloat for a few hours longer, the magnitude of the historic tragedy may have been averted with the bulkheads as the ship's prime defence against the ocean.

The ship's lack of lifeboats was rationalised because the *Titanic* itself was thought to be a lifeboat.

Now if you're wondering why it left port in the first place with a fire raging below, Michelle Kiisa says that the company operating the *Titanic* was in deep financial trouble. The introduction of the *Titanic* had already been delayed and with her sister ship damaged, the *Titanic* needed to sail on schedule otherwise the company might have imploded. [The evidence to support that assertion is not in the Quora.com article.]

Despite the 2017 evidence, nobody can deny that the story of the *Titanic* is a tragedy that could have been avoided and the people onboard died needlessly horrible deaths. In the end, the only thing the new evidence indicates is a new level of negligence and risk-taking by those in charge.

Contributed by



Martin Pollins



Maritime Mysteries



Ships are usually declared lost and assumed wrecked after a period of disappearance. The disappearance of a ship usually implies that all the crew have been lost too. Without witnesses or survivors, the mystery surrounding the fate of missing ships has inspired many items of nautical lore and the creation of paranormal zones such as the Bermuda Triangle. In many cases a probable cause has been deduced, such as a known storm or warfare, but it could not be confirmed without witnesses or sufficient documentation.

The **Mary Celeste** (see screenshot above from a video on the Smithsonian Channel, here called *The True Story of the Mary Celeste*, [here](#)) provides arguably the biggest mystery of all (see below). Then there is the **SS Cotopaxi**. Lore has it that this steamship was swallowed by the infamous Bermuda Triangle after it and all 32 crew members on board, inexplicably vanished in 1925. But in the sci-fi film *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, aliens were shown as responsible for the ship's disappearance. Bunkum: A team of divers has identified the ship and debunked the fictions, theories and conspiracies that emerged over the years. And unlike in *Close Encounters*, the ship wasn't found in the Gobi Desert but rather 35 miles off St. Augustine in Florida. The story is [here](#).

Other examples, excerpted from [here](#), are worth some attention:

- The **Mary Celeste** didn't disappear in 1872, but its crew and passengers did. Mary Celeste was built in Spencer's Island, Nova Scotia, and launched under British registration as *Amazon* in 1861. What happened 11 years later is unknown, yet it is described as 'the greatest maritime mystery of all time'. She was a merchant 'ghost' ship spotted by a Canadian brigantine on 4th December 1872, unmanned, sailing off the Azores in seaworthy condition. Her finders determined she had already been at sea for a month and had over six months' worth of food and water on board. The mysterious part was that her cargo was virtually untouched, and the personal belongings of passengers and crew were still in place, including valuables. British officials dismissed any suggestion of piracy or foul play as there were no signs of violence. One of the most prevalent and plausible theories to date suggests that the crew perished after embarking on a lifeboat, fearing the ship's cargo may have been about to explode as they were transporting barrels of alcohol.
- The **USS Cyclops** is perhaps the most famous of the early 20th century seafaring disappearances. She vanished sometime after 4th March 1918 with 309 men aboard. It remains the single largest loss of life in the U.S. Naval history which did not directly involve combat, though treason may have played its hand. USS Cyclops was a huge steel-hulled fuel ship, tasked with carrying coal and other useful supplies for the U.S. Navy. On her final journey, the Cyclops set sail from Rio de Janeiro, with a full load of 10,800 tons of manganese ore and over 300 people on board.
- The **SS Marine Sulphur Queen** was originally a T2 tanker ship that was converted to carry molten sulphur. She disappeared off the coast of Florida taking with her the lives of 39 crew members. The ship's last voyage began on 2nd February 1963 out of Beaumont, Texas, with a cargo of sulphur weighing 15,260 tons.

The ship itself weighed 7,240 GRT. Two days later, as she reached Florida, she sent a regular radio message giving the position of the ship. By 6th February, there had been no news from the Sulphur Queen - and she was declared missing. After 19 days of searching, all that was left were some life preservers and debris, but no trace of the ship or the 39 men.

- In October of 1996, 16 people went missing after reporting that they were abandoning their sinking yacht, **Intrepid**, off Fort Pierce, Florida. The passengers of the 65-foot yacht sent out a MAYDAY call saying the ship was sinking and everyone on board was escaping on a life raft. The Coast Guard reported that seas in the area were rough with waves up to 7 feet high. Four aircrafts searched all night and into the morning for the life raft. After searching 6,000 square miles, the search was called off. Intrepid and her 16 passengers were never found.

The Mental Floss website, [here](#), has a list of ships that disappeared without trace. This list was first published in 2016 and republished in 2019. Some of the ships mentioned are:

- On New Year's Eve 1812, the schooner **Patriot** left South Carolina for New York. It is known that the ship left dock and sailed north, but what happened after that is a mystery. It never arrived in New York, and no trace of the ship or crew was ever found. After more than 200 years we shall never know the real fate of the Patriot and the crew and its passengers.
- The **Andrea Gail** was a 72-foot-long-liner boat that fished in the North Atlantic for swordfish. In September 1991 the ship, along with several other fishing vessels, set sail from Gloucester, Massachusetts for the last fishing session of the season. By October, the Andrea Gail and its six-man crew passed the coast of Newfoundland when the confluence of terrible weather fronts conspired to create what has been dubbed "the perfect storm" with massively powerful winds whipping waves 100 feet high. The Andrea Gail failed to return to port after the worst of the storm had passed. Rescue missions were sent out, but nothing was ever found. The story of the storm and the imagined fate of the Andrea Gail and her crew was later told in the book *The Perfect Storm* by Sebastian Junger, as well as a Hollywood movie of the same name.
- Over the course of a 20-year career, the British Navy ship **HMS Sappho** worked to suppress the slave trade off the coast of West Africa. In 1857, after wrongly chasing down and boarding an American ship—an event that caused something of a diplomatic crisis between America and Great Britain—the ship was ordered to set sail to Australia. The Sappho reached Cape Town without incident, and from there headed toward the Bass Strait, where it was last spotted by a passing brig on 18th February 1878. Bad weather was reported in the area, and it has been assumed that high winds caused the ship to founder and sink. No sign of the 147 crew members was ever found, but rumours abounded that the captain, Fairfax Moresby, had somehow escaped the wreck and made it to an island off Australia, where he was said to have become insane.

Many disappearances occurred before wireless telegraphy became available in navigation applications in the late 1890s, which would have allowed the crew to send a distress call. Sudden disasters such as military strike, collision, rogue wave, or piracy could also prevent a crew from sending a distress call and reporting a location. Among the many missing ships are submarines, which have limited communication, and provide the crew almost no chance of survival if struck by disaster under water.

Most vessels currently listed as missing disappeared over a vast search area and/or deep water and there is little commercial interest in searching for the vessels and salvaging the contents. Often the search and recovery costs are prohibitive even with today's sonar and wrecking technologies and could not be compensated by salvaged valuables, even if there were any on board. The search for these types of missing vessels is usually motivated by historical, legal or actuarial interests requiring the aid of government funding.

Finally, on Wikipedia, there is a list of ships that went missing, organised by the marine region in which the disappearance or sinking occurred, or the closest country to the area. The year of the disappearance, last known location, and possible location of the wreck are included. The list is [here](#).

Pandemics, then and now

Excerpted from a posting on Scientific American, [here](#), by **Scott Hershberger** on 13th August 2020

The legacy of the 20th century's deadliest pandemic shows how large groups remember—and forget—their shared past. In 1924, Encyclopædia Britannica published a two-volume history of the 20th century to that point. More than 80 authors—professors and politicians, soldiers and scientists—contributed chapters to *These Eventful Years: The Twentieth Century in the Making as Told by Many of Its Makers*. But the 1,300 pages of the book never mention the **catastrophic influenza pandemic** that had killed between 50 million and 100 million people worldwide only five years earlier. And many history textbooks in subsequent decades just note the 1918–1919 flu pandemic as an aside when discussing World War I, if at all.

Many popular museums and blockbuster movies recount the **sinking of the Titanic** and the **Apollo moon missions**. But there is barely a mention of the 1918 flu (often mistakenly referred to as the “Spanish flu”), which, although not entirely forgotten but forming a disproportionately small part of our society's narrative of its past.

That such a devastating pandemic could become so dormant in our collective memory puzzled Guy Beiner, a historian at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Israel, prompting him to spend decades researching its legacy. “We have an illusion. We believe that if an event is historically significant—if it affects many, many people, if it changes the fate of countries in the world, if many people die from it—then it will inevitably be remembered,” he says. “That’s not at all how it works. And the Spanish flu is exactly a warning for that.”

Historic UK ([here](#)) describes the ‘Spanish Flu’ pandemic of 1918 as one of the greatest medical disasters of the 20th century - a global pandemic, with an airborne virus which affected every continent. One of the first casualties was the King of Spain. Although not caused by World War I, it is thought that in the UK, the virus was spread by soldiers returning home from the trenches in northern France. Soldiers were becoming ill with what was known as ‘la grippe’, the symptoms of which were sore throats, headaches and a loss of appetite. Although highly infectious in the cramped, primitive conditions of the trenches, recovery was usually swift and doctors at first called it “three-day fever”.

The outbreak hit the UK in a series of waves, with its peak at the end of WWI. Returning from Northern France at the end of the war, the troops travelled home by train. As they arrived at the railway stations, so the flu spread from the railway stations to the centre of the cities, then to the suburbs and out into the countryside. Not restricted to class, anyone could catch it. Prime Minister David Lloyd George contracted it but survived.

Collective Memory

Pioneered in the early 20th century by sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, the study of **collective memory** has garnered widespread interest across the social sciences in recent years. Henry Roediger III, a psychologist at Washington University in St. Louis, defines collective memory as “how we remember ourselves as part of a group... that forms our identity.” Groups such as nations, political parties, religious communities and sports fandoms, he explains, weave events from their collective past into a narrative that reinforces individual members’ shared sense of who they are.

For the countries engaged in World War I, the global conflict provided a clear narrative arc, replete with heroes and villains, victories and defeats. From this standpoint, an invisible enemy such as the 1918 flu made little narrative sense. It had no clear origin, it killed otherwise healthy people in multiple waves and slinked away without being understood. Scientists at the time did not even know that a virus, not a bacterium, caused the flu.

“The doctors had shame,” Beiner says. “It was a huge failure of modern medicine.” The pandemic all but vanished from public discourse soon after it ended.

Unlike the 1918 flu, COVID-19 has had (thank goodness) no massive war with which to compete in memory. And science’s understanding of viruses has dramatically improved in the past century (although many COVID-19 mysteries remain).

Contributed by



Martin Pollins

Should we all be wearing not one, but two face masks?

John Donovan on *How Stuff Works*, pulls no punches when he says:

“By now, in this unending coronavirus pandemic, we should all agree about the importance of wearing a mask. **Anyone who doubts it, at this point, is either anti-science, stupidly stubborn, religiously opposed or libertarian to an alarming degree. Possibly all of those.** Way back, a year or more ago, the word might not have been so clear. [Then], as researchers and scientists wrestled with new data surrounding this novel virus, what the experts were saying about masks may have been a little confusing. But it’s 2021 now. More than 100 million people have been stricken by COVID-19, the disease that springs from this coronavirus infection. More than 2.2 million have died. Those are the facts. **The world’s scientists now have enough data, enough proof, to definitively state: Masks work.**”

Now, as the virus mutates into different variants, masks are as critical as ever. That’s why, some people in ‘the know’ are suggesting doubling up—wearing two masks—to keep everyone safe and to get this pandemic under control. It’s an idea that may send the anti-mask crowd into double fits of paroxysm. But, it works.

