

The Carrick Argus

The Hundredth Edition

April 2025



Tulips

by Ray Goddard

An entry in the 2024 Photography Competition

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Editorial

Welcome to the 100th edition of the Carrick Argus. Little did we imagine, 8 years ago, that we would still be going strong in 2025. To celebrate this achievement, we are delighted to publish articles by Sue Swinchatt who put the whole thing together all those years ago, and Ian Searle, former chair of Carrick u3a and of The Third Age Trust who dedicated so much of his retirement to the u3a. Thanks to you both, your contributions over the years have been much appreciated.

A huge thank you also to our regular contributors, the creative writing groups of Truro and Falmouth, Sue Amer, Jon and Anne Skelton, Jean King and members of the photography group as well as those who have sent in occasional articles. They are all gratefully received.

The Carrick Argus would not exist without the enthusiasm and dedication of John Dearman, former treasurer of Carrick and our first editor. He, along with Robin Waddling, is sadly missed. Also deserving of a mention on this anniversary issue are those contributors no longer with us, especially Michael Power, whose poems delighted us for so long, Chris Burton who knew so much about local history and of course Brenda Burgess, leader of Truro creative writing group. All gone but not forgotten.

In this issue we are delighted to welcome a newcomer, Leonie Whitton, who is going to provide us with her insights into a range of culinary delights available at a restaurant near you. Leonie is a member of the Falmouth creative writing group and some of you will have been entertained by her witty and fascinating accounts of life in Italy at Travellers' Tales last year, followed by an insightful journey through North Africa, expertly illustrated by David Westby, at a Monthly Meeting this year.

Thank you, Leonie.

The Carrick Argus is for our members, by our members, and only exists because of you. So if you would like to contribute anything you feel would be of interest to others, please send it to carrickargus2017@gmail.com; it may be a walk you have been on, a film or book you enjoyed, a recent scientific or archaeological discovery, a puzzle or conundrum, a childhood memory or a view of life from your armchair. The more variety the better!

Finally, a plea on behalf of the committee. It is our AGM on Wednesday 9th April at The Perranwell Centre. Doors open at 10 for tea, coffee and a chance to catch up with friends, with proceedings starting at 10.30. We need 70 people to come for the meeting to be quorate, so would appreciate your company. We have two members who have kindly put themselves forward to join the committee, Dee Cope and John Wallace. If anyone else would be willing to help on an ad hoc capacity, I do have a list of those people we can call on. This might involve helping with refreshments, putting out chairs, welcoming newcomers and so on. If you feel you could offer a little of your time in this way, please contact me, vicechair@u3acarrick.org.uk or speak to me at the AGM.

Thank you to all, especially my other half, Ray, who now actually puts the whole thing together, my IT skills not being up to the task. He works hard to make the Argus look professional and I am very grateful.

Sue Hutt
Editor

Letters to the Editor



A **coggy** boat probably in the Humber

Image courtesy of Warren Thorpe

Thanks for printing my story '**After the Deluge**'. I know it may be unfamiliar, but the dredger's tender is actually a **coggy** boat and not a soggy boat (the WORD censor bot didn't like it either - one of the penalties of trying to impart a regional flavour!)

All the best,
Warren Thorpe

Editor's reply

Sincere apologies, probably an autocorrect. Coggy is certainly unknown to me, (my iPad just corrected it to foggy) so if you do use unusual words in future, please let us know in advance then we can be sure to get it right.

Many thanks for your contributions, they are much appreciated.

Remembering Anthea Sharp

Sadly, Anthea's son Oscar contacted Julia to inform her that his mother had died unexpectedly at home in March. Anthea was born in 1946 and leaves two sons, a daughter and a loving extended family. Although she was living with leukaemia in her later years, she still led a busy and purposeful life right up to her passing.

