

The Carrick Argus

Supporting Carrick u3a – sharing members' interests and news

Issue no 87

March 2024



The Goose Walk

by Chris Rowlands

An entry for the 2023 Photography competition

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Editorial

It is often said that Spring is perhaps the best time to be in Cornwall. This year it was declared on 16th February, two weeks earlier than last year. The official announcement is based on the flowering of Cornish magnolias. At six of the chosen gardens, at least 50 blooms on the magnolia campbellii tree have to be seen, photographed and the proof is then collated by the project jointly run by the Nare Hotel and the Great Gardens of Cornwall. The gardens involved are Trewidden, Caerhays, Trebah, Trewithen, The Lost Gardens of Heligan and Tregothnan. So, if you haven't already been, now is the time to go to see them at their best.

It was good to see a packed Garden Room at the Princess Pavilion on 17th February for a performance by the Carrick Singers. They entertained the audience for an hour with a wide repertoire. June Caddy and their director Richard Bailey did a great job in promoting Carrick u3a in what is perhaps one of the best ways of publicising our organisation.

As you will have seen from the newsletter, there will be vacancies on the committee at the next AGM. If you feel you could help in any way, please get in touch. With over 600 members, Carrick does not run itself and if we wish to continue to thrive, we need to not have to rely on just a few people. Nomination forms are in the March newsletter and a brief resumé with a photo can be included in the April edition.

Our Facebook page continues to accrue followers, we now have over 300 and it forms another way of reaching out to potential new members. If anyone has photographs of our activities that would be suitable, please send them to vicechair@u3acarrick.org.uk. Any people included in the photographs should be asked for their permission for these to be shared. Thank you.

Important dates for your diary

Quiz night Saturday 16th March at 7pm at **Kea Community Centre**. £7 per entry. Team names and pasty orders to vicechair@u3acarrick.org.uk

AGM Wednesday 10th April, 2pm for a 2.30pm start at the **Perranwell Centre**

Tony Herring Memorial Lecture Thursday 17th October, 10am for a 10.30 start, Jason Semmens on **Witchcraft and Folklore in Cornwall** from medieval times to the 20th century.

Sue Hutt
Editor

Six Remarkable Female Explorers

Jeanne Baret (1740-1807)

Jeanne was the first woman to complete a circumnavigation of the world. She joined the naturalist Philibert Commerson aboard an expedition ship and for three years from 1766, travelled among the crew of 300, disguised as a boy (see right) until eventually discovered. When she returned to France, the navy paid tribute to her excellent botany work by awarding her a pension of 200 livres a year.

*Portrait of Jeanne Barret, 1806 by Cristoforo Dall' Acqua
Courtesy of Wikipedia.com*



Ida Pfeiffer (1797-1858)



Courtesy of Wikipedia

Born in Vienna, as a child Ida preferred boys' clothing, enjoyed sports and received the same education as her brothers. She married and had two children before commencing her extensive travels. Between 1846 and 1855 she journeyed an estimated 32,000 km by land and 240,000 km by sea. She travelled through Southeast Asia, the Americas, the Middle East and Africa, including two trips around the world. During her travels, sometimes unaccompanied, she collected plants, insects, marine life and mineral specimens. Despite her overwhelming bravery and success, she was denied recognition by the Royal Geographical Society of London because of her gender.

Portrait of Ida Laura Reyer-Pfeiffer by Franz Hanfstaengl

Isabella Bird (1831-1904)

Born in Yorkshire and frail through her childhood, she nevertheless travelled to America, Australia, Hawaii, India, Kurdistan, the Persian Gulf, Iran, Tibet, Malaysia, Korea, Japan and China. She climbed mountains, trekked volcanoes and rode on horseback across thousands of miles. Her last trip was to Morocco, at the age of 72. She became a prolific author, all illustrated with her own photography. In 1892 Isabella Bird was the first female to be inducted into the Royal Geographic Society in honour of her contributions to travel literature.



Annie Smith Peck (1850-1935)



Annie became one of the greatest mountaineers of the 19th century. But despite setting mountain climbing records, she suffered repeated criticism for wearing trousers while climbing. She responded defiantly: *“For a woman in difficult mountaineering to waste her strength and endanger her life with a skirt is foolish in the extreme.”* Besides her work as a trailblazing mountaineer, Annie wrote and lectured about her adventures. She was also an ardent suffragist. In 1909, she planted a flag that read **“Votes for Women”** on the summit of a mountain in Peru. She climbed her last mountain, Mount Madison (5367 ft) in New Hampshire, at the age of 82.

Nellie Bly (1864-1922)

Nellie is known as a pioneer of investigative journalism, including undercover work in a “lunatic asylum” for women. Her exposés led to reforms in mental institutions, sweatshops, orphanages and prisons. In November 1889, she decided to take on a new challenge for a New York newspaper. Inspired by the Jules Verne novel **‘Around the World in 80 Days’**, she set out to beat the fictional record. Alone, carrying just one small bag, she set off aboard a steamer. She returned 72 days later, having travelled 24,899 miles from England to France, Singapore to Japan, and California back to the East Coast, in ships, trains, rickshaws, on horseback and by mule.