You can read about it at: <https://health.howstuffworks.com/diseases-conditions/respiratory/wear-two-masks.htm>



Picture Credit: “Home sweet home” by antefixus21 is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

FURTHER READING

- *What Should We Expect After the Pandemic Based on the Aftermath of the Spanish Flu - Differences in social behaviour during a pre-pandemic and post-pandemic* - (read [here](#)).
- *London's five centuries of face coverings* - BBC News (read [here](#)).

Maslow, Music, Movies and Motivation

During the summer of 1997, I attended a seminar at Roffey Park Management Institute in Sussex as part of a Masters' degree (MBA). The topics were wide and varied and offered an opportunity to think about management issues in a new light. One interesting idea concerned the role of music to enhance the effects of positive emotion - in other words, motivation. Motivation also plays a large part in the rationale of popular films. Take a good look at psychologist Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs - if you understand them, you'll understand much more about what motivates people.

Picture Credit: "20150502 Maslows-Hierarchy-of-Needs" by cesararada.com is licensed under CC-BY-NC-SA 2.0



Because of direct connections with the brain, when information is linked to music there's a good chance that the brain will encode it in its long-term storage system. Recollection of happy times and circumstances act as a stimulus for motivation. At the other end of the scale, absence of music can retard child brain development. One of the reasons that music affects learners is that the processing of music involves both sides of the brain.

Neuroscientist Gordon L. Shaw, Ph.D., of the MIND. Institute, University of California, says that music can entertain, motivate, inspire and calm. Music lessons, and even simply listening to music, can enhance spatial reasoning performance, according to his research. Now, years of innovative scientific research prove that music can enhance how we can think and reason and show us how the brain works and how thought and reason can be enhanced by music.

"In The Wizard of Oz, Dorothy's feelings of insecurity create the motivation to find somewhere without problems."

Many feature films arouse emotions and contain profound messages of motivation. The desire for security is one of the primary motivations of characters in popular films - for example as Dorothy (Judy Garland) showed in *The Wizard of Oz*. Her insecurity provides the motivation to find somewhere without problems but when she finds that Oz is a dangerous place, she's soon motivated to return to the safety of her home.

Psychologist Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs focuses ultimately on the person striving to attain "self-actualisation" (reaching their full potential). Maslow acknowledged that there need - lower, yet stronger - that must be satisfied before needs higher on the hierarchy are activated. After the basic physiological needs of hunger, thirst and sex, humans have a terrific need for personal safety.

Next on the Maslow's hierarchy is the need for love and the feeling of belonging to a person or group. An example of this is in *ET - The Extra-Terrestrial*. Elliott (played by Henry Thomas), a lonely child abandoned by his father and excluded by his brother's friends, finds friendship in his relationship with ET a visitor from another planet. These two lost souls find each other across the vastness of space and time. The film identifies with many childhood experiences: a broken family with a single parent and no positive role model, a child's caring for a stray creature or pet, and homesickness.

After love and belonging, there's the need for self-esteem and the need for esteem from others. These motivations are displayed by Marty (Michael J Fox) in *Back to the Future* - his humiliation and lack of self-esteem is based on his need to belong to a family he can be proud of.

"... the need for self-esteem and esteem from others, are displayed by Marty in Back to the Future."

Harrison Ford as Indiana Jones in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* searches for ancient and rare objects of historical value for his museum, a selfless act of motivation that produces good for the community.

In *Home Alone*, Kevin (Macaulay Culkin) needs his family to love him, but he also needs self-esteem because of his inability to take care of himself, and he needs to safeguard his home against burglars.

"Nick Marshall falls in love and gets a new outlook on life in What Women Want."

Nick Marshall (played by Mel Gibson) a Chicago advertising executive, gets a new outlook on life when an accident gives him the ability to read women's minds in *What Women Want*. He soon realises that he can use it to good effect, especially when it comes to outwitting his new boss, Darcy Maguire (Helen Hunt). In spite of his best efforts to finesse Darcy, he soon finds himself falling in love with her and

then understands what women want.

Many popular films are stories about characters with specific needs. Revenge is often used as the protagonist's motivation in many films. It's a powerful emotional force fixing direction towards a clear goal to achieve justice to counter an earlier injustice (often in the opening scene), which generates audience empathy for the character. This incident, along with the protagonist's attempts to bring the perpetrators to justice, forms the foundation of his motivation.

In *Batman*, Bruce Wayne (played by Adam West) is driven by revenge to overcome his feelings of helplessness as a child while watching his parents being murdered. Sam (Patrick Swayze) in *Ghost* needs to save the life of the woman he loves (Molly - played by Demi Moore) and the friend that has helped him Oda Mae (Whoopi Goldberg). Molly needs Sam's love and doesn't want to let him go. In *Beverly Hills Cops*, Eddie Murphy playing Axel Foley wants to find who murdered his friend, Mike Tandino.

Revenge is also the motivation for Andy Dufrene (Tim Robbins) in *The Shawshank Redemption* who has been wrongly imprisoned for the murder he didn't commit of his wife and her golf-club lover. Prison Warden Norton uses Andy to run his financial scam empire. But Andy gets his own back - the Warden's money, shoes and respect disappear down the dank hole Andy uses to escape to Mexico. Red Redding (Morgan Freeman), another Shawshank inmate, achieves self-actualisation in being able to make it on the outside with Andy's help - even after 40 years of imprisonment.

"Revenge was the motivation for Andy Dufrene in The Shawshank Redemption."

What can we learn from all this?

Motivation is a very complex thing. It can mean different things to different people at different times. And its impact can be different too.

Contributed by



Martin Pollins

Only by understanding the need can it be satisfied. It's that way in business too - that's why psychology plays such a big part in marketing and sales. Take a good look at Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs - if you understand them, you'll understand much more about what motivates people.

Cockney Column



Picture Credit: "Hot chestnuts" by jovike is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0

Not many people know this, but I am a Cockney. Phew... I feel better already sharing that with you. The term Cockney is applied as a **demonym** (that's a posh word, 'invented' around 1995-2000, for people who live in a particular location) and for Cockneys it applies to people from defined areas of London – namely East Enders or to those born within the sound of Bow Bells.

The Cockney dialect is the form of speech used in those areas, and elsewhere, particularly among working-class Londoners.

Technically, you can only be a Cockney if you were born in the East End of the city. To be really specific, you must have been born within the sound of Bow Bells – that's the bells of St Mary-le-Bow Church in Cheapside.

Etymologically, where does the word Cockney come from? Good question: in 1362 the word was used to mean "a small, misshapen egg", from Middle English *coke* + *ey* ("a cock's egg").

The mythical, imaginary Land of Cockaigne (a land of contraries, where all the restrictions of society are defied: abbots are beaten by their monks, sexual liberty is open and food is so plentiful that the skies rain with cheese) may have been the source of the word under a variety of spellings, including Cockayne, Cocknay, and Cockney. The word "Cockaigne" comes from the Middle French phrase *païs de cocaigne*, which literally means "the land of plenty."

Worryingly, the present meaning of Cockney comes from its use among rural Englishmen in around 1520 as a pejorative term for effeminate town-dwellers, from an earlier general sense (encountered in "The Reeve's Tale" of Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* in 1386). By 1600, the word Cockney was being particularly associated with the Bow Bells area.

The connection with the bells of St Mary-le-Bow Church in Cheapside, is the one I like best. Apart from the first few months of my life, after birth in Whitechapel Hospital, which were spent in London town, Sussex has been my home, perhaps because I had no wish to be called an 'effeminate town dweller'.

My tip of the day, if you plan to visit the East End of London, is – don't call the market traders in Petticoat Lane *effeminate town dwellers*. Ignore this tip at your peril.

Learn more...

Listen: Have a butcher's hook at this video with your china plates. Not sure what this means? Learn how to speak Cockney rhyming slang with Anglophenia's Kate Arnell, just click [here](#) to find out more.

Or try this: 'A LONDONER Explains How to Speak COCKNEY'. Click [here](#) to become an expert, in next to no time.

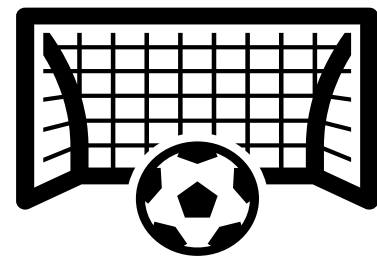
Or you try to 'Learn the Cockney accent with a Jason Statham' look-alike), [here](#).

When you think you've got it, you are ready to read my next article on Cockney Slang.

Contributed by



Martin Pollins



"Some people think football is a matter of life and death. I assure you, it's much more serious than that."

Bill Shankly

"I am not a perfectionist, but I like to feel that things are done well. More important than that, I feel an endless need to learn, to improve, to evolve, not only to please the coach and the fans but also to feel satisfied with myself. It is my conviction that there are no limits to learning, and that it can never stop, no matter what our age."

Cristiano Ronaldo

"Football is a simple game; 22 men chase a ball for 90 minutes and at the end, the Germans win."

Gary Lineker

"We must have had 99 percent of the game. It was the other three percent that cost us the match."

Ruud Gullit

"Becoming a footballer is only the first half of the silent prayer a kid offers up to the sky or confides to his teacher in a primary school essay. The second part is the name of the team he wants to play for."

Andrea Pirlo

"The ball is round, the game lasts ninety minutes, and everything else is just theory."

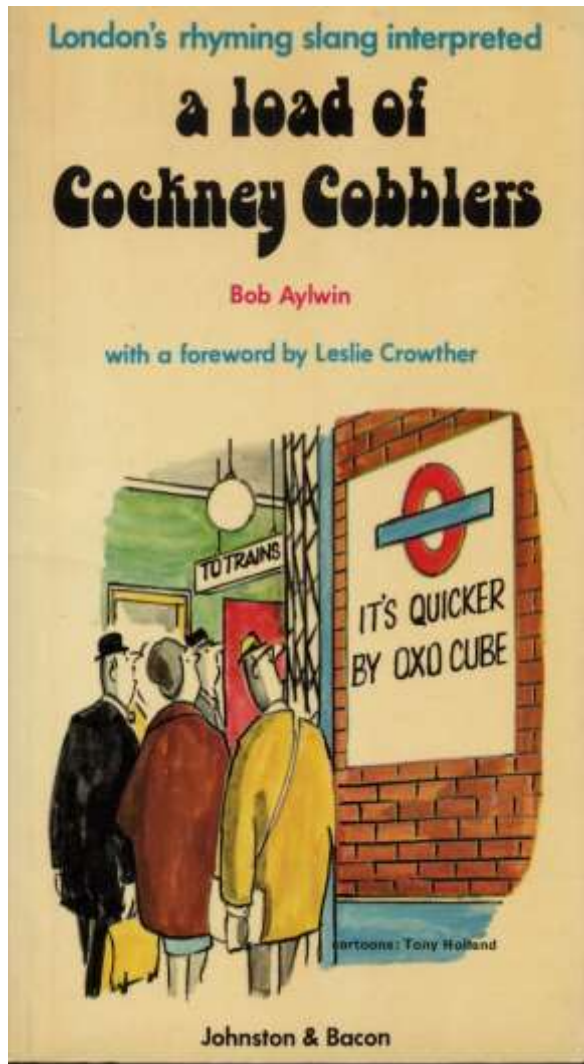
Josef "Sepp" Herberger

"When people succeed, it is because of hard work. Luck has nothing to do with success."