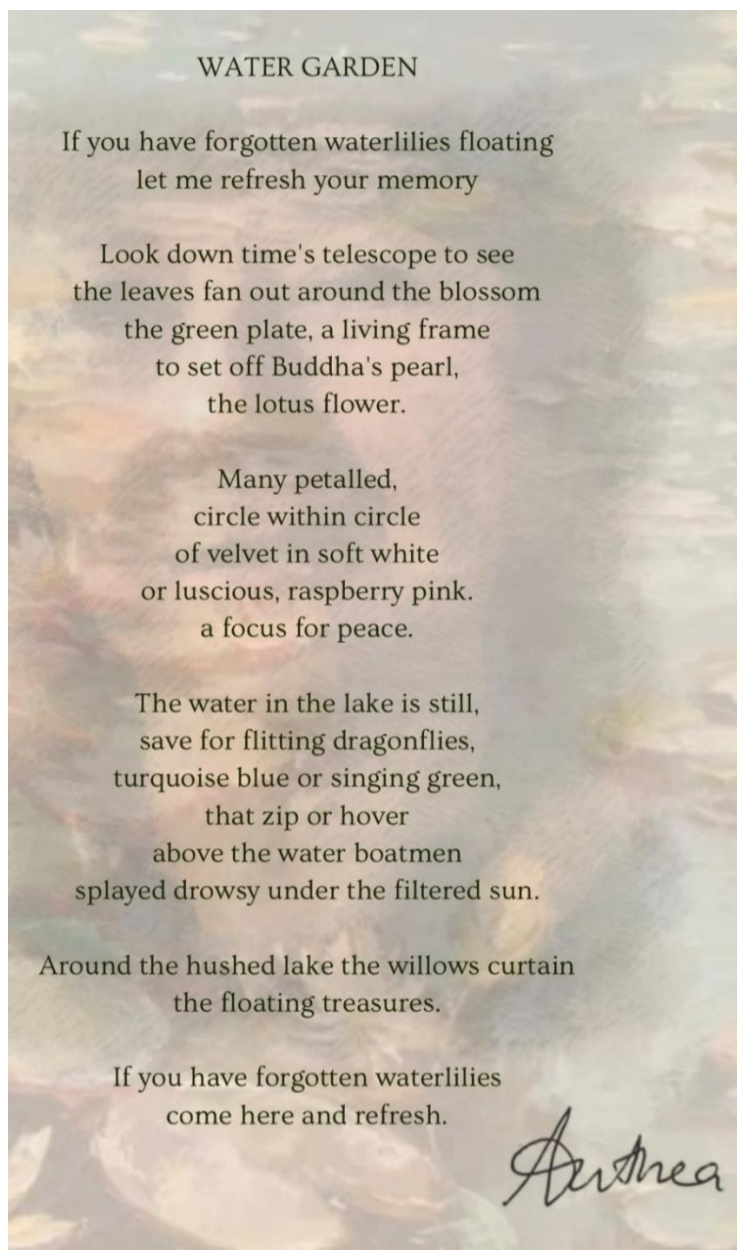
Anthea gained an English degree at London University and her business career encompassed a number of roles including events organiser for York Chamber of Commerce through to press officer for the Open University.

The Humanist funeral took place on 24th March at Penmount Crematorium and when Oscar informed us of the arrangements his words were " *Please join us in celebrating Anthea's love & creativity, mischief & magic, kindness & wonder* ".

Anthea enjoyed a number of craft activities, bright colours and her garden. She was a long standing u3a member and participated in the Science and Travellers' Tales meetings plus the Third Thursday group and other interests.

When the Truro Monthly Meeting met in the library and appealed for help, she joined the steering group where she would listen, think and usually offered a piece of well-considered advice. She was also involved in the wider community because she loved her music, books and writing poetry, alongside being a contributor with the " Material Girls" craft group in Truro library.

We mourn her passing but remember her with joy, and the poem she penned and sent to Julia which is shared here



Julia Holme and Richard Allen.

From Humble beginnings

Reaching the 100th issue of the Carrick Argus is quite a milestone; congratulations to Sue Hutt and all those who continue to contribute articles, stories, letters and photographs.