Annie Cohen aka Annie Londonderry (1870-1947)



Annie was the first woman to cycle around the world, from 1894 to 1895. Born Annie Cohen in Latvia to Jewish parents, she grew up in Boston, USA. She married and had three children before embarking on her extraordinary journey which came about after two Boston businessmen bet that no woman could travel around the world by bicycle in 15 months. In exchange for funding, she agreed to advertise spring water on her bicycle and to use the company name, Londonderry, during her journey. She sailed from place to place, visiting Alexandria, Colombo, Singapore, Saigon, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Nagasaki and Kobe. She delivered lectures and gave exhibitions, telling enthralled crowds of her adventures. She claimed she hunted Bengal tigers in India, had been shot in the shoulder on the front lines of the Sino-Japanese War and waylaid by bandits in France.

Sue Swinchatt

Ref: Wikipedia

www.historyhit.com

All other images courtesy of www.historyhit.com

Cecilia Payne-Gaposchkin

It is easy to forget that less than 100 years ago women were still treated as second class citizens; they might have gained the right to vote after years of fighting for emancipation, but it was not until 1948 that they were allowed to receive a degree from the **University of Cambridge** to which their studies should have entitled them. Imagine studying so hard and then not being awarded the degree at the end of the course just because of their sex.



Photo of Cecilia courtesy of Wikipedia

This is what happened to **Cecilia Payne-Gaposchkin**, amongst many others. She was an astrophysicist and astronomer who produced a doctoral thesis in 1925 challenging the perceived beliefs at the time and so it was rejected. She was able to show that stars are composed primarily of helium and hydrogen. Scientists then believed there was no elemental difference between the sun and the earth. She was later proved to have been correct and her work on the variation of the stars has become the foundation for modern astrophysics.

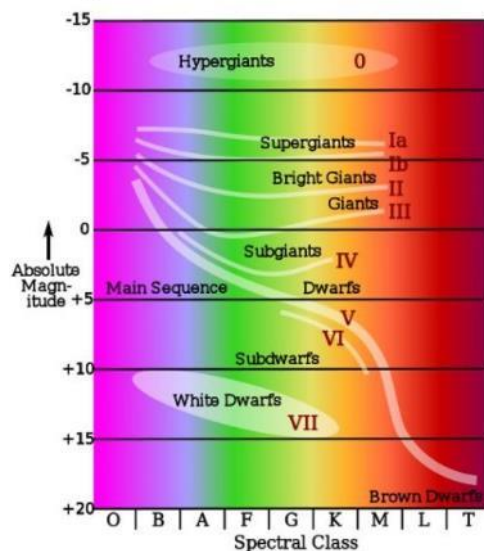


Photo of Cecilia at work courtesy of Discovery

Realising that her only future in the UK would be as a teacher in a girls' school, she moved to the US where in 1925 she became the first person to be awarded a PhD in astronomy from **Radcliffe College**

at **Harvard University**. However, even in the States she faced discrimination, her findings that hydrogen was the most abundant element in the universe and it formed the overwhelming constituent of stars was rejected by fellow astronomer **Henry Norris Russell** as “*spurious*” and when he later found her to have been correct, he published a paper with only a passing reference to her work, taking the majority of the credit for himself.

Spectral Classes of Stars



A diagrammatic representation of Cecilia's research findings

Courtesy of Famous Scientists

It was not until 1956 that she was finally promoted to the rank of professor at Harvard's Faculty of Arts and Sciences, the first woman to hold the post. This was despite the publication of her books, including *The Stars of High Luminosity* (1930), *Variable Stars* (1938) and *Variable Stars and Galactic Structure* (1954) where she recorded her studies of over 3 million stars and which formed the basis for future work in astrophysics. The intervening years had been spent in low paid research posts.

It was in 1958 that she was promoted to the post of **Phillips Professor of Astronomy** and later was the first woman to head a department at **Harvard**. She was of course something of a trailblazer; it had been a commonly held belief (usually by men) that women were not able to understand scientific concepts and it was thanks to Cecilia's groundbreaking research that women were finally offered more opportunities. She became an inspiration to others, including the astrophysicist **Joan Feynman** who felt able to follow her ambitions after seeing what could be achieved by a woman.



“For the first time I knew the leaping of the heart, the sudden enlightenment, that were to become my

passion... These moments are rare, and they come without warning, on ‘days to be marked with a white stone’.”

CECILIA PAYNE-GAPOSCHKIN
An Autobiography and Other Recollections,
published 1984

Courtesy of Cecilia's Biography, Facts & Pictures

After receiving the **Henry Norris Russell Prize** from the American Astronomical Society, Cecilia said “*The reward of the young scientist is the emotional thrill of being the first person in the history of the world to see or understand something. Nothing can compare to that experience.*”

While in school she had conducted an experiment on the efficacy of prayer. She prayed for success in one exam but not in another. She gained higher marks in the latter. In later life she became an agnostic, despite having been very active in the Lutheran Church and in the Quaker movement. She died in 1979 of lung cancer, smoking her only vice according to her daughter Katherine. She gave her body to medical science before being buried in Tewkesbury, Massachusetts. Her granddaughter, **Cecilia Gaposchkin**, is a professor of Late Medieval Cultural History and French History at **Dartmouth College**.