Diego Maradona

Cockney rhyming slang

Sources: https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Appendix:Cockney_rhyming_slang and <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/jun/09/guide-to-cockney-rhyming-slang>



Rhyming Slang works by taking a common word and using a rhyming phrase of two or three words to replace it. For example, instead of using the word 'look', the rhyming phrase 'butcher's hook' is used, would you Adam and Eve it? This type of slang was first used in the early 19th century in the East End of London - hence its alternative name, *Cockney rhyming slang*. The effect is simple - the origin and meaning of the phrase becomes a complete mystery except to listeners who are 'in the know'.

Some examples are listed below. There are hundreds more. Many terms are based on popular culture and are updated according to changing fashions. These are well-established, and easily recognised but I have excluded others either for lack of space or because they have a rather rude, racial, pejorative, or downright unpleasant connotation or might offend. I hope you recognise some of them...

- "Apples and pears" (stairs)
- "Adam and Eve" — (believe)
- "Army and navy" (gravy)
- "Bees and honey" (money)
- "Borrow and beg" (egg)
- "Bottle and stopper" (copper)
- "Box of toys" (noise)
- "Brahms and Liszt" (pissed/drunken)
- "Bristol" - short for Bristol City FC (titty/breast), usually plural
- "Coals and coke" (broke)
- "Collar and cuff" (puff)
- "Crowded space" (suitcase)
- "Cut and carried" (married)
- "Cuts and scratches" (matches)
- "Day's a-dawning" (morning)
- "Derry and Toms" (bombs)
- "Didn't ought" (port)
- "Duck and dive" (hide)
- "Dustbin lid/s" — (kid/s)
- "Early hours" (flowers)
- "Gay and hearty" (a party)
- "Give and take" (cake)

- "Gregory Peck" (neck)
- "Half-inch" (pinch/steal)
- "Hank Marvin" (starving)
- "Helter-skelter" (an air-raid shelter)
- "Light and dark" (park)
- "Lion's lair" (chair)
- "Loaf" - short for loaf of bread (head)
- "Loop the loop" (soup)
- "Lump of ice" (advice)
- "Lump of lead" (the head)
- "Lump of school" (fool/idiot)
- "Merry-go-round" (pound)
- "Mutt and Jeff" (deaf)
- "Near and far" (bar)
- "Oily rag" (a fag)
- "On the floor" (poor)
- "Pleasure and pain" (rain)
- "Tea leaf" (thief)
- "Whistle and flute" (suit)



Picture Credit: "Joe Brown On Stage" by garryknight is licensed under CC BY 2.0

Many think Joe Brown was a Cockney, but no - he was actually born in Lincolnshire.

What is a Proverb?

Picture Credit: [Recoloured]
"Proverbs" by Totally Severe is licensed
under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0



I came across a great website recently. Its focus was on proverbs – you know what a proverb is, don't you? It's that short, pithy saying that expresses a traditionally held truth or piece of advice, based on common sense or experience. The website is at:

<https://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/proverbs.html>

According to the site, nothing defines a culture as distinctly as its language, and the element of language that best encapsulates a society's values and beliefs is its proverbs.

No collection of proverbs in English would be complete without the proverbs collected and published by the Tudor courtier **John Heywood**. Just in case you've never heard of him, or perhaps forgotten who he was, he was born (probably in Coventry) in 1497. He was best known for his plays, poems, and collection of proverbs. He was also active as a musician and composer, though no musical works survive. Although he was a devout Catholic, he nevertheless served as a royal servant to both the Catholic and Protestant regimes of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I.

The website provides a list of most of the commonly used English proverbs, with links to the meaning and origin of many of them. Here are some to whet your appetite or grey cells (just click on the links below for an explanation):

- [A bad penny always turns up](#)
- [A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush](#)
- [A cat may look at a king](#)
- [A chain is only as strong as its weakest link](#)
- [A change is as good as a rest](#)
- [A dog is a man's best friend](#)
- [A drowning man will clutch at a straw](#)
- [A fish always rots from the head down](#)
- [A fool and his money are soon parted](#)
- [A friend in need is a friend indeed](#)
- [A golden key can open any door](#)

If you want to explore further, the website has proverbs in their hundreds...

Contributed by



Martin Pollins

Cockney Money-Slang

Source: <https://www.cockneyrhymingslang.co.uk/subjects/money>

Picture Credit: "Wide Boy" by Flickrone is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0



There are scads of Cockney slang for money. Much of it comes from the designs on the notes - five pounds, ten pounds, twenty pounds. But first, you must learn that five pounds is a fiver, and ten pounds is a tenner. £20 is a Score, £25 is a Pony, £100 is a Ton, £500 is a Monkey, and £1,000 is a Grand.

Take a trip to the website source given above and you will discover a new world of money you never knew existed, such as:

- £1 As in "Can you lend us a Lost and Found mate?"
- £1 As in "Lend us a Nicker mate"
- £1 (nicker) As in "Go down the pound shop - everything's only a Nicker" (based on Alan Whicker)
- £10 (Cock and Hen) As in "You don't get much change from a Cock and Hen for a pint of Pig's Ear in this Battle Cruiser (Boozer)"
- £10 pounds (tenner) As in "You got that Bill and Benner you owe me?"
- £10 (tenner) As in "an Ayrton Senna"
- £1,000 (Grand) As in "a Bag of Sand"
- £15 (a Commodore) As in "Lend us a Commodore mate." Fifteen pounds is three times a Lady (Lady Godiva) which is slang for fiver.
- £20 (a Score) As in "Come on love, it's only a Score!"
- £20 (score) As in "It cost me a Bobby Moore"
- £20 (Score) As in "Apple Core"
- 50 pence - As in "Lend me a Cow's Calf for my bus fare." From Cow's Calf meaning half - half a Quid.

How Britain fought Hitler with satire

Source: Column by Kristina Moorehead, 30th August 2019, on [BBC.com/Culture](https://www.bbc.com/culture)

Did you know this: the BBC's German Service used satire to reach ordinary Germans in World War Two? Its aim was to break the Nazi monopoly on news within the Third Reich. You read about how it was done and who was involved by clicking [here](#).

The Bible: who wrote it and why?



Picture Credit: "Holy Bible" by O Silva is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

Not intending to be controversial, this text is simply about a book. A book called the Bible: who wrote it and why? And in what language was it written?

As we all know, the holy scripture of the Christian religion, is called the Bible. It tells the history of the Earth from its earliest creation to the spread of Christianity in the first century A.D. Both the *Old Testament* and the *New Testament* have undergone changes over the centuries, including the publication of the King James Bible in 1611 and the addition of several books that were discovered later.

Whatever religion holds your belief, you'll be interested to read about the Bible at: <https://www.history.com/topics/religion/bible>

A good starting point is the name. How did this holy book come to be called the Bible? The Bible takes its name from the Latin word *Biblia* ('book' or 'books') which comes from the Greek *Ta Biblia* ('the books') traced to the Phoenician port city of Gebal, known as *Byblos* to the Greeks.

Although the Bible, a collection of sacred texts or scripture, is the central book in Western culture, it seems extraordinary that there is no proper history of it. Along with the Codex Vaticanus, the Codex Sinaiticus is considered the oldest known Bible in the world. The Codex Sinaiticus was more than 1,460 pages long and measured 16in by 14in. It was written by a number of people around the time of Constantine the Great in the 4th Century. The manuscript contains the Christian Bible in Greek, including the oldest complete copy of the New Testament. The hand-written text is in Greek.

The New Testament appears in the original vernacular language (koine) and the Old Testament in the version, known as the Septuagint, that was adopted by early Greek-speaking Christians.

The entire Bible was first put together in Greek. The Old Testament came from the Septuagint, a Jewish translation of the Hebrew scriptures and related writings into Greek before the time of Christ. The New Testament documents were all composed in Greek, although Aramaic materials may have been used in doing so.

Biblica, The International Bible Society, say that during the thousand years of its composition, almost all of the Old Testament was written in Hebrew. But a few chapters in the prophecies of Ezra and Daniel and one verse in Jeremiah were written in a language called Aramaic. This language became very popular in the ancient world and actually displaced many other languages. Aramaic even became the common language spoken in Israel in Jesus Christ's time, and it was likely the language He spoke day by day. Some Aramaic words were even used by the Gospel writers in the New Testament.

Greek was the language of the eastern Roman Empire, the area where Christianity first emerged. The western Roman Empire mainly spoke Latin.

The Greek bible was translated into Latin by various people, with varying quality, until Saint Jerome translated major portions of the Bible into Latin. He began in 382 AD by correcting the existing Latin language version of the New Testament, commonly referred to as the *Vetus Latina*. By 390 AD he turned to translating the Hebrew Bible from the original Hebrew, having previously translated portions from the Septuagint which came from Alexandria.

Codex Vaticanus

The 'Codex Vaticanus' is regarded as the oldest extant manuscript of the Greek Bible, one of the four great uncial codices. The Codex is named after its place of conservation in the Vatican Library, where it has been kept since at least the 15th century. It is written on 759 leaves of vellum in uncial letters and has been dated paleographically to the 4th century.

Codex Sinaiticus

The literal meaning of 'Codex Sinaiticus' is the Sinai Book. The word 'Sinaiticus' comes from the fact that the Codex was preserved for many centuries at St Catherine's Monastery near the foot of Mount Sinai in Egypt.

Saint Jerome

Saint Jerome was a Latin Catholic priest, confessor, theologian and historian, commonly known as Saint Jerome.

A timeline of events recorded in the Bible, based on traditionally accepted timeframes and general consensus of a variety of sources can be found at: <https://biblehub.com/timeline/#sources>. The sources include Wilmington's Guide to the Bible, A Survey of Israel's History (Wood), The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings (Thiele), ESV Study Bible, The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge, International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, and Easton's Bible Dictionary. They are probably all available on Amazon.

According to both Jews and Christians, the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy (the first five books of the Bible and the entirety of the Torah) were all written by Moses in about 1,300 B.C. Not everyone agrees however, because of the lack of evidence that Moses ever existed and the fact that the end of Deuteronomy describes the "author" dying and being buried.

Contributed by



Martin Pollins

CREDIT:

Mostly extracted from **Glossary - Timeline of the Bible**, published by OneSmartPlace, at: <http://onesmartplace.com/resources/glossaries/> from where you can obtain a free digital copy.

The Book:

A Cover-to-Cover Exploration of the Most Powerful Object of Our Time

Extracted from a book of that title (page(s): 254-256), written by Keith Houston, © Copyright 2016, published by W.W. Norton & Company

The danger and ease of reading a papyrus scroll:

"With all the rolling and unrolling demanded while reading a scroll, with no page numbers to guide the reader to their desired location, and with no pages to riffle through in the first place, many book historians claim that finding information in a bookroll must have been frustrating.

"But then, there is a suspicion among others that we are too far removed from the daily use of scrolls to be entirely sure about this. It is slower to access a particular part of a scroll, but many of the same intangible factors are at work as when flipping through a book: the visual appearance and the physical weight of the scroll's rolled-up ends guide one to the approximate location, and even without page numbers, chapter titles, and the other textual furniture found on the pages of a modern book, an unadorned column of characters does become familiar after a while. The act of scrolling through an electronic document is named by analogy with the ancient experience of shuffling through a bookroll, and we adapted quickly to that particular change in the reading experience.