It occurs to me that there must be many readers who are unaware of how the Argus got going. Back in the Spring of 2017 John Dearman (still much missed) who had recently stepped down from his role as Treasurer, became concerned that printing costs and other constraints on the editor of our monthly newsletter meant there was no forum for members to discuss their views, frankly. So, he asked me, Sue Hutt, Peter Marron and the late Robin Waddling (also greatly missed) if we would be interested in helping him produce an email-only magazine as a sort of colour supplement to the newsletter.

The hot topic of the day was the cost of venues – nothing new there you might say! But, in fact, it had not been raised before. Since the formation of Carrick U3A many groups had benefitted from being able to use rooms and halls in Richard Lander School for free. Groups could meet as often as they liked with most incurring no cost, therefore no group funding policy had been required. But that arrangement ended in 2015. We also suffered the loss of our former President, Tony Herring, who had, out of his own pocket, paid fees to outside speakers for the many groups he led. Then Covid hit and the membership has dwindled from a high of around 1000 in 2015, to 659 (Dec 2024).

Many U3As manage to keep their annual subscription very low. This benefits members who only attend meetings in private homes, or perhaps only belong to a walking group. Those members who use more costly sports facilities, or halls with projectors, Wi-Fi etc. each pay a little extra.

Our present committee has recently enabled a sub-group to carry out a thorough analysis of current venue/group costs, and their findings and suggestions will be put to the membership at the AGM on April 9th.

Sue Swinchatt

Some of you will be familiar with Sue as one of Carrick u3a's most engaging speakers. Her next presentation will be to the History group meeting on **Monday April 14th at Kea Community Centre** when she will be talking about **The Barbary Corsairs**.

'The raid on Mounts Bay in 1595 by the Spanish has not been forgotten, but did you know the Cornish also suffered attacks from pirates based in North Africa? And they were not alone. Over a period of some three hundred years Barbary Corsairs captured thousands of men, women and children from coastal towns and villages in Italy, France, Spain, Ireland and England to ransom or sell into slavery. These raiders were generally referred to as "Turks", but some came from closer to home and had fascinating, if notorious, lives. The majority of those captured never returned home, but one young man from Penryn came back with a remarkable story to tell.'

Sue Swinchatt

If you are interested in this topic or would like to join the History group, please contact the group leader **Sheila James** by email: (u3acarrickhistory@gmail.com)

Social Mobility

This year I reach my 90th birthday. Please note I say reach, not celebrate. I am making a distinction here between growing old and achieving the kind of success represented by 100 editions of the Argus. I have made no real effort to reach 90. It just sort of happened. To produce 100 editions of this attractive and well-made magazine, on the other hand, this necessitated a great deal of hard work and I must congratulate those people who have been involved.

As for growing old, like many of my fellow members it has frequently, and especially of late caused me to reflect on the nature of time. 90 years is the measure of a long life and the birthday brings with it many memories, good and bad. The remarkable thing is how fresh some of those memories remain. I should add that there are periods of my life which I have forgotten, however hard I try to remember them, and some of those periods have been the boring, dreary times I am happy to forget. Recently I have found myself dreaming quite a lot about people and places from my earliest years in the 1940s. I don't know why this is the case. Some of those memories may be of interest to the readers.

I don't remember very much of the war. It hardly impinged on my consciousness at the age of six or seven. My father was in a so-called "reserved occupation". He worked in a lime kiln and the product was used both for building and for agriculture. He was not called upon to work in the ARP (Air Raid Precautions) because, instead, he was a member of the Auxiliary Fire Service. He was required to spend some nights on duty in the local town. Most of the time, however, he lived at home so we had a relatively normal family life. There were features of it, however, which were a little unusual, features which, on reflection, had a lasting and profound effect on my life.