Sue Hutt
Ref famousscientists.org
Wikipedia

A Tale of Two Zoos: Chester & Warsaw

CHESTER and WARSAW zoos in World War 2

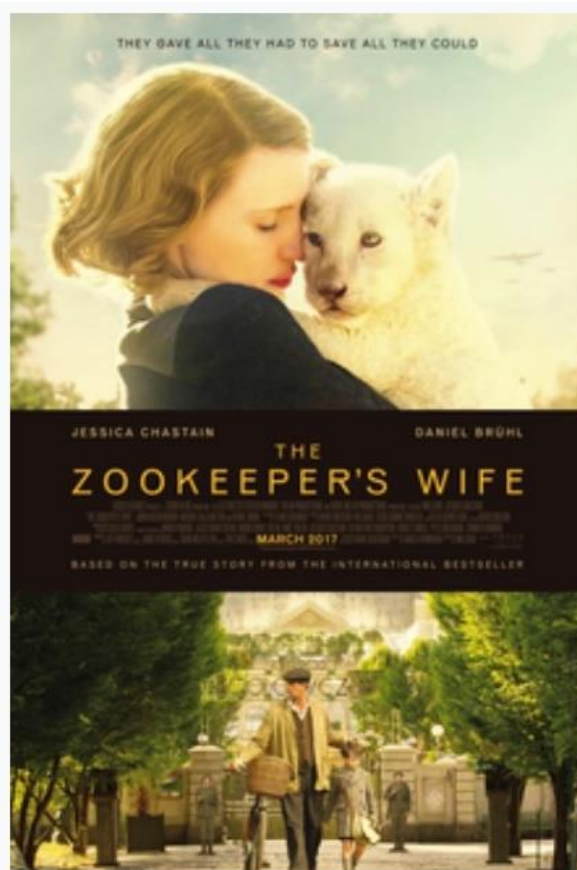


Drama series based on the true story of the Mottershead family who, in the face of staunch opposition and huge personal sacrifice, founded Chester Zoo in the 1930s.

Courtesy of BBC productions

In 2014 a six-part series called '**Our Zoo**' was shown on BBC1. Starring Lee Ingleby as **George Mottershead**, the man who founded **Chester Zoo** in the 1930s, it was based on a memoir of the same name by his daughter June, published by Headline earlier that year. I've recently enjoyed watching the series again on DVD and also rereading June's fascinating account of the zoo which ends with her marriage to Fred Williams. Fred became one of the keepers in 1947, when the zoo was recovering from wartime damage and rebuilding its stock of animals. June and Fred married in 1949 and their reception was held at the zoo.

'**The Zoo Keeper's Wife**' by Diane Ackerman (also published by Headline, in 2013) is described as 'A true story of an Unlikely Heroine'. When Germany invaded Poland in early September 1939 the Luftwaffe bombers devastated Warsaw, including the city's zoo, run by **Jan and Antonina Zabinski**. Most of the zoo's animals were killed or taken by the Nazis to Berlin. The couple, along with their son **Ryszard** (Rys), courageously decided to remain in their home in the zoo's 40-acre grounds in Praski Park, and support the anti-Nazi resistance movement.



Courtesy of Wikipedia

In 2017 the book was made into the film *'The Zoo Keeper's Wife'*, which starred Jessica Chastain as Antonina. She and Jan, along with their workers, helped Jews to escape from the ghetto and hid them temporarily in the bombed-out remains of the zoo's garden. By doing so they helped to rescue over 300 Jews as part of the underground railroad. More of this later on.

Born in 1926, **June Mottershead** was four when the extended family moved into a rambling mid-Victorian mansion set in an overgrown estate totalling nine acres. Owned by a wealthy tea merchant, Oakfield estate was just two miles from the centre of Chester and during WW1 convalescent Belgian Officers had been billeted in its grounds. June was closely involved in the development of the zoo, often being photographed with new arrivals for articles in the local press. The zoo was a family affair, and she recalled the house being occupied by birds like parrots, cockatoos, macaws and a pelican, as well as its human inhabitants.

As WW2 approached, they took in animals evacuated from other cities, including a Malayan bear from Liverpool and a polar bear from Brighton. Money, materials and food were scarce and nothing went to waste. Local abattoirs supplied anything not used for human consumption, and even the head of a horse whose neck had been broken in a local point-to-point race helped to feed the carnivores. When fish wasn't available the penguins were fed with strips of horse-meat drenched in cod liver oil.

June's elder sister **Muriel** (Mew) was already a keeper and when the male keepers were called-up she continued working until joining the Wrens. To help with finances June's father initiated an

'adopt an animal' scheme which was very successful. Reported by the national newspapers, it was the first-time sponsorship was used, and his idea was later copied by other zoos across the world.

More keepers were needed and in 1940, 300 'land girls' applied. Of the six who were accepted, only one eventually stayed on, and she became a lion keeper. As June commented wryly, '*Being in uniform was far more glamorous than wearing dirty overalls or mucking out animal cages.*' Food was in short supply, and when American servicemen from the largest airfield in England at nearby Warrington visited the zoo, June was amazed to see the tins and chocolate they brought with them.

With the seaside out of bounds, as every beach was covered in barbed wire, people went to the zoo for an outing instead. Petrol was only for the use of reserved occupations, so visitors came by train and bus. June joined the Girls Training Corps, learning Morse Code and First Aid. During the Liverpool blitz hundreds of bombers flew over the zoo to attack the docks, and the tanks in the aquarium June looked after started leaking due to the vibrations of the bombing. All the tropical fish she'd cared for died, and for a time the aquarium became the family's air-raid shelter. She wrote, '*There was no radio in it, and whilst boredom may not kill you, it is very tiring*', so they preferred to risk sleeping in their own beds.