Terentius Neo and his wife

"Whether a reader was searching for a favourite passage or reading through an unfamiliar work, 'scrolling' through a scroll demanded their full attention. It takes two hands to simultaneously unfurl a bookroll at one end and roll it up at the other; there is no way to casually prop open a scroll in one hand while sipping from a glass of wine held in the other. (I have tried.) Perhaps because of this, the oenophile Romans accessorised some of their scrolls with a pair of sticks, or umbilici, one attached to each end of a scroll to facilitate rolling and unrolling. They made furniture to match too, in the form of reading desks sporting pegs behind which a scroll's umbilici could be lodged to keep it open at a desired location. Shorter scrolls equipped with umbilici could be unrolled and their ends left to dangle off the end of a table; failing that, a pair of stones would serve well enough as paperweights. And the dangers of a springy papyrus bookroll should not be underestimated: in the first century CE, an aging Roman senator named Lucius Verginius Rufus died after trying to retrieve a scroll that had sprung out of his grasp; he slipped on the marble floor, fracturing his hip, and never recovered.

"In spite of all its shortcomings - its flammability, unwieldiness, and comparative fragility - for the denizens of ancient Greece and Rome, the papyrus scroll was the obvious choice for recording texts of any great length."

What is a Bookroll – Ancient Books explained

In Ancient Greece, books did not take the form known to us today, but rather were in the shape of rolls made out of papyrus. The papyrus plant grows widely in Egypt, and the material itself is made by cutting the stem of the plant in half and laying it crosshatch over itself, like a weave, before hammering it together. Papyrus sheets were formed in a range of sizes. Width was closely related to quality: rolls containing wider sheets tended to be more expensive than those containing narrower sheets. Bookrolls could then be extended by the addition of extra sheets if necessary.

Source: <https://www.bl.uk/greek-manuscripts/articles/ancient-books>

Comment from Martin Pollins

Delanceyplace is a FREE brief daily email with an excerpt or quote they view as interesting or noteworthy, offered with commentary to provide context. There is no theme, except that most excerpts will come from a non-fiction work, mainly works of history, and they hope will have a more universal relevance than simply the subject of the book from which they came. And there is not necessarily an endorsement, and in some cases an excerpt may be particularly controversial, and Delanceyplace may disagree with some or all of it, but nevertheless deem it worth noting.

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"The greatest lesson in life is to know that even fools are right sometimes."

- Winston Churchill

Democracy vs. Republic



A "Democracy" is two wolves and a lamb voting on what's for lunch.

A "Republic" is two hundred wolves and one hundred lambs electing two wolves and one lamb to vote on what's for lunch.

A "Constitutional Republic" is the same two hundred wolves and one hundred lambs electing two wolves and one lamb to vote what's on for lunch, where a Constitution guarantees that lamb is off the menu. Eventually, the Supreme Court votes 5 wolves to 4 lambs that mutton is not the same as lamb.

The House of Rothschild: How did they become so powerful?



The House of Rothschild is a 1934 American Pre-Code film written by Nunnally Johnson from the play by George Hembert Westley, and directed by Alfred L. Werker. It chronicles the rise of the Rothschild family of European bankers. Of the actors, perhaps the best-known are: *Boris Karloff* as Count Ledrantz, *Loretta Young* as Julie Rothschild, *Robert Young* as Captain Fitzroy and *C. Aubrey Smith* as The Duke of Wellington. *George Arliss* took the lead role and played Mayer Rothschild.

To explain: Pre-code is the brief era in the American film industry between the widespread adoption of sound in pictures in 1929 and the enforcement of the Motion Picture Production Code censorship guidelines, popularly known as the "Hays Code", in mid-1934.

Briefly, the film plot is:

In 1780 in Frankfurt Germany, youngster Nathan Rothschild warns his parents Mayer Amschel Rothschild and Guttie that the taxman is coming. They respond by hurriedly hiding their wealth, including currency, silver, etc. The taxman demands 20,000 gulden, an exorbitant sum, but accepts a bribe of 5,000 and reduces the taxed by 9/10ths. Mayer's satisfaction is short-lived, 10,000 gulden due to him is intercepted and the money confiscated by the taxmen. Mayer tells his sons that he tried to be as honest as possible, but the anti-Semitic authorities will not let him; he admonishes his children to acquire money, for "money is power" and a defense for their people.

Later, as Mayer Rothschild is lying on his deathbed, he instructs his five sons to start banks in different countries across Europe: Amschel in Frankfurt, Salomon Mayer von Rothschild in Vienna, Nathan in London, Carl in Rome, and James in Paris. That way, they can avoid having to send gold back and forth as the need arises, for in war they are in danger of being robbed by the enemy and in peace by their own countrymen. Instead, they can draw on each other's banks.

Thirty-two years later, the five sons have established banking houses. From their humble beginnings, the business grows and helps to finance the war against Napoleon, but it's not always easy, especially because of the prejudices against Jews. The wealthy Rothschild family undergo prejudice from the anti-Semitic society in which they live.

NOTE: The gathering of all of the five sons of Mayer Rothschild on his deathbed never happened, it was a dramatic license taken by the script writers. In reality, only two of his sons were present while the others were living in different European nations at the time.

You can watch a film clip at:

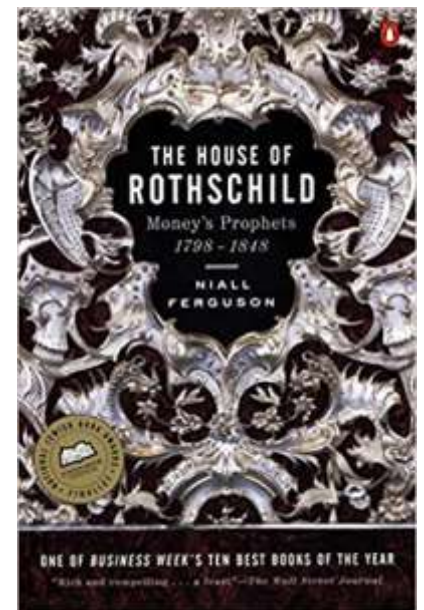
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibkF3gXAEes>

The screenshot (left) is taken from the film clip.

The Book, by Niall Ferguson

Source: [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk)

The House of Rothschild: Money's Prophets 1798-1848, is a rich and nuanced portrait of the remarkable, elusive Rothschild family. Written by Oxford scholar and bestselling author Niall Ferguson, the book uncovers the secrets behind the family's phenomenal economic success. The author reveals for the first time the details of the family's vast political network, which gave it access to and influence over many of the greatest statesmen of the age. And he tells a family saga, tracing the importance of unity and the profound role of Judaism in the lives of a dynasty that rose from the confines of the Frankfurt ghetto and later used its influence to assist oppressed Jews throughout Europe.



It's described as 'a definitive work of impeccable scholarship with a thoroughly engaging narrative, *'The House of Rothschild'* is a biography of the rarest kind, in which mysterious and fascinating historical figures finally spring to life.'

You can buy the book at Amazon from, [here](https://www.amazon.co.uk).

Contributed by



Martin Pollins

One of my all-time favourite films... 'A Few Good Men'



Michael Schlesinger wrote on Quora.com about how fond he was of the film **A Few Good Men**. I agree with him 100% – and enjoyed the stellar acting by Jack Nicholson, Tom Cruise, Demi Moore and Kevin Bacon.

Schlesinger focuses on a scene in which prosecutor Kevin Bacon asks Noah Wyle a question that he believes will totally destroy Tom Cruise's defense: 'When he finishes, Cruise stands and comes over, asks one simple question, and totally demolishes Bacon's premise. As he returns to his table, director Rob Reiner cuts back to Bacon, who half-smiles in rueful admiration at how Cruise has wrecked what he thought was a triumphant moment. It humanises Bacon's character and provides a realistic tag to the scene - without using a single word of dialogue.'

In case you didn't see the film, or have forgotten about it, this is what it's about:

A Few Good Men is a 1992 American legal drama film directed by Rob Reiner and starring Tom Cruise, Jack Nicholson, and Demi Moore, with Kevin Bacon, Kevin Pollak, Cuba Gooding Jr., Wolfgang Bodison, James Marshall, J. T. Walsh, and Kiefer Sutherland in supporting roles. It was adapted for the screen by Aaron Sorkin from his 1989 play of the same name and includes contributions by William Goldman. The film revolves around the court-martial of two U.S. Marines charged with the murder of a fellow Marine and the tribulations of their lawyers as they prepare a case to defend their clients.

The climax of the film was the superb inter-change between Cruise and Nicholson which culminates in Nicholson's admission that he gave a CodeRed order... watch a film clip at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FnO3igOkOk>

The screenshot above is taken from that film clip.

A Baird Man or a Good Man?



While on the subject of great films, I have to mention **Scent of a Woman**.

This film was also made in 1992. *It's a simple enough story about a prep school student (Chris O'Donnell) needing money over the Thanksgiving weekend, so he agrees to "babysit" a blind ex-military man (Al Pacino), but the job is not at all what he anticipated. That's a very shortened version of the film plot.*

If you didn't see the film, here's a longer description:

Scent of a Woman is a 1992 American drama film produced and directed by Martin Brest that tells the story of a preparatory school (William Baird School) student who takes a job as an assistant to an irritable, blind, medically retired Army officer. The film is a remake of Dino Risi's 1974 Italian film *Profumo di donna*, adapted by Bo Goldman from the novel *Il buio e il miele* (Italian: Darkness and Honey) by Giovanni Arpino and from the 1974 screenplay by Ruggiero Maccari and Dino Risi. The film stars Al Pacino and Chris O'Donnell, with James Rebhorn, Philip Seymour Hoffman and Gabrielle Anwar.

Pacino won the Academy Award for Best Actor for his performance and the film was nominated for Best Director, Best Picture and Best Screenplay Based on Material Previously Produced or Published. The film won three major awards at the Golden Globe Awards: Best Screenplay, Best Actor and Best Motion Picture – Drama. The film was shot primarily around New York state, and also on location at Princeton University, at the Emma Willard School, an all-girls school in Troy, New York, and at the Ethical Culture Fieldston School in New York City.

O'Donnell is accused of unbecoming conduct and refuses to own up to a 'crime' he didn't commit. It all looks bad for him until Pacino enters the fray (the school assembly) to represent his temporary babysitter.

The school assembly gathered to hear the charges against O'Donnell is a perfect setting for an amazing speech given by Pacino. Watch a film clip at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jd10x8LiuBc>

The screenshot above is taken from that film clip.

Contributed by



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Making a Difference...



The film is a story about a quiet insurance actuary who is retiring from his position with a life insurance company in Omaha, Nebraska. There's the customary retirement party, of course and much hand shaking, smiles and good wishes but the ex-actuary finds it hard to adjust to his new life. It doesn't help that he is unhappily married to his wife. The fact is - he feels useless.

It's not long before the newly retired, ex-actuary visits his young successor at the life insurance company to offer his help, but the offer is politely declined. His wife suddenly dies from a blood clot in her brain not long after their purchase of a Winnebago Adventurer motor home.

Watching a TV ad about a foster program for African children, he decides to sponsor a child. He soon receives an information package with a photo of his foster child, a small Tanzanian boy named Ndugu Umbo, to whom he outpours his life in a series of candid, rambling letters.

Saddened by almost everything, except perhaps for the feelings he has for his newly purchased motor home, he dumps his woes on his new foster child. Then, to make things worse, Jeannie, his only daughter, and her fiancé, arrive from Denver for the funeral.

Schmidt, the name of the ex-actuary, feels his daughter could do better than to marry the fiancé she has chosen. After the couple leave to return to Denver, Schmidt is overcome by loneliness. He stops showering, sleeps in front of the TV, and goes shopping with a coat over pajamas to load up on frozen foods. In his wife's closet he discovers some hidden love letters disclosing her long-ago affair with a mutual friend.