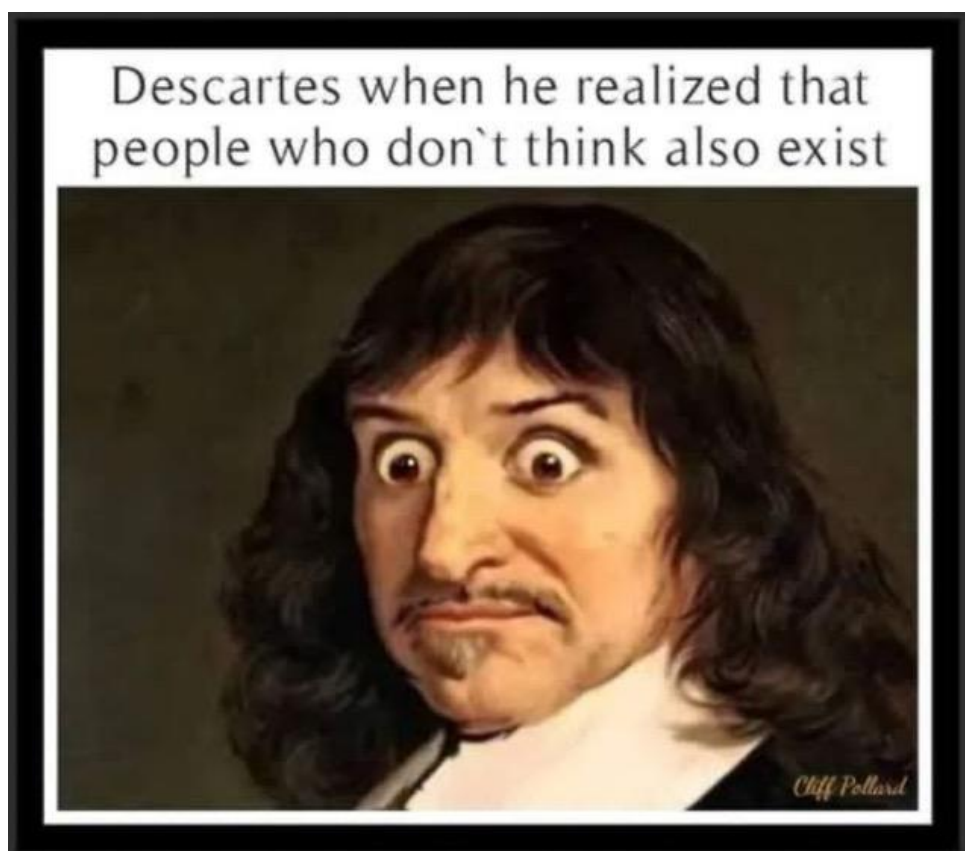
My father was an evangelical Christian. The rest of the Sussex villagers was not. He also was a fairly recent incomer to Sussex and brought his wife, my mother, with him from Northumberland. She spoke with a pronounced Geordie accent. No one understood her nor did she understand them. As a family we were regarded as slightly different, though I was accepted generally by children of my own age. I remember days spent wandering round the fields and lanes with boys and girls of my age. We experienced the freedom which is unheard of these days. My mother had no idea where I was at any time of day between breakfast and teatime. I could have been playing in the woods, climbing trees, running wild on the South Downs, drinking clean water from the chalk stream, wandering in the chalk quarry, lighting small fires, coming home for bread and jam or bread and margarine with a sprinkling of sugar on it.

I attended the local village school. It was a Church of England school with fewer than 30 children. I spent hours happily doing sums which involved adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing pounds, shillings and pence, not forgetting the farthings. 4 farthings made 1 penny, 12 pennies 1 shilling, 20 shillings 1 pound. I enjoyed it. I was good at it. I read enormous numbers of books, most of them library books because we never bought one. In this I was different from my fellow pupils at the age of 10 when I was entered, one year early, for the so-called 11+. This examination was also known as The Scholarship. Passing it entitled you to attend the local grammar school which was 3 miles away in the nearest town. Leaving the village school for the grammar school definitely made me odd. It was also to have an effect I could not have expected.