Fire was the greatest threat, and because none of the Fire Guards from the near-by village were prepared to patrol the zoo, June took on the job; she learnt how to use a stirrup pump, although technically she was too young. After leaving school she trained as a hairdresser, but was soon back at the zoo as an official employee, earning 10/- a week.

By D-Day, 6th June 1944, June had received her call-up papers but failing the medical for the Wrens she went to work at a munitions factory instead. It made jerry cans, the ingenious design of which had been stolen from the Germans. After a while she asked for a transfer to the Women's Land Army and was sent to a country house very similar to Oakfield, where she worked in the plant nursery. When war ended June returned to the zoo, making vivariums for the amphibian collection and breeding tropical fish to replace those they'd lost.

Warsaw Zoo also suffered greatly during the war years. Like June, Antonina had a natural affinity with animals, especially the young and sick ones. With their animals gone, she and Jan were kept busy hiding as many as 50 escaping Jews at a time in the remains of the empty cages, sheds and enclosures. Escapees were given secret names, the name of the animal that once used to live there. People were also hidden '*in the hollows of their villa*', a large 1930s modernist-style building. Two secret tunnels led from its basement to the old pheasant house and lion house.

The best camouflage for people is more people, so the couple invited a stream of legal visitors, such as friends and family, for varying stays. Along with their itinerant guests, strange pets joined the household, such as an arctic hare. The '*indoor zoo*' created a diverting circus, a tonic for everyone, especially young Rys. A mini menagerie of muskrat, eagle, lynx and baby foxes (plus cats and dogs) helped the escapees to live from moment to moment and forget their precarious existence. Some relief was also given by regular evening piano recitals, when the Jewish and Polish outlaws were allowed indoors. As Jan and Antonina's home became a '**Noah's Ark**' for human flotsam, it provided a much-needed temporary respite from dangerous waters. '*They wished the villa to sail safely through the war with its human cargo*'.

'*The villa embraced people lost between worlds and on the run from the Gestapo*'. The German decree that all Poles hiding Jews would be killed made the latter feel guilty for being such a burden

to their rescuers. Even the villa's housekeeper wasn't aware of all the guests hidden there, and eventually Antonina had to replace her with someone more trusted. Often, Rys took meals to those in the former cages, as he was the least conspicuous member of the household.

In 1943 Rys developed pneumonia, recovering without the help of antibiotics, which had only been discovered in Britain in 1939. They weren't used for injured soldiers until D-Day, and civilians and animals not until after the end of the war.

Over the years even Antonina wasn't aware of the full extent of her husband's involvement with the Polish Underground movement. Once, for example, a large barrel of *'fertiliser'* was stored in a shed next to the villa. She later learnt that the barrel had contained a water-soluble explosive which was successfully used by an Underground cell led by Jan to sabotage German trains. In April 1943, after heroic Jewish resistance, the Warsaw Ghetto was finally razed to the ground. Of the 3 million Polish Jews, only ten percent remained.

Despite being wounded and interned as a POW, Jan survived the conflict and in 1947 he started building a new zoo for 300 animals, which opened two years later.

Most of his and Antonina's guests also survived the war, and the couple were honoured by **Yad Vashem** in Jerusalem as *'Righteous Among Nations'* for their efforts.

*

Lastly, a personal note about Chester Zoo. I remember visiting it as a teenager, wearing new green slingback shoes, which gave me sore heels. Sadly, I don't recall much about the animals.

Sue Amer

A window with holes?



Why are there such unusual holes in this window? The owner of this stable in **Ruan Lanihorne** on the Roseland said the large hole was for owls, but didn't know the reason for the four smaller holes. Any ideas?

Jon Skelton

Castilly Henge



The Henge before work began in 2021, courtesy of Historic England/CAU

Castilly Henge near **Bodmin** is thought to have been built during the late Neolithic period (3000-2500 BC). In 2021, in a joint venture between **Historic England** and the **Cornwall Archaeology Unit**, research using modern scientific methods was carried out revealing a hidden stone circle in the middle which made it only the second known henge with a stone circle in the whole of Cornwall. The first to be found was at the Striple Stones on the slopes of **Hawks Tor** on **Bodmin Moor**.



The henge after work has been completed, courtesy of Historic England/CAU

Volunteers had spent the winter clearing bracken and scrub from the site which has since been re-fenced, allowing the land to be grazed again. There are well preserved earthworks measuring 68 x 62 metres with a surrounding ditch over 7 metres wide and 1.6 metres deep. It would have formed an amphitheatre being used for ritual activities and gatherings, possibly as place for plays to be performed (a Plen-An-Guary) during the Middle Ages and perhaps even as a battery during the English Civil War.