He decides on taking a journey alone in his new Winnebago to visit his daughter and try to convince her not to go through with the marriage. Despite his pleas against the union, the wedding goes ahead. Schmidt delivers a kind speech at the reception, hiding his disapproval.

Schmidt composes a letter to Ndugu, his foster child. Schmidt questions what he had actually accomplished in life, lamenting that he will soon be dead, that his life has made no difference to anyone, and that eventually it will be as if he has never existed at all. Rather too much to unload on a child.

On arrival back home, there is a pile of post waiting for him. Schmidt opens a letter from Tanzania. It is from a nun, who writes that Ndugu is only six years old and unable to read and reply to Schmidt's letters on his own, but the child appreciates them as well as Schmidt's financial support very much. A crayon drawing by Ndugu is enclosed, showing two smiling stick figures, one large and one small, holding hands on a sunny day (see picture on the left). Schmidt is moved to tears. In the very last scene of the film, **About Schmidt**, after despairing about his life, Schmidt is about to realise that he's made a difference after all... Watch it at: <https://www.tvguide.com/movies/about-schmidt/2000054895/>

(The picture (left) is a screenshot from that video. Jack Nicholson won Best Actor Motion Picture Drama at the Golden Globes 2003 for his performance).

Poor Vision

Ethel and Albert are having yet another row. Albert stubbornly refuses to go to the opticians again and Ethel has had quite enough!

"But you're 73 Albert" she protests "Only yesterday you wore your slippers when you went to the supermarket".

"How many times do I have to say no!" Albert argued. Enraged by her constant nagging, he jumps into his car and drives off in a rage.

Half an hour later Ethel calls Albert on his mobile and says "Albert, if you're on the motorway please be careful. The man on the news says that some idiot is driving the wrong way".

Albert replies "Honey, he needs to get his facts right, there's hundreds of them".



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The Lost Colony at Roanoke Island

Picture Credit: "The Roanoke Colonies" by Travis S. is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0



THE LOST COLONY

Source: <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/roanoke-colony-deserted>

It happened on 18th August 1590. That's when **John White**, the governor of the Roanoke Island colony (present-day North Carolina), returned on a British ship after a supply-trip to England. To his surprise the settlement, which had been established 3 years earlier, was deserted. The 100 or so colonists he left behind were gone. There were no traces of them nor any signs of violence. The only clue to their mysterious disappearance was the word "CROATOAN" carved into the palisade that had been built around the settlement. White took the letters to mean that the colonists had moved to Croatoan Island, some 50 miles away, but a search of that island found no trace of them.

The Roanoke Island colony, the first English settlement in the New World, was founded by English explorer **Sir Walter Raleigh** in August 1585. The first Roanoke colonists did not fare well, suffering from dwindling food supplies and Indian attacks, and in 1586 they returned to England aboard a ship captained by **Sir Francis Drake**. In 1587, Raleigh sent out another group of 100 colonists under John White. White returned to England to procure more supplies, but the war with Spain delayed his return to Roanoke. By the time he finally returned in August 1590, everyone had vanished.

JOHN WHITE (COLONIST AND ARTIST)

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_White_\(colonist_and_artist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_White_(colonist_and_artist))

John White (circa 1540 – 1593) was an English colonial governor, explorer, artist, and cartographer. He was among those who sailed with Richard Grenville in the first attempt to colonise Roanoke Island in 1585, acting as artist and mapmaker to the expedition. He would most famously briefly serve as the governor of the second attempt to found Roanoke Colony on the same island only to find that the colonists had mysteriously disappeared.

During his time at Roanoke Island he made several watercolour sketches of the surrounding landscape and the native Algonkin peoples. These works are significant as they are the most informative illustrations of a Native American society of the Eastern seaboard; the surviving original watercolours are now preserved in the print room of the British Museum.

In 1587, White became governor of Sir Walter Raleigh's failed attempt at a permanent settlement on Roanoke Island, known to history as the "Lost Colony". This was the earliest effort to establish a permanent English colony in the New World. White's grand daughter, Virginia Dare was the first English child born in the Americas.

After the failure of the colony, White retired to Raleigh's estates in Ireland, reflecting upon the "evils and unfortunate events" which had ruined his hopes in America, though never giving up hope that his daughter and grand-daughter were still alive.

FURTHER READING

- "It Was America's First English Colony. Then It Was Gone", By Andrew Lawler, at: <https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/2018/05/it-was-americas-first-english-colony-then-it-was-gone>
- "The John White Colony" (Fort Raleigh National Historic Site (U.S. National Park Service), at: <https://www.nps.gov/fora/learn/education/the-john-white-colony.htm>
- "Have We Found the Lost Colony of Roanoke Island?" (Remote-sensing techniques have unearthed clues to the fate of settlers who mysteriously disappeared) at: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2013/12/131208-roanoke-lost-colony-discovery-history-raleigh/>

Having a Whale of a time



Did you know that after a whale gives birth, it must spend the next several weeks continually swimming in order to "tow" its calf along in its slipstream because at first the calf has insufficient blubber to maintain buoyancy in the water. Quite simply, it would otherwise sink without help from its mother.

The gestation period in most whale species is 11 to 16 months. The new-born calf is usually one-quarter to a one-third the length of the mother. Baleen whales will wean their calves by their first summer when they are less than a year old, while the toothed variety take up to three years to be completely weaned. Calves grow very rapidly, thanks to the extremely high proportion of fat and proteins contained in whale milk.

Whales developed from land mammals that lived in warm, salty waters about 55 million years ago. There are two types of whales: whales with teeth (odontoceti) and baleen whales (mysticeti). For details on the species, click [here](#).

Is this the best medicine of all?

"Learning a new skill at any age helps to promote neural cell growth, improve concentration, and increase overall brain function... The studies provide evidence that intense learning experiences akin to those faced by younger populations are possible in older populations and may facilitate gains in cognitive abilities."

Source: <https://www.country-cousins.co.uk/post/how-can-elderly-people-stay-active-at-home>



Picture Credit: "Two Men Listening" by .hd. is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Learning several new things at once increases cognitive abilities in older adults. Giving older people lessons on photography, painting and how to use iPads could make their brains up to 30 years younger in just six weeks, a study claims, according to a posting by Dianne Apen-Sadler for MAILONLINE, [here](#).

Dr Rachel Wu, an assistant professor of psychology from California University, said the elderly should soak up knowledge as a child does. The claims from a detailed study are staggering:

- After six weeks, **those in 80s increased cognitive abilities to those seen in 50s.**
- Course workload saw a group take on three new skills including language lessons, photography, music composition, acting painting or using an iPad. **Taking on up three new tasks at the same time** boosts mental power, wards off memory loss and confusion as well as protecting against Alzheimer's disease, scientists have found.
- The course workload would be similar to that of an undergraduate and adds to growing evidence that **dementia is avoidable through lifestyle changes.**
- But, importantly, 'Brain Training' with crosswords or sudoku puzzles actually **had no noticeable benefit on thinking ability**, said the researchers.

The study published last year in *The Journals of Gerontology, Series B: Psychological Sciences*, involved 58 - 86-year olds who **simultaneously took three to five classes for three months.**

"IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO LEARN – IF YOU GO ABOUT IT IN THE RIGHT WAY". This is what David Robson wrote on 28th August 2017 on BBC Future - click [here](#) to read the full article, but an extract is as follows:

"If you ever fear that you are already too old to learn a new skill, remember Priscilla Sitienei, a midwife from Ndalat in rural Kenya. Having grown up without free primary school education, she had never learnt to read or write.

"As she approached her twilight years, however, she wanted to note down her experiences and knowledge to pass down to the next generation. And so, she started to attend lessons at the local school – **along with six of her great-great-grandchildren. She was 90 at the time.**

"We are often told that "you can't teach an old dog new tricks" – that the grizzled adult brain simply can't absorb as much information as an impressionable young child's. Many people would assume that you simply couldn't pick up a complex skill like reading or writing, at the age of 90, after a lifetime of being illiterate.

"The latest studies from psychology and neuroscience show that these extraordinary achievements need not be the exception. Although you may face some extra difficulties at 30, 50 – or 90 – your brain still has an astonishing ability to learn and master many new skills, whatever your age. And the effort to master a new discipline may be more than repaid in maintaining and enhancing your overall cognitive health."

Contributed by



Martin Pollins

Pub Talk...

Two blokes were talking in the pub, and one of them said: "Do you remember those two terrible winters we had in the sixties?"

His mate answered: "Yes, '62 and '63, weren't they?"

"No, Mike and Bernie," came the reply.



Picture Credit: "04 - 6.5 Special - Mike & Bernie Winters" by Bradford Timeline is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0

The Priory, Haywards Heath's first Roman Catholic Church

Picture Attribution: See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Former_Priory_of_Our_Lady_of_Good_Counsel,_Haywards_Heath.jpg
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"From every point of view, looked at externally or internally, the chapel is a handsome and substantially built structure."

The description afforded to the chapel at The Priory, Haywards Heath by The Mid Sussex Times on Tuesday 23 June 1891

The building is Grade II listed and was originally built for a community of nuns from Bruges. It was known as the *Priory of Our Lady of Good Counsel*. It was also Haywards Heath's first Roman Catholic Church and was used by the nuns until 1978. The building was then converted into the Priory Bar and Restaurant together with offices with conference facilities and squash courts. More recently, the Bar and Restaurant and other facilities were closed and the building has been converted into several residential units.

The Priory was built in 1890, its architect being Edward Goldie a member of the firm of Messrs Goldie, Child, and Goldie, of London. Its builders were Messrs Goddard and Sons of Farnham and Dorking. A separate church (St Paul's) was established nearby in 1930 and the congregation moved there, whilst the nuns moved to Sayers Common in 1978.

The Sussex Online Parish Clerks website at <http://www.sussex-opc.org/index.php?k=686&t=Church> says:

"The foundation stone was laid on 5th May 1890 by the Rt. Rev. John Butt, Bishop of Southwark and opened by the same on 18th June 1891. The building was consecrated in 1897 by the Cardinal-Archbishop of Westminster. The red brick Gothic building had fittings of oak and the altar space was divided from the south transept (for the use of the public) by a light iron screen. The roof carried a bell turret and on the western gable, is a statue of St Augustine of Hippo (354-430)."

The Mid Sussex Times dated 23rd June 1891, (extracted from a detailed account, [here](#)) records the opening of the Roman Catholic Chapel and the visit of the Bishop of Southwark:

"On Thursday afternoon the Roman Catholic Bishop of Southwark (Dr. Butt) attended at the Priory of our Lady of Good Counsel, Hazelgrove Park, Haywards Heath to open the chapel, the foundation stone of which he laid in May of last year. The chapel is intended for the sisters of the order of St Augustine located at Hazelgrove Park, and to the young lady pupils entrusted to them to educate. The noble edifice just opened is to take the place of a small and inconvenient chapel which has hitherto done service for the sisterhood."

Eyes in the back of their butts...

Farmers in Botswana have long been used to lions and other predators attacking their cows every once in a while. But there might be a simple solution, according to a new study. It's a bit weird, but it can work. It's simple too: paint false eyes on their butts!

"Lions are ambush predators that rely on stalking, and therefore the element of surprise, so being seen by their prey can lead to them abandoning the hunt," said researcher Neil Jordan [in a press release](#).

Read the article by Fermin Koop, by clicking [here](#).

More humour by Mark Twain

Samuel Langhorne Clemens, known by his pen name Mark Twain, was an American writer, humourist, entrepreneur, publisher, and lecturer. He was lauded as the "greatest humourist [the United States] has produced", and William Faulkner called him "the father of American literature."