Until I “passed the Scholarship” I had no idea that we were poor. Meeting other boys – there were no girls at my school – opened my eyes to social differences and classes. This was at a time at the end of the Second World War when the traditional class system was beginning to break down. I discovered I came from a working-class background and, once I had visited other boys’ homes, my own poverty was made clear. My mother, father, brother and sister and myself lived in a council house. Owning a car was not even a dream. We never owned a telephone. There were three bedrooms, small, barely furnished. The floors were covered in linoleum. Downstairs there was a scullery, not even big enough to sit on a chair at the very small table. There was a bathroom of sorts. They contained a bathtub but the water had to be heated in the open copper which was heated by a small fire underneath. We filled the bath by siphoning the boiling water into the bath. There was a bucket lavatory outside the back door. The family lived for the most part in the living room. This was about 12 ft² and we did everything there. There was even a coal-fired range on which we cooked. Today the building would have been condemned.

At the age of 17, I came to an entrance to Oxford. I was asked to supply not only my own birth certificate but those of my mother and father. When I obtained my mother’s, I was astonished to find her father had placed “his mark”, a large X, on it. The grammar school was certainly an agent of social mobility. In my case it moved to being from working class to social elite in two generations. It is no surprise that my experiences were to be remarkably varied.

Ian Searle



Courtesy of Facebook

Eating Out & About

We all enjoy eating out. No preparation, no washing up, no dirty pans, no sweat. Sadly, the move from the trusted products of one's own kitchen can sometimes be an expensive disappointment, but occasionally we discover an unexpected gem of gastronomic delight that doesn't have Michelin stars or break the bank. We then either keep our lips firmly shut fearing over exposure, crowd generating Trip Adviser reviews and subsequent drop in quality, or we dash to the computer with our own rave reviews and trust the chefs to cope with the crowds. Or we generously share our knowledge with a few friends and hope it will help a struggling industry to keep up standards. Sharing my experiences with the discerning readers of the u3a Argus will hopefully be in the last category, particularly as I'll try to keep my reviews local and within the geographical remit of Carrick u3a.

So, what are my qualifications for donning the mantle of Restaurant Critic?

Quite simply-I am obsessed with food. From a childhood living through times of social and gastronomic austerity, through the post war revelation of '*foreign food*', to years of catering abroad for clients both rich and celebrated, or poor and hungry, to a return to the riches of Cornwall and the respected poverty of the pasty, I have a long track record of obsession....

So, every month I would like to share experiences good and bad which might occasionally introduce you to an unfamiliar eatery which could become a favourite treat.

Verdicts on venues will inevitably sometimes differ. Sometimes the glory or otherwise of the location will affect my appreciation of the food, but I will admit to this in the review. After all - it's the total experience that counts. Memorable meals are often more circumstance than cooking.

So here we go for an **early evening meal** -

We drive down a tree lined hill to **Budock Water** near **Falmouth** where a converted church has suffered many transformations in its time. From Meadery to doss-house to Burger Joint to Restaurant with Bar.

It is now **CJ's at the Sanctuary** with designated parking opposite. A mid-price, mid-range restaurant where the food is far better than you might expect judging from the interesting but well-worn interior and furnishings. There is a small collection of 80's memorabilia (*a passion of the owner?*) and it has a spacious layout retaining much of the character of the original church. Had this been taken over by a massively endowed national restaurant chain it could have been a truly spectacular venue. Instead, it is being run by a couple who are clearly better cooks than interior designers.

Ignore the 70's toilets (*up a length of stair and survivors from the Meadery?*), the sagging sofa (very comfortable) the well-worn furniture, the grubby carpet and quaint school dinner cruets (*easily up-graded?*), sit down and be charmed by the eager if uninformed young waitress who will tell you the daily specials and get you your drinks. The food is of a good standard, cooked by Paul James who genuinely wants to provide fresh food locally sourced wherever possible and most Trip Adviser reviews have been rhapsodic.

I admit to being hard to please - almost in the **AA Gill mode** - and I have probably been over critical of the ambiance. Most visitors like the quirky unique setting that I have just rubbished, so ignore me and come to your own conclusions.