A project officer at Historic England said *“The research at Castilly Henge has given us a greater understanding of the complexity of this site and its importance to Cornish history over thousands of years. It will help us make decisions about how it is managed and presented so it can be enjoyed for generations to come.”*

Sue Hutt
 Ref *The Guardian*
historicengland.org.uk

Creative Writing: The Truth was Revealed

It's a winter's day in Hull, 1996, and it's raining at Nana's funeral as we huddle under brollies outside the crematorium. Nana lived for ninety-six glorious years surviving the bombing in 1941 of a trolley bus in Grimsby in which she was travelling with a mutton stew. From then she survived a further fifty-five years smoking twenty Senior Service every day after a chemist recommended tobacco to relieve Nana's nerves after the trolley bus incident. Nana never forgave the Germans for the loss of the mutton stew but never questioned the veracity of the chemist's advice.

In her retirement Nana lived in a caravan without indoor toilet facilities sited in a farmyard just outside Hull. Her diet consisted of Quality Street and whiskey with the odd slice of 'good' ham. Her ashtray was always overflowing with little white tabs and her fingers were stained brown with the vicious smoke of unfiltered cigarettes. Now Nana loved the telly, especially the snooker, and Steve Davies was her favourite and when he appeared in any competition, she stroked the top of the TV to give him luck.

Nana's caravan was a treasure trove of all the bits and pieces she kept from the various eras of her life. There were remnants of her childhood spent in Ceylon, biscuit barrels from her days in a posh semi in Cleethorpes where her husband, a professional footballer, provided an income unimagined by many. And there were books too from her passion of reading and days spent running the Green Circle Libraries pre-war, which her husband bought with the monies raised from his testimonial at Reading when his career as a footballer ended. Ironically Nana had wanted to buy a pub but was persuaded to become a librarian instead whilst my grandad, in 'retirement', spent most of his days drinking in the "Leaky Boot" at the end of the road.

Nana divorced my grandad in 1945 after an affair with a colonel who was barracked in the family home and she moved to a red brick terrace house in Grimsby. My Mum served as an anti-aircraft gunner in Cardiff during World War Two and was not at home during the turmoil, though her brother was. This was a period of family history blurred by scandal and we all learned to not ask questions.

So, at the funeral, a friend of Nana's approached my eldest sister - I am the youngest of four - and asked my sister for a quiet word.

"I think there is something the family should know," Auntie Elsie told my sister.

Now for clarity, my eldest sister is a snob - a Mrs Bucket with a perfect family, immaculately clean home and an untarnished life. So, when Auntie Elsie told her,

"There's another sister, my dear. She visits your Nana most weeks and 'as done for years. Here's 'ur number," my sister did not believe her and put the number in her purse and forgot it.

A year later, prompted by her husband, my eldest sister contacted the "other sister" and agreed to meet with her as long as she provided hard evidence that she was who she claimed to be.

Presented with a blue folder stuffed with letters, adoption papers and newspaper cuttings of the search for a footballer's daughter in Grimsby, my eldest sister had to agree that our mother in 1944 had given birth to a girl she called 'June'. This additional sister, now making me the youngest of five, was delivered in a child and baby unit after my mother was dismissed from the ATS in Cardiff for 'health' reasons.

June, now Bridget, was adopted at 6 weeks old and handed to her adopted mother in person by our own mother. Despite this cruelty and the effect it must have had on our mother, my eldest sister refused to acknowledge this exchange and kept the information to herself for another year.

Our mother died aged 48 in 1971 leaving my dad a widower. So, when Bridget, the new sister, began the search for her biological mother in 1975, she soon discovered that her mother had passed away so focussed on finding our grandmother instead. In the late 1970s, with the help of a social worker, Bridget got in touch with Nana for the first time. Initially Nana refused to see her new granddaughter though eventually consented to regular visits on the condition Bridget never contact her sisters.

Two years after Nana's funeral, my eldest sister picked up the courage to approach our father, now happily remarried, to tell him before she told her sisters about this amazing discovery of a war baby.

"Dad," she began, "I have something to tell you about Mum."

And before she could finish, our father interjected with,

"It's about the baby. It's the first thing your Mum told me when we met."

A week later, at a gathering of sisters, the truth was revealed. We had another sister whom our Nana had met with on a regular basis for at least 25 years and neglected to tell anyone. We had a sister who my father knew the existence of, but who never told us as it was our mother's secret. And, in true family tradition, it took my eldest sister at least 3 years to afford her siblings the knowledge of Mum's war time indiscretion.

Bridget is now an 'official' sister and I tell anyone who will listen.

Karen La Borde

Creative Writing: Revelation

Winnie Harwood reacts with shock and disbelief when she receives a letter from her brother-in-law telling her of her sister Maud's death. They hadn't been close, but Stanley could have told her that Maud was in hospital.

The train journey from Halifax to Falmouth takes all day, four changes, and the one-horse train from Truro to Falmouth Town. There is no taxi at her destination, not even a map to consult.

'Excuse me,' Winnie accosts a passing woman. *'Could you direct me to Gillingvaise Road?'*

She plods up the hill, thankful that her suitcase contains only enough for a two-night stay. Winnie stops to check the address.

'Are you lost?' An elderly man enquires.

'I'm looking for Kinbrae.' Winnie's voice betrays her weariness.

'It's across the road, that one with the tall hedge.'

'Thank you so much,' says Winnie. Her spirits sink further as she views the gloomy house.

Mrs Sharp, the owner, true to her name, snaps at Winnie as she opens the front door, in answer to a loud jangling bell.

'You're late Mrs Harwood. Dinner was at 6.00pm.'