Picture Credit: "Mark Twain 1835 - 1910" by oneredstf1 is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0



“

Truth is stranger than fiction, but it is because Fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities; Truth isn't.

Do the right thing. It will gratify some people and astonish the rest.

Be good and you will be lonesome.

There are basically two types of people. People who accomplish things, and people who claim to have accomplished things. The first group is less crowded.

Go to Heaven for the climate, Hell for the company.

Man is the only animal that blushes - or needs to.

Be careful about reading health books. You may die of a misprint.

The best way to cheer yourself up is to try to cheer somebody else up.

It is better to keep your mouth closed and let people think you are a fool than to open it and remove all doubt.

The secret of getting ahead is getting started.

Get your facts first, then you can distort them.

All you need in this life is ignorance and confidence, and then success is sure.

”

In days gone by ...

Extract from the Middy, 19th March 1940

Advertisement on page 2

W. HILTON, BUILDER, DECORATOR, PLUMBER, Etc., 137 WESTERN ROAD, HAYWARDS HEATH, begs to announce that although he is now serving with H.M. Forces his Business is being carried on as usual in his absence. ORDERS AND ENQUIRIES ARE SOLICITED.

CUCKFIELD WOMEN'S INSTITUTE. A HAPPY 21st BIRTHDAY PARTY.

It was perhaps only fitting that after several months' absence due to war conditions, members of the Cuckfield Women's Institute should celebrate their 21st birthday party in their original home the Queen's Hall on Wednesday. The occasion proved memorable for Miss Olive Turner, the Institute's esteemed President, who wished the Institute very many happy returns of the day and remarked how pleased she was to see such a large attendance. (Applause). She regarded it a great honour to be their President such time. She had always loved the Institute, and Miss Reid and herself were instrumental in its formation. The speaker was indeed thankful that the Institute had successfully weathered both storms and difficulties. Thanks were due to the members for their loyal co-operation through the years. Quite a dozen hands were lifted when Miss Turner questioned how many members present had been connected with the Institute since its formation. The President added it was nice to think there were many original members. (Applause). She liked to feel that the Institute had been responsible for assisting strangers in the town to make fellowships which they might not have otherwise made. The Institute was formed four months after the Great War. They were now facing war again, and she knew the Institute would not fail its country in any way. (Applause)...

WIRELESS FOR THE BLIND FUND.

During the ten years since its inception to the end of last October, nearly £166,000 had been collected for the British for the Blind Fund. Of this sum, £151,500 was expended on sets and accessories for blind listeners, and there was a balance of nearly £2,000 in hand. All sets provided by the Fund, says the annual report, are of the modern loudspeaker type. Their distribution is carried out by local welfare agencies.

HAYWARDS HEATH WEEKLY MARKET.

Messrs. T. Bannister and Co.'s market at Haywards Heath last Tuesday comprised 267 fat pigs. 141 fat sheep, 78 fat cattle. calves which were dealt with under the Government control scheme, 99 store pigs, 20 Southdown store lambs, suckler calves, dairy cows and heifers, 490 live and dead poultry, 430 dead rabbits, day-old chicks, fertile geese eggs, 1,750 dozen eggs etc. Shuts made up to 38s per head. Suckler calves were in keen demand, fetching up to 75s. A short entry of dead poultry was very dear, securing up 9s 6d per head and 1s 11p per lb. Dead rabbits were in keen demand, getting up 22s per dozen. Live poultry sold well, obtaining up to hens 7s 6d, cockerels 6s 9d, pullets 5s 6d and geese 6s per head. Eggs were in considerable demand, realizing up to specials 2s 4d, standards 2s 2½d and mediums 2s per dozen. Chicks got up to 7s per dozen and fertile geese eggs 7d each. (see Footnote below)

Advertisement on page 6

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Footnote

Thomas Bannister was born in Cuckfield in 1842 and died 70 years later in Seaford. The Cattle Market in Haywards Heath that bore his name lasted for over 120 years. Thomas Bannister's Market (where Sainsbury's now stands) is extremely important in Haywards Heath history. He was well known in the agricultural world in Sussex and excelled as an auctioneer and valuer, his chosen profession. On leaving school he was articled to the Mr. John Agate, an agricultural valuer, and when he started business on his own account, he speedily gained an excellent reputation.

In 1868, Bannister realised the possibilities of a cattle auction mart at Haywards Heath, and although it started in a small way, the market became one of the most important in Sussex, with sales starting monthly, then fortnightly and finally, weekly.

Bannister was a most successful breeder of pedigree Sussex cattle and large black pigs. For over forty years he acted as agent for the Sergison estate, and most building land sales in Haywards Heath took place through him.

Bannister's Cattle Market was built in 1859 and was the 12th largest in the UK at one point. This was closed to make way for a Sainsbury's supermarket in 1989.

Chemistry facts to surprise you

Excerpted from:

<https://www.zmescience.com/science/chemistry/amazing-chemistry-facts/>

I spotted this the other day because it looked interesting. Maybe you'll find these quick chemistry facts and tidbits interesting too. They are only a selection from the link given above:

DNA is a flame retardant



Picture Credit: [Cropped to fit] "The flame retardant witches of Newick" by Chain of Voves is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#)

(Don't try this at home) DNA, also known as the blueprint for life, contains all the biological instructions that make each species unique. The molecule of life is also surprisingly sturdy, being considered a natural flame retardant and suppressant. Its flame-retardant properties are due to DNA's chemical structure — when heated, the phosphate-containing backbone produces phosphoric acid, which chemically removes water, leaving behind a flame-resistant, carbon-rich residue.

Lightning strikes produce Ozone, hence the characteristic smell after lightning storms

Ozone, the triple oxygen molecule that acts as a protective stratospheric blanket against ultraviolet rays, is created in nature by lightning. When it strikes, the lightning cracks oxygen molecules in the atmosphere into radicals which reform into ozone. The smell of ozone is very sharp, often described as similar to that of chlorine.

Water expands when freezes, unlike other substances

Usually, when something is cold, it shrinks. That's because temperature describes atomic vibration — the more vibration, the more space it takes, hence expansion. Water is an exception. Even though it vibrates less when it's frozen, the ice occupies more volume. That's due to the strange shape of the water molecule.

Glass is actually a liquid, it just flows very, very slowly

Being neither liquid, nor solid, explaining glass is a lot harder than some might think. In a glass, molecules still flow, but at a very low rate that it's barely perceptible. As such, it's not enough to class it as a liquid, but neither as a solid. Instead, chemists classify glass as amorphous solids— a state somewhere between those two states of matter.

t try thi

If you pour a handful of salt into a glass of water, the water level will go down

When you step into a bath, the water level will immediately go up, per Archimedes' law. But when you add a volume of sodium chloride (salt) to a volume of water, the overall volume actually decreases by up to 2%. The net reduction in observed volume is due to solvent molecules which become more ordered in the vicinity of dissolved ions.

Air becomes liquid at -190°C

Commonly, matter appears in one of the four states: solid, liquid, gas and plasma. The air we all breathe is gaseous but like any kind of matter, it can change its state when subjected to certain temperature and pressure. Air is a mixture of nitrogen, oxygen, and other gases. The gas can be liquefied by compression and cooling to extremely low temperatures — under normal atmospheric pressure, air has to be cooled to -200°C and under high pressure (typically 200 atmospheres) to -141°C to convert into liquid. Liquid air is used commercially for freezing other substances and especially as an intermediate step in the production of nitrogen, oxygen, and argon and the other inert gases. There's a video on this at: https://youtu.be/qgqT9_sEHNE

Which face mask or covering is best to wear?

Source and Copyright © credit:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/health-55877540>

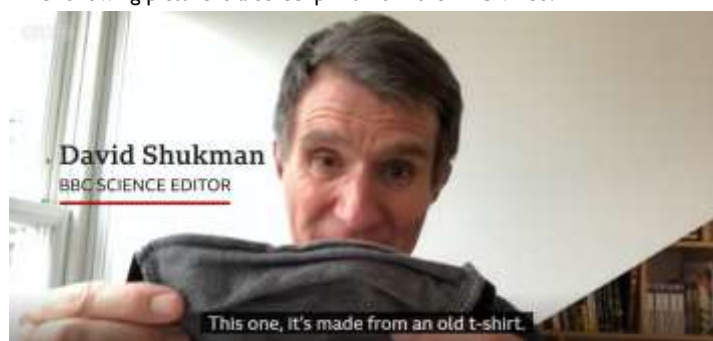
There's a lot of choice about which type of face covering to wear — and in some countries the advice about which one to wear is changing, as we learn more about how the virus spreads. Dr Anthony Fauci, the top US infectious diseases expert, recently advocated wearing two masks.

But does it matter what mask you wear? The BBC's Science Editor David Shukman explains the difference between a fabric mask, surgical mask and an N95 - or whether we should double mask.

See video at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/health-55877540>

Produced by: Bella McShane, Ameer Ahmed and Parveen Virdi.

The following picture is a screenprint from the BBC video.



Are paper surgical single-use masks better or is a cloth mask OK?, asks Hannah Devlin, Science correspondent in the Guardian ([here](#)). The evidence on any mask use, outside of surgical masks, is still emerging: there appears to be some benefit, but the exact parameters of which masks are the best and the extent to which they protect the wearer or those around them are still being figured out. A tighter fitting around the face is probably better, but [the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) suggests any covering](#), including a bandana, is better than none.

The man who almost conquered the world

Picture Credit: "Genghis Khan: The Exhibition" by William Cho is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0



As a boy, he was rejected by his clan yet as an adult he clawed his way to power, coming to believe he was destined to rule the world. And he all but succeeded, so writes Spencer Day in History today (click [here](#)), who says:

In the early 13th century, Wanyan Yongji, mighty emperor of the Jin, sent a message to an upstart warlord who had had the temerity to invade his territory. "Our empire is as vast as the sea," it read. "Yours is but a handful of sand. How can we fear you?" It was a bold statement, but one that was, on the face of it at least, fully justified. For the Jin dynasty of northern China was perhaps the most powerful polity on the face of the Earth at the time. The Jin had unimaginable wealth, gunpowder and an enormous army equipped with state-of-the-art weaponry, such as catapults. What's more, they could call upon the protection of one of the foremost engineering feats of all time, the Great Wall of China. So why should they be concerned about a nomad army riding roughshod over their land? But there were a couple of problems.

The Jin weren't facing any old bunch of nomads, and the man commanding them wasn't any old leader. He was Genghis Khan.

Who was Genghis Khan?

Source: Wikipedia – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genghis_Khan

Genghis Khan (born Temüjin Borjigin) c. 1155 – c. 1162 to 18th August 1227), also named officially Genghis Huangdi, was the founder and first Great Khan and Emperor of the Mongol Empire. It became the largest contiguous empire in history after his death. He came to power by uniting many of the nomadic tribes of Northeast Asia. After founding the Empire and being proclaimed Genghis Khan (meaning 'Universal, oceanic, and firm/strong ruler and lord'), he launched the Mongol invasions that conquered most of Eurasia, reaching as far west as Poland and the Levant in the Middle East.

Campaigns initiated in his lifetime include those against the Qara Khitai, Khwarezmia, and the Western Xia and Jin dynasties, and raids into Medieval Georgia, the Kievan Rus', and Volga Bulgaria.

These campaigns were often accompanied by large-scale massacres of the civilian populations. Because of this brutality, which left millions of humans dead in his pursuit of power, Genghis Khan is considered by many to have been a brutal ruler. By the end of his life, the Mongol Empire occupied a substantial portion of Central Asia and China. Due to his exceptional military successes, Genghis Khan is often considered to be the greatest conqueror of all time.