Order the scallops with chorizo – perfectly cooked with the precious corral intact - why do some chefs remove that delicate morsel? Or the linguine with wild mushrooms and truffle oil - rich and well flavoured and pasta cooked just right. These were the best of our four choices. We also chose mussels which were fine, not too salty and squid which was ok, but would have benefitted from tempura rather than crunchy batter, with dipping sauce which must have come straight from the bottle.



Image courtesy of Trip Advisor

This review is limited as our purse did not extend to the tempting lobster dishes. We keep such luxuries for special occasions and usually phone in advance to query daily deliveries, as it is actually possible to be fobbed off with frozen crustaceans! Yes-even here in Cornwall! However - other reviews have been ecstatic and we may visit again to compare CJ's top of the range seafood with more famous restaurants.

We perused the sensible short wine list, all well-chosen, mid-range examples of characteristic wines - (*full marks for the Puglian Primitivo*) with reasonable prices, but it was a mid-week treat watching the pennies, so we opted for the excellent Dynamite Valley Black Charge stout.

All in all, a satisfactory night out and at a very reasonable cost - £55 for me and the silent Blond who was reluctantly too full for pudding.

No disappointments but no great thrills. It takes something exceptional for me to blow whistles.

The next place comes close, despite it being a **modest daytime venue** -

After a morning shopping what better sanctuary than the **Truro Museum Cafe?**



Image courtesy of Cornwall Museum

Good for coffee and perfect for lunch. It has comfortable sofas downstairs, reasonably spaced tables upstairs and when the weather is good there are tables in the sun outside. All this and delicious healthy breakfast and lunch menus, from simple buttered toast or sumptuous cakes and a range of coffees and teas, to satisfying lunch dishes, the choice is good and well-priced.



Image courtesy of Cornwall Museum

Sandwiches are hearty and imaginative and come (grilled or not) with a salad garnish for £9.95p. The bewildering choice of colourful mixed salads are usually fresh and interesting with a full selection for £11.50p. I say 'usually' as I once had a limp wet and overdressed plate which I am sure was unusual. There is a choice of excellent home-made dishes from £6.95 to £12.95. My personal favourite dish is the smashed avocado and poached egg, even better when topped with smoked salmon. The bread is good - particularly the focaccia.

You can wash it all down with free water or cold beer or 187ml glass of perfectly adequate wine from £5.75p - £6.75p.

For those with grandchildren in tow there is a '**Kids Box**' bargain at £6.50p. and a range of milkshakes and smoothies, enough to please the most discerning young palate, with which you can blackmail them into the museum for an educational hour or two.

Buon Appetito

Leonie Whitton

Book Review: We Solve Murders by Richard Osman

Published by Random House UK 2024

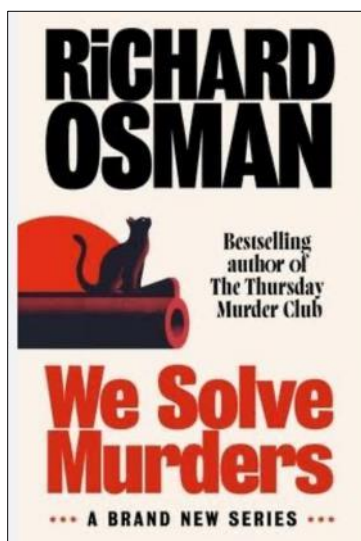


Image courtesy of
goodbooks.com

Fans of the Thursday Murder Club series will be pleased to know that Osman's latest book has all his usual trademarks: witty one-liners; easy to read short chapters; a fast-moving plot; lots of up-to-date social media; and laugh out loud scenarios – not forgetting mentions of TV game shows and junk food. Plenty of boxes ticked there.