'So sorry,' mutters Winnie as she follows Mrs Sharp's command. They climb the stairs to the top floor of the dark, cheerless house. The wallpaper on the lower half of the staircase is painted a depressing shade of brown. It is chipped in places where suitcases have ripped shreds off and white shows through. The stair covering for the final flight is worn linoleum. Mrs Sharp flings open the door of a room at the back of the house. Winnie is assailed by a smell of mildew and mothballs.

'This is your room. The dining room is on the ground floor and the bathroom on the floor below this. I've kept a dinner for you.' Mrs Sharp leaves Winnie to discover Room 26 alone.

A huge musty-smelling wardrobe dominates the room, dwarfing a double bed covered with an almost bald, beige candlewick bedspread. The wash basin, boasting H and C is screened by a stiff, plastic curtain. The small window is shrouded in a heavy net curtain which obscures the view of the untidy yard at the back and shuts out most of the light.

'So much for my sea view.' huffs Winnie.

She has barely time to wash her face and hang her black dress on a hanger from the picture rail, before a loud gong summons her to a dried-up dinner of...she's not really sure what?

Breakfast is bleak and sparse. She decides to look for a café where she'll get some decent coffee and hot toast before the funeral at 11.30 am in the Chapel. She feels conspicuous in her formal, black clothes amongst the bright cotton frocks and open-necked shirts of the holiday-makers.

The café owner is a friendly woman who gives Winnie a sympathetic look as she puts her coffee and toast on the table.

'There you are my lovely. Just shout if you need anything else. I'm Rose.'

'What a nice person.' Winnie says aloud.

'Did you say something?'

'Nothing really,' Winnie stammers. *'It's just that you're so friendly compared to my landlady. She's a bit of a tartar.'*

'Where're you staying my lovely?'

Rose is quiet for a minute before speaking. *'That woman wants closing down, causes no end of misery to her guests. Have you paid her?'*

'Unfortunately, I have.'

Winnie looks at her watch, sips her coffee and gives an involuntary, shuddering sigh.

'Are you here for a funeral my lovely?'

'Yes .my sister's.'

Rose reaches out and takes hold of Winnie's hand. *'What was her name? Most of Falmouth passes through my café at one time or another.'*

'Maud, Maud Penrose.'

'Maud Penrose. She was one of my regulars. I can see the likeness now. Came in here regular, two or three times a week with that lovely hubby of hers. You could tell they were devoted to one another. Nobody told me she'd died. I'm so very sorry.'

Rose's eyes brim with tears Winnie opens her mouth to speak but closes it.

'So handsome, always immaculate, right down to his polished shoes, lovely manners too.'

Winnie doesn't recognise this description of Stanley. She remembers him as morose, surly and unkempt. She never understood why Maud married him.

'I always thought the name Alex suited him down to the ground. Poor, poor man, how will he manage without Maud?'

Winnie leaves the café for the funeral of someone she feels she never knew.

Ann Mundler

Creative Writing: The Shadow of Arthur

Sir Tabulas limped into the tent and threw his helmet onto the table. Sir Pediment observed the gesture, and the mud and grass clinging to his cousin's pauldrons and cuisses, and tactfully did not enquire who had prevailed in the joust. Pediment's manservant, Hammon, rolled his eyes, and received a reproving glare from his master. Canvas rattled as a gust of moist wind blew through the tent, and outside the pounding of hooves signalled that the next course was in progress.

'I had him; right up to the last second – then my horse slipped!' blustered Tabulas.

Pediment nodded sympathetically, and handed him a beaker of wine. *'Could happen to any of us.'*

Just not every time, thought Hammon. But he knew better than to voice the thought.

Tabulas drained the beaker in two gulps. *'You, boy, help me off with my harness!'* he ordered Hammon.

'Yes, my lord!'

This was really a squire's duty, but Ulric was once again absent on an errand for his father, Robert de Basset, Earl of Sproatley, and since Tabulas owed that nobleman over five hundred gold marks he was disinclined to complain. Privately he considered that he had already given more than value for money by taking the Earl's fourth and least accomplished son as his squire, but he knew that Basset would be only too happy to incorporate his own lands into the Basset estates should their arrangement be jeopardised in any way. Late that evening, in his cups, he revealed to his cousin the fragility of his position.

'If that ever came to pass, could you not appeal to the King?' Pediment suggested.

'Pah! Henry doesn't know that I exist! What he does know is that Basset can be relied on to milk his tenants for all they have, and much of it goes into the royal coffers. And what about the fees he pays to the Crown for his rights and privileges in the markets and ports - the King wouldn't want to lose any of that!'

'Well, look on the bright side, at least the wars are over.'

'What's good about that? In war, we had the chance of booty and ransom, and we could win honour and fame as knights are meant to do, instead of pretending to be farmers and merchants like some low-born peasant. We don't hear about King Arthur and his knights sitting at the Round Table discussing the price of turnips or the tax on beer, do we? What's happened to our pride and our love'

of chivalry – sold for a mess of pottage, it seems. No, roll on the next wars, say I, and we might be able to find again what we have lost. I truly believe that that is our Grail - a quest for our times!' he ended oratorically.