Beyond his military accomplishments, Genghis Khan also advanced the Mongol Empire in other ways. He decreed the adoption of the Uyghur script as the Mongol Empire's writing system. He also practised meritocracy and encouraged religious tolerance in the Mongol Empire, unifying the nomadic tribes of Northeast Asia. Present-day Mongolians regard him as the founding father of Mongolia. He is also credited with bringing the Silk Road under one cohesive political environment. This brought relatively easy communication and trade between Northeast Asia, Muslim Southwest Asia, and Christian Europe, expanding the cultural horizons of all three areas.

The Secret History of the Mongols

Genghis Khan's birth name was *Temüjin*, a word derived from the Mongol word *temür* meaning "of iron" and *jin* denoting agency, and together mean *Temüjin* meaning "blacksmith".

The Secret History of the Mongols reports that *Temüjin* was born grasping a blood clot in his fist, a traditional sign that he was destined to become a great leader. *The Secret History* is regarded as the single most significant native Mongolian account of Genghis Khan. Linguistically, it provides the richest source of pre-classical Mongolian and Middle Mongolian. The Secret History is regarded as a piece of classic literature in both Mongolia and the rest of the world.

You can read about The Secret History in the book titled:

The Secret History of the Mongols: The Life and Times of Chinggis Khan (Note the spelling of Genghis) available at Amazon at:

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Secret-History-Mongols-Times-Chinggis/dp/0415515262/>

Why it ended...

In 1206, Genghis Khan, a fierce tribal chieftain from northern Mongolia, began to take over the world. His ruthless tactics and loyal horde swept across Asia, and one territory after another fell under the overwhelming force of the Mongol Empire, which would eventually stretch from the eastern shores of China. A series of successful forays in Hungary and Poland made even Europe seem within reach of conquering. By the year 1240, my paternal grandfather's home city, Kiev (now capital of modern-day Ukraine), had been sacked. But this unstoppable wave of victories in Europe suddenly ended. Almost as soon as the Mongols set their sights set on Austria, they abruptly returned to Asia. You need to go to <https://www.sciencealert.com/scientists-finally-know-what-stopped-mongol-hordes-from-conquering-europe> to find out why. It's very interesting indeed...

Contributed by



Martin Pollins

The Mysterious Burial at Sutton Hoo: was it King Raedwald?

Excerpted from:

• <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/sutton-hoo> • https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sutton_Hoo
 • <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/01/23/saxon-ship-inspired-netflix-film-dig-sail-restorers-rebuild/> • <https://www.britannica.com/place/Sutton-Hoo>
 • <https://www.historyextra.com/period/anglo-saxon/sutton-hoo-what-where-burial-site-visit-discovery/> • <https://www.historyextra.com/period/anglo-saxon/sutton-hoo-discovery-what-found-treasures-ship-importance/>
 • <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/magazine/2017/01-02/sutton-hoo-england-anglo-saxon-treasure-ship/> • <https://www.history.co.uk/article/sutton-hoo-discovering-the-face-of-history> • <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2021/jan/31/the-dig-review-sutton-hoo-carey-mulligan-ralph-fiennes>



Sutton Hoo near Woodbridge, in Suffolk, England, is the site of two early medieval cemeteries that date from the 6th to 7th centuries. Archaeologists have been excavating the area since 1939. The internment of a ship at Sutton Hoo represents the most impressive medieval grave to be discovered in Europe. The excavation, often referred to as *the Great Ship Burial* took place in 1939, on the eve of hostilities in the Second World War.

Picture Credit: "File:Original Sutton Hoo Helmet.jpg" is licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0

Sometime around 1,400 years ago, a great ship was hauled up from the East Anglian coast to Sutton Hoo, the site of an Anglo-Saxon burial ground. Here, the ship became the last resting place of a king or a great warrior. This unknown figure was buried with his vast treasure, which lay undisturbed until the site was excavated.

Amateur archaeologist Basil Brown famously made the discovery of a lifetime back in 1939, when he brushed away the Suffolk soil and revealed the richest intact early medieval grave in Europe. More than a grave, it was a spectacular funerary monument on an epic scale: a 27m (88.6ft) long ship with a burial chamber full of dazzling riches. As Basil and a team of archaeologists dug deeper, they unearthed fine feasting vessels, deluxe hanging bowls, silverware from distant Byzantium, luxurious textiles, gold dress accessories set with Sri Lankan garnets and the iconic helmet with human mask.

The archaeologists and landowner Edith Pretty were dumbfounded. This was clearly the grave of an important person – someone meant to be remembered. But who was it? And what can the Sutton Hoo excavation tell us about Anglo-Saxon society?

Who was buried at Sutton Hoo, and why?

Archaeologists and historians have been guessing ever since the site was uncovered. The most likely theory would seem to name the deceased as King Raedwald, an Anglo-Saxon leader and the son of Tytila of East Anglia and a member of the Wuffingas dynasty, who were the first kings of the East Angles. After triumphing over Northumberland, he fell out with his people after erecting an altar for Jesus Christ alongside one for the 'old gods'.

The Book

The story of what was found at Sutton Hoo was captured by John Preston in his [historical novel](#) *The Dig*, first published in May 2007. The book's dust jacket describes it as "a brilliantly realised account of the most famous archaeological dig in Britain in modern times".

The events start in the summer of 1937, at a town fete in Woodbridge in Suffolk. A local woman, a widow, named Edith Pretty got chatting with a local historian named Vincent Redstone. The conversation turned to her property, Sutton Hoo, a short distance away. Specifically, she mentioned some interesting looking mounds on the estate. Might they conceal something more than mere earth, Mrs Pretty wondered? One thing led to another. Redstone contacted his colleagues about Sutton Hoo and a self-taught Suffolk archaeologist and astronomer called Basil Brown was eventually commissioned to start delving into the estate.

The Ship and its Treasures

The burial, one of the richest Germanic burials found in Europe, contained a ship fully equipped for the life hereafter (but with no body). It threw light on the wealth and contacts of early Anglo-Saxon kings; its discovery, was unusual because ship burial was rare in England.

The largest Anglo-Saxon ship burial ever discovered contained artifacts of a quality and quantity never seen before. The collection of 263 objects included weapons, silver cutlery, gold buckles, coins, and a distinctive full-face helmet, of a kind never before recovered in Britain. Examining the artifacts, they concluded that the settlement was not Viking, as was first assumed, but Anglo-Saxon.

The Sutton Hoo longship, now one of Britain's greatest archaeological treasures, is being carefully recreated and brought back to life in a Suffolk shed after it was buried 1,400 years ago.

The Film



The Dig is a 2021 British drama film directed by Simon Stone, based on the 2007 novel of the same name by John Preston: in 1939, archaeologist Basil Brown (Ralph Fiennes) arrives in Woodbridge, Suffolk, at the behest of landowner Edith Pretty (Carey Mulligan). With the help of his apprentices Peggy (Lily James) and Stuart (Johnny Flynn), Brown searches the property for any significant finds until he stumbles upon the remains of a Viking burial site.

News of their find soon led to scholars from The British Museum, led by Charles Phillips (Ken Stott), trying to take over the site.

Naming the site Sutton Hoo, Brown's discovery challenges the conceptions of British history to their very core, making significant strides in the field of archaeology in the process.

Some of the geographical context shots were filmed on the Suffolk coast near the burial site at Sutton Hoo, but most of the film was made in Shackleton, Surrey.

The film, shown on Netflix on 30th January 2021, is well worth watching, if you subscribe to that service. A trailer (see a screenshot above) is available at:

<https://youtu.be/IJQz0rkNajo>

Franklin's Lost Expedition

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franklin's_Lost_Expedition
 • <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2017/04/franklin-expedition-ship-watson-ice-ghosts/>
 • <https://www.history.com/news/franklin-expedition-mystery-northwest-passage>
 • <https://www.whitehousehistory.org/photos/treasures-of-the-white-house-resolute-desk>
 • <https://www.christies.com/features/The-story-of-HMS-Resolute-11188-7.aspx>
 • https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Resolute_desk



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The Franklin Expedition, or more precisely, *Franklin's Lost Expedition* holds great interest and mystery. What really happened to the 129 men aboard HMS Terror and HMS Erebus as they attempted to explore the unknown territory of the Northwest Passage? Their fate is one of the enduring mysteries of the age of exploration. There are many theories and hypotheses about what might have taken place, but still nobody yet knows what really happened.

Picture Credit: "Sir John Franklin, explorateur de l'Arctique / Sir John Franklin, the Arctic Explorer" by BiblioArchives / LibraryArchives is

Franklin's lost (and last) expedition was a British voyage of Arctic exploration. It was led by Captain Sir John Franklin and departed from the River Thames, England in 1845 aboard two ships - HMS Erebus and HMS Terror. It was Franklin's fourth Arctic expedition and his third as commander. Franklin had three attempts to find the Northwest Passage. His final voyage in 1845 ended in tragedy for him and his men, becoming the worst disaster in the history of British polar exploration. Yet, the plan was simple: to traverse the last unnavigated sections of the Northwest Passage through Canada's ice-strewn Arctic inlets to find the long-sought pathway from Atlantic to Pacific. But things obviously did not work out as planned.

Some two months after setting sail, the *Erebus* and *Terror* were spotted in Baffin Bay, just east of the Northwest Passage's entrance. Then, the expedition met with disaster after both ships and their crews, a total of 129 officers and men, became icebound in Victoria Strait near King William Island, in what is today the Canadian territory of Nunavut. After being icebound for more than a year, both ships were abandoned in April 1848, by which point Franklin and nearly two dozen others had died. The survivors, led by Franklin's deputy Francis Crozier and *Erebus'* captain James Fitzjames, set out for the Canadian mainland, but they were never seen again.

Finding the lost ships

Pressed by Franklin's wife and others, the Admiralty launched a search for the missing expedition in 1848. In the many subsequent searches in the decades afterward, several relics from the expedition were uncovered, including the remains of two men that were returned to Britain. A series of scientific studies in modern times suggested that the men of the expedition did not all die quickly. Hypothermia, starvation, lead poisoning or zinc deficiency and diseases including scurvy, along with general exposure to a hostile environment whilst lacking adequate clothing and nutrition, killed everyone on the expedition in the years following its last sighting by Europeans in 1845. Cut marks on some of the bones recovered during these studies also seem to support allegations of cannibalism reported by Franklin searcher John Rae in 1854.

In 2014, a Canadian search team led by Parks Canada equipped with the latest marine archaeological equipment located the wreck of HMS Erebus in the eastern portion of Queen Maud Gulf. Two years later, the Arctic Research Foundation found the wreck of HMS Terror south of King William Island. Research and dive expeditions at the wreck sites, now protected as a combined National Historic Site, are currently ongoing but it could take up to 10 years to reach completion as the environment is as hostile as they come.

Despite the expedition's infamous status, it did explore the vicinity of what was ultimately one of many Northwest Passages to be discovered. Robert McClure led one of many expeditions to investigate the fate of Franklin's voyage, and finally ascertained an ice-bound route that connected the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean and made it out alive. This trip was similarly beset by immense challenges and controversies. In 1906 Roald Amundsen traversed the passage on the *Gjøa* (Amundsen was the first explorer to transit the Northwest Passage, the first to reach the South Pole (in 1911), and the first to fly over the North Pole in an airship (in 1926)).