There's lots of new names to absorb, with several strong female roles. **AMY WHEELER** is married to **ADAM**, and works for Maximum Impact Solutions, the world's biggest close protection agency. She is currently staying on an island, protecting **ROSIE D'ANTONIO**, the world's best-selling novelist '*if you don't count Lee Child.*'

Her father-in-law, **STEVE**, was in the Metropolitan Police Force for 25 years but is now enjoying a peaceful retirement in **AXLEY**, a village in the New Forest. A widower, he was married to **DEBBIE**, who sadly '*left her life behind one rainy January day.*'

Steve has started up an agency solving local crimes but it's not exactly taxing and his main interests are caring for **TROUBLE**, his cat, and the Wednesday night quizzes at The Brass Monkey pub, which he never misses.

Steve and Amy get on well, and he's aware that she had an unhappy childhood: '*Violence had been ever-present in her life. Self-protection had been a life-long necessity for her, so the idea of protecting others seemed a natural fit.*'

The plotline revolves around '**influencers**' being killed, and after five murders in just over 100 pages Amy and Steve join forces to '**solve murders**'.

I liked Osman's 'therapy -speak', such as '*Don't be jealous – you can live with unhappiness, but bitterness will kill you.*'; '*I refuse to fear death, but I do fear life*'; '*The only way out of a corner is to fight.*' As for humour, Osman's two-page dissertation on poached eggs on toast is a masterpiece.

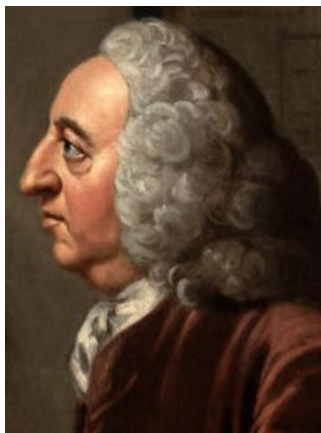
He's very perceptive of older people's feelings, for example this passage towards the end of the book: '*Steve is in contemplative mood as he walks along the quayside of Dubai Marina. Here he is, 3,000 miles from home, from the sofa that's been moulded into the shape of his backside, and the picture of Debbie that smiles at him from the bedside table. He yearns for all this, physically aches. To be able to shut his own front door, to shut out the world.*'

Osman is aware that mourning is a long and complex process, and he has some good advice for coping with loss. '*No regrets. We live our lives forwards, not backwards. So always make the best of what's in front of you.*'

He ends with the longest acknowledgment section I've ever read, and the promise of a Thursday Murder Club sequel next year to look forward to.

Sue Amer

Bath Oliver biscuits; the Cornish link



William Oliver

Image courtesy of Wikipedia

William Oliver was born in **Ludgvan** in 1695 and received his medical training at **Cambridge** graduating in 1720. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in 1729.

His first medical position was in **Plymouth** in 1724 where he pioneered smallpox inoculation. In December 1728 he moved to **Bath**, where he became one of its most eminent physicians. Through his friendship with fellow Cornishman **Ralph Allen**, he met many leading literary figures, they together with **Richard (Beau) Nash** and **John Wood** (architect) founded Bath General Hospital.

Oliver is remembered as the inventor of the **Bath Oliver biscuit**, intended to alleviate the dietary excesses of some of his patients.



Photo courtesy of google images

Before his death in 1764, he gave the recipe to his coachman Atkins together with some sacks of flour and £100. Atkins set up shop in Bath where the biscuits were made for many years. Each biscuit is still stamped with a portrait of Dr Oliver.

Jean King

Daffodils

My wife Anne and I happened to visit the National Trust House at **Cotehele** in March unaware that it had special displays to celebrate the daffodil as the birth flower of March.



I didn't know that the daffodil was the birth flower for the month of March. But it makes sense as it is wonderful to see those bright yellow trumpet shaped flowers emerging in early spring representing new beginnings and hope after the gloom of winter.

The sign at the entrance to Cotehele also made me question whether there is any difference between daffodils and narcissus. So whenever in doubt refer to Google! Apparently "**Narcissus**" is the botanical name for the genus of flowers we call daffodils so it would seem all daffodils are narcissus. But maybe not all narcissus are daffodils, all very confusing.