Pediment sighed. Tabulas could be impossible sometimes, especially when he got onto his hobby-horse about the decline of knightly values. And his reference to the Grail was almost blasphemous. *'We cannot live by legends, Tabulas,'* he chided, *'and the Grail is a Holy Mystery, best left to those who know about such things!'*

Flushed with wine, Tabulas slammed his fist down on the table. *'God's blood! You're as spineless as the rest of them! Where can I find a true knight who will quest after things fine and good, without always weighing his purse?'*

More than a little drunk himself, Pediment flared up; he was a knight after all, and knights did not suffer insults meekly. *'Spineless?'* he roared, *'You dare call me that? You will apologise!'*

Tabulas sneered. *'Apologise? What will you do if I don't apologise – burst into tears?'*

Eavesdropping behind the pantry door Hammon covered his eyes with his hand. He heard the crash as a chair went over, followed by shouts and curses and the sound of blows and smashing crockery. When the noise died down at last, he essayed a glimpse round the door. Pediment was sprawled face down over a settle, apparently unconscious, while Tabulas was on his hands and knees, being sick into the hearth. Clearly, **chivalry had triumphed again.**

u3a Carrick member writing as Warren Thorpe



Courtesy of Facebook

Adrian's 'Pot Pourri' from '23





All images courtesy of u3a Carrick Photography group.

The Photographs were all taken during 2023 and display the variety of topics considered by the group over the year.







Poem: Bamboo's Better

Bamboo products are better than paper -

Give the kitchen roll a try;

Softer than the paper tissues,

Worth a few more pence to buy.

Loo rolls too are eco-friendly,

'Save the trees and save the seas' –

Every tiny action taken

Cools our planet by degrees.

BAMBOO

- grows 30x faster than trees
- emits 30% more O₂ than trees
- absorbs 30% more CO₂ than trees

Quiz

Anagrams of fruit and vegetables.

1. Trocra
2. Elke
3. Yrurbbele
4. Bbrruah
5. Oeairhktc
6. Hussaq
7. Rccuubme
8. Rllcweuaofi
9. Lump
10. Nntcreeia

In 1970

1. This Liverpool group released their final album before splitting up.
2. Which mission to the moon was launched?
3. In the UK, what ceased to be legal tender?
4. Which Pacific Island gained independence from Britain?
5. Which dam across the Nile was completed?
6. Who became the new Prime Minister in June of that year?
7. Where was the FIFA World Cup held?
8. Who won the FA cup final replay at Old Trafford?
9. Which film won Best Picture at the 42nd Academy Awards?
10. Who took control of Libya?

What is the currency in these countries?

1. Denmark
2. Ecuador
3. Estonia
4. Northern Cyprus
5. Egypt
6. Poland
7. Switzerland
8. Vatican City
9. Brazil
10. Japan

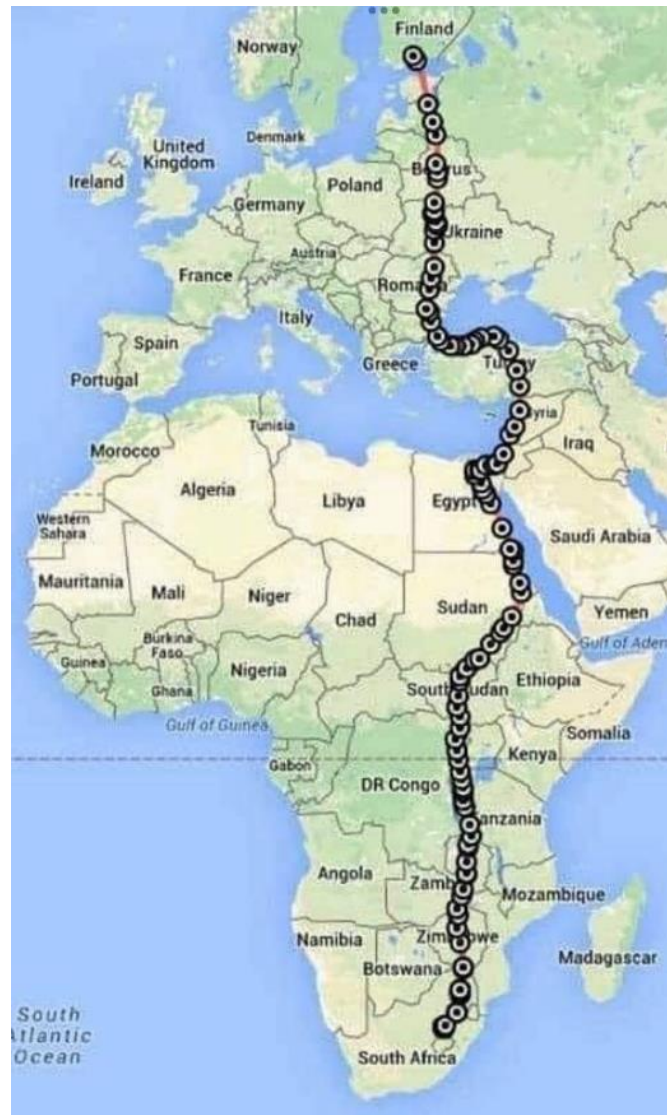
[Answers on page 27](#)

Picture Quiz: Flags of Commonwealth Countries



[Answers on page 28](#)

The Amazing Flight of the Falcon



"A female falcon was equipped with a satellite tracking system in South Africa before migrating to Finland. Image shows tracker data. In just 42 days, she flew over 10,000 km, at an incredible average of 230 km per day. The most unbelievable thing is that it kept a straight line across the continent, except when it had to fly over water, turning right on the Nile River Delta, then pursuing the course of the river to the Mediterranean. Yeah, nature is really a beauty..."