A Series of Clues to the Fate of the Franklin Expedition

The History.com website ([here](#)) records:

'Rescue expeditions turned up tantalizing clues: A [trio of graves](#) at one site. A [note at another site](#), dated April 1848 and indicating that Franklin and 23 others were dead, the ships had been trapped in the ice for 18 months, and the survivors were abandoning ship and striking out across land. Other clues trickled in: An abandoned sled, with two skeletons and numerous personal effects. Letters from one of the men, some written phonetically and some backward and [few fully deciphered](#). Stories from local Inuit tell of 'white men who had slowly perished'; of ships that had been caught in, and then disappeared beneath, the ice.'

The Inuit

The Inuit (sometime previously known as Eskimos) live throughout most of Northern Canada in the territory of Nunavut, Nunavik in the northern third of Quebec, Nunatsiavut and NunatuKavut in Labrador and in various parts of the Northwest Territories, particularly around the Arctic Ocean, in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region.

The Resolute Desk

The Resolute Desk (aka the Hayes Desk) is a 19th century desk used by several presidents of the United States in the White House Oval Office. It was a gift from Queen Victoria to President Rutherford B. Hayes in 1880 and was built from the oak timbers of the British Arctic exploration ship HMS Resolute. The desk has been modified twice. Franklin Roosevelt requested the addition of a door with the presidential seal to conceal his leg braces and a safe but it was not installed until 1945, after his death. A two-inch tall plinth was added to the desk in 1961 and replaced in 1986.

You might be wondering what this has to do with Franklin's Expedition. HMS Resolute was abandoned in Melville Sound in 1854 while searching for Sir John Franklin and his lost expedition. The Resolute was found in 1855 floating in Davis Strait by George Henry, an American whaling ship. It was repaired and returned to England as goodwill gift from the United States. After serving in the British Navy for a further 23 years as a supply vessel, the ship was decommissioned in 1879 and subsequently broken up in Chatham Dockyard in Chatham, England. A competition was held to design and build a piece of furniture that Queen Victoria could gift to the American president, built from the timbers of Resolute. Morant, Boyd, & Blanford won this contest and this desk was constructed shortly afterwards. It has been used by every president since Hayes during their period in office, except for Presidents Johnson, Nixon, and Ford.

Recommended Reading

Written by Paul Watson, winner of the Pulitzer Prize, *Ice Ghosts, the Epic Hunt for the Lost Franklin Expedition*, weaves together the epic story of the Lost Franklin Expedition of 1845. Paul Watson was on the icebreaker that led the discovery expedition and his book tells a fast-paced historical adventure story. The book is available at Amazon, [here](#).

Footnote

Michael Smith, who previously spoke to us at the Lindfield golf club about Sir Ernest Shackleton, delivered a Zoom talk on "*The Franklin Expedition*" on 10th February 2021. It was extremely interesting and well presented with a superb array of graphics and pictures. Michael has undertaken several such talks during the Covid-19 lockdowns. He makes regular public appearances at museums, literary festivals and other groups and schools to give illustrated talks about his books and the history of Polar exploration.

Our thanks go to Eric Bassett for selecting the speaker and to Otto Somodi for organising the Zoom technology.

Chromebook – your next computer?

When you are considering buying a new computer it's always difficult to know which one to buy. This is even more so today than ever before because you have more of a choice. A computer typically lasts for about six years, so making the right decision is important. If you need a computer to browse the internet, or communicate by email, do not spend £thousands when for a few £hundred you can get a better, simpler solution.

Operating System

Most people have heard about Microsoft computers (using the Windows operating system) or Apple computers (using the Mac operating system). But there is another option. Its name is a Chromebook computer and it uses the Chrome operating system.

Chromebooks

A Chromebook is a laptop or tablet running the Linux-based Chrome OS as its operating system. Chromebooks are primarily used to perform a variety of tasks using the Google Chrome browser, with most applications and data (your files) sitting safely in the cloud rather than on the computer itself. All Chromebooks released since late 2017 can also run Android apps. Some Chromebooks can also run Linux apps.

Chromebooks are still thought of by many as just a web browser running on low powered hardware. That is not true as they have evolved to be so much more than that. Many Chromebooks can run android apps now, and more and more services are available via the web browser.

The **Chromebook** is the most common Chrome OS computer and it is a laptop. However, you can also buy a **Chromebox**.



Picture Credit: "Acer Chromebook C720" by Stratageme.com is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

The Chromebox is exactly the same as a Chromebook. It uses the same operating system and performs just like a Chromebook. The only difference is a Chromebox is a desktop computer. With a Chromebox you will need to buy a separate mouse, keyboard and monitor. The benefit of buying a Chromebox is that you're not limited to the type of display monitor - you can buy any monitor that meets your needs whether that's a 19-inch monitor or 32-inch monitor.

Cannot live without Microsoft Office?

Many people buy Windows laptops because they want to run Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Microsoft teams and Skype. Chromebooks will work with these but not Access or Publisher. But ask yourself: do you really need these applications? Google Docs, Sheets and Slides can create documents that do most of what you want them to do and they can run on any computer with a modern web browser. You can even save your files from Google in Microsoft Office formats.

If you have to use Microsoft Office, there are a couple of options with a Chromebook. You can buy an Office 365 subscription with the money you saved from not buying a Windows or Mac laptop and access Microsoft Office Online. If you purchased a Chromebook that also runs Android apps you can simply download the office Android apps for nothing.

Summary

Did you know that:

- The Chrome Operating System (OS) is regarded as being more stable than Windows 10.
- Chromebooks tend to have smaller screens than many Windows and Apple laptops, but they also weigh a lot less. All Chromebooks are lightweight and ultra-portable often weighing in at under 3lbs.
- When you are using Chrome OS, even if your Chromebook bursts into flames, you lose none of your files. They are safely stored for you in the cloud ready to be accessed next time you go online.
- Chromebooks can run far more than just Chrome OS.
- A Chromebook lets you draft, save, and edit your emails without internet access, so that when you are connected to Wi-Fi all you must do is hit send.
- Chromebooks are designed to rely on Wi-Fi to access the Internet, which means that many apps simply will not work if you're out of Wi-Fi range. But there are more than 200 offline Chrome applications that can work without Internet connectivity, including Gmail, Pocket and Google Drive, and many of the Android apps will also work offline.
- Most Chromebooks have spill-resistant keyboards and extra tight hinges – they can survive minor drops and other unplanned disasters.
- If it is just a barebones Chromebook you are after, you can't get much better than the entry-level version which costs a little over £200. For a few hundred £s more, you can get one with a touch screen.
- With Chromebooks, you can expect to get six hours or more on a single charge, as they use less power than Windows laptops.
- You do not have to download third-party virus software. That is because they run Chrome OS, which automatically downloads new virus security patches every six weeks. The Chromebook is considered one of the safest computers you can buy today.
- Chromebooks do not come with much storage space (the hard disk is a fraction of the size of a Windows or Apple computer. The reason is simple: you do not need much storage space if most of what you are accessing is in the cloud.
- Many Chromebooks now have built-in camera and speakers - so they work fine with Zoom.

Reasons not to buy a Chromebook

- If you are deep in the Apple ecosystem, or you are a power user and rely heavily on Microsoft Office and cannot do without it, you should stick to a MacBook or Windows laptop.
- If you move about a lot and aren't going to be in places with a stable Wi-Fi connection to the Internet, or your home Wi-Fi isn't all that great or reliable, then your Chromebook will be a waste of money.
- If you want to play games on your Chromebook, forget it.
- Chromebook simply are not powerful enough to deal with audio or video projects.
- If you are looking for a computer that will be able to play CDs or DVDs then a Chromebook is also not for you.
- If you are printing on a Chromebook, and want to use Google Cloud Print, it can be a hassle for most users. However, most Chromebooks will allow direct printing to a USB compatible printer as well.
- Chromebook have been known to have problems accessing older .exe programs. If any programs are not on the cloud, this could be a potential issue for you.
- Many Chromebooks have only 1 USB C, so you may have to get an external USB dock.
- If you print directly to a USB printer and you prefer to use a mouse rather than the touch pad, you will need a small USB hub as most Chromebooks only have a single USB slot.

Last words

You should view the Chromebook as a **tablet** and not as a **laptop**.

Fond Memories

Sadly, we have lost two of our members this year.

Colleague, friend and Probus member, **Derek Brian Hopkins**, died on 11th January at age 90 and his funeral was held in Burnley on 16th January 2021.

Derek was born on 8th December 1930 and he joined the RAF in 1952 and served 18 years, seeing some active service in the bomber squadron. He met his wife, Mella, at a Christmas Ball in the Officer's mess and after being introduced they danced all night and were married for over 60 very happy years.

On leaving the RAF, Derek moved into civilian flying roles, becoming Senior Captain for Tradewinds Airways visiting many places in Africa and the Far East. When he was forced to give up flying due to a surprise illness, Derek ran a chauffeur-driven limousine company for many years, driving the rich and famous whenever he was required.



Derek joined the Rotary Club of Cuckfield and Lindfield in 1990 and he wrote the Club's Newsletter for 13 years. He was the Club President in 1998-99 and during that year, the Club

raised over £15,000 for local and International charities. Derek was awarded the Paul Harris Fellowship in 2008 in recognition of his outstanding service, one of the highest awards available in the Rotary Organisation.

In 2002, Derek published his autobiography which many Rotary and Probus members were able to buy.

Derek was not a man for changing times and when Rotary found it necessary to adapt to new parameters, including the introduction of lady members, he decided to resign.

However, his public-spirited interest in the local community was not lost because he was invited to join the Probus Club of Haywards Heath & District in 2009.

Derek thoroughly enjoyed Probus and loved telling stories and would tell them at many meetings together with providing the Probus members with a monthly joke sheet.

He thought that Probus stood for Prostrate Removed Other Bits Under Scrutiny!

Derek loved company and relished his lunch meetings and was known to enjoy his food whether it be at a good restaurant or just having a full English breakfast.



Derek was a very special person and a true "old school" gentleman. We shall miss him.

Written by Mike Harper

Also, we regret to report that **Michael Woodroffe Chester** (born 26th June 1932) died peacefully on 2nd February 2021.



Mike Chester was inducted into Probus by President Frank Legg in 1997, a vintage year, as John Butler and Francis Page were also inducted at that time by Frank.

Mike was a London Solicitor in Stones Porter. His father was also a solicitor with his own firm. When his father retired, Mike became a partner in Stones Porter, but this was

after his education at Charterhouse followed by National Service in the King's Africa African Rifles serving in Kenya and Malaya with Dai Curtis! Both Mike and Dai also spoke Swahili; part of the job for a commissioned officer in the regiment and Mike then went to Magdalene College Cambridge.

Although never on the rowdy part of the lunch table he was quietly influential becoming a committee member followed in 2008 as President, taking over from Roy Page (later Francis Page – don't ask).

Shortly after I joined Probus I sat next to Mike at lunch and we discovered that, although we had not corresponded, I dealt with another of his firm's partners for several years, so the name Stones Porter was not unfamiliar to me. Mike's contacts with my company were somewhat above my paygrade.

He commuted to London for almost all of his working life, but this was not without its benefits for he met this pretty girl on Haywards Heath Station and being charming and witty the rest is history as they say. He and Ann-Marie were married in St Wilfrid's Church in 1972 where he was a regular worshipper, together with Ann-Marie, for 47 years. He loved travelling and had visited most countries in the world.

Sadly, Mike became ill at the start of 2019 and had to move into a nursing home where in the end the Coronavirus conveyed him to his Maker on 2nd February.



In recognition of his years of service to the Haywards Heath & District Probus Club, Mike was awarded Life membership last year.

Again, we shall miss him, a great loss to our Club.

Written by Robin Harrison

Finish with a smile, with Dilbert's help



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