Cornwall in old photographs

Portreath



Courtesy of Nostalgic Camborne shared on Facebook



The Falmouth Hotel opened in 1865 shared on Facebook

Quiz Answers

Anagrams of fruit and vegetables.

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| 1. Trocra | Carrot |
| 2. Elke | Leek |
| 3. Yrurbbele | Blueberry |
| 4. Bbrruah | Rhubarb |
| 5. Oeairhkct | Artichoke |
| 6. Hussaq | Squash |
| 7. Rccuubme | Cucumber |
| 8. Rllcweuaofi | Cauliflower |
| 9. Lump | Plum |
| 10. Nntcreeia | Nectarine |

In 1970

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. This Liverpool group released their final album before splitting up. | The Beatles |
| 2. Which mission to the moon was launched? | Apollo 13 |
| 3. In the UK, what ceased to be legal tender? | 10 Shilling Note & Half Crown coin |
| 4. Which Pacific Island gained independence from Britain? | Fiji |
| 5. Which dam across the Nile was completed? | Aswan Dam |
| 6. Who became the new Prime Minister in June of that year? | Edward Heath |
| 7. Where was the FIFA World Cup held? | Mexico |
| 8. Who won the FA cup final replay at Old Trafford? | Chelsea |
| 9. Which film won Best Picture at the 42nd Academy Awards? | Midnight Cowboy |
| 10. Who took control of Libya? | General Gaddafi |

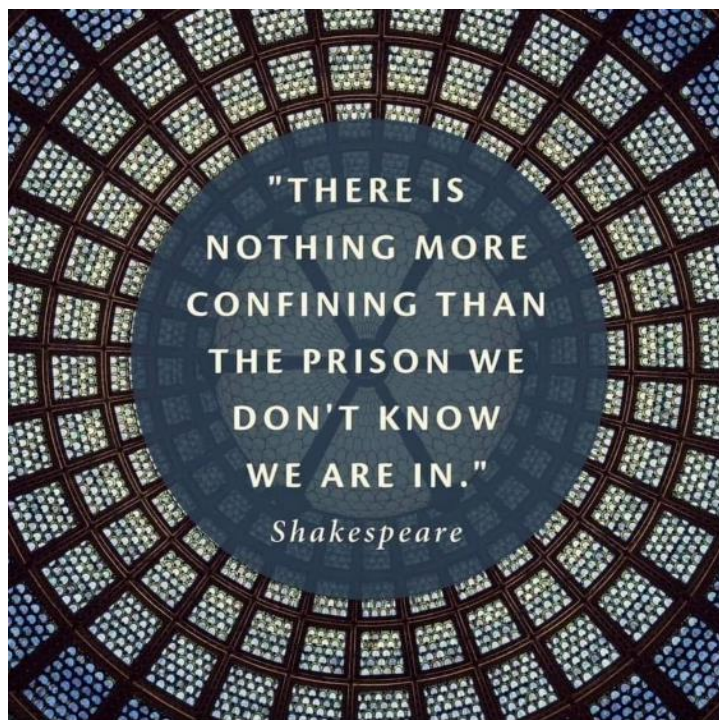
What is the currency in these countries?

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. Denmark | Danish Krone |
| 2. Ecuador | US Dollar |
| 3. Estonia | Euro |
| 4. Northern Cyprus | Turkish Lira |
| 5. Egypt | Egyptian Pound |
| 6. Poland | Polish Zloty |
| 7. Switzerland | Swiss Franc |
| 8. Vatican City | Euro |
| 9. Brazil | Brazilian Real |
| 10. Japan | Japanese Yen |

Picture Quiz Answers

 <p>Papua New Guinea</p>	 <p>Kiribati</p>	 <p>St Vincent and The Grenadines</p>
 <p>Dominica</p>	 <p>Sri Lanka</p>	 <p>Seychelles</p>
 <p>Kenya</p>	 <p>Jamaica</p>	 <p>Malta</p>
 <p>Cameroon</p>	 <p>Tuvalu</p>	 <p>Fiji</p>
 <p>Lesotho</p>	 <p>Namibia</p>	 <p>Zambia</p>

Thoughts for the day



Both items courtesy of Facebook

Carrick Argus: Contact details

We look forward to receiving your letters and any other contributions you may like to offer such as quizzes, articles, and short stories by email to

carrickargus2017@gmail.com

Deadline for next issue – Wednesday 27th March 2024

Policy and guidelines for contributors

- 1) Written contributions of any length will be published whether typed or hand-written. But remember that the shorter the contribution, the more likely is the reader to continue to its end.
- 2) The topics of your contributions should be restricted to those likely to be of interest to members of u3as. But see 6 below.
- 3) Apart from obvious typing errors, your contribution will never be altered or cut without first being returned to you for your agreement. That includes punctuation.
- 4) Contributions must show name of contributor; contact details their choice. A contributor may instead select a pen name, but if so, their own name will be supplied to any reader who asks for it.
- 5) A contribution that is critical of an identifiable individual will not be published. But see 6 below.
- 6) If contributing, you should regard yourself as responsible for factual accuracy. Opinions are your own.

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