However, the two terms conjure up images of different kinds of flowers for some people. I must admit I tended to think of the big blowsy bright yellow trumpet flowers as daffodils and other trumpet shaped flowers especially the shorter stem varieties as narcissus, but I stand corrected now!

This brings me to the Greek myth that concerns a handsome youth named **Narcissus** who fell in love with his own reflection in water. A pretty hopeless sort of love and thus he pined away until he died and the gods turned him into the flower which became known by his name. Was he coloured bright yellow by any chance!

Here are several photos of the displays at Cotehele.



In the potting shed at Cotehele, shown in the photo, there are very interesting panels explaining the history of daffodil growing in that region of the River Tamar.



The earliest types of produce grown by the Tamar valley market gardeners were apples and cherries, but daffodils, strawberries and other fruits and flowers soon followed. Throughout the season there would always be some produce to be picked, packed and sent to market via boats on the Tamar to **Plymouth** and then by train to **Covent Garden**.

In 1880 a farmer named Mr Jackson changed the fortune of the industry. He sent a few bunches of his late flowering "**Tamar Double White**" to Devonport market. This highly scented daffodil then became a huge success at Covent Garden.

Many varieties of daffodils that were grown for the market can still be found in the meadow at Cotehele. They claim to have some 250 varieties.



Jon Skelton

Creative writing: I was so embarrassed by...

Today was the day. I smiled – I could feel it in my bones or was that in my water?
It was a beautiful summer's day. Clear and dry with a forecast for sunshine all day, just what we needed.

I parked the trailer in the allocated spot and gazed around. The whole field was a lush green, the grass sparkling, the sun starting to warm and soon it would all become part of the showground. I had arrived early but others had arrived even earlier and the site was one big kaleidoscope of colour and movement. The area was divided into sections and people, animals and produce were moving to their slots in a steady organised stream.

As farmers recognised each other there was time for a quick nod or comment but the sole purpose was for everyone and everything to be in place before the gates opened, prompting me out of the cabin. This was my first entry at the Royal Cornwall Show. I had been brought up on a farm and over the years had taken a shine to the dairy so today I planned to show my prize milker, Daisy.

Unfastening the heavy door at the back of the trailer I offered greetings and words of reassurance to Daisy. The cow turned its head towards my voice and replied with a deep bellow. Climbing in I

patted Daisy's side and moved up towards her head, rubbing it and tweaking her ears. Daisy closed her eyes and enjoyed the moment before stamping her hoof to the floor, impatient to be out. I continued talking as I untied the rope and lead Daisy down the slope towards our area. She followed me and, as I tied her and offered water, she gently nosed the grass below. I looked at the other entrants. Some were younger than Daisy but had a restlessness about them which I didn't think would be in their favour. I had milked Daisy by hand for the last 2 years. It was the best way and showed her you cared and appreciated her and in return you got a placid animal who was easier to work with. I stepped back and was pleased with what I saw. Daisy's black and white coat gleamed and her hooves shone. Her ears twitched in the sunlight. Yes, she was ready for the judges.

The Show had been opened this year by the Duke of Edinburgh who I was told had an interest in things connected to the dairy so I half hoped he would be looking when I showed Daisy, might even be one of the judges?

I checked my own appearance - Black trousers, white shirt, hair neatly tied back, just time for a trip to the loos. It was a Portacabin so not exactly luxurious but I checked my face and washed my hands as I listened to the Tanoy announcements. I smiled hearing the strong Cornish dialect and wondered how many would have to ask somebody to translate what had just been said.

My event was one of the first which I was pleased about as this meant I would have time to look around the show. Farmers brought their stock, businesses set up stalls looking for new customers, local bands played and there were always free samples of the lovely farm foods to try. I heard my event being announced. Slipping quickly from the toilet I walked over to Daisy. As I untied her and joined the others, I noticed people were nodding and smiling already and I hadn't even paraded her yet. That was reassuring.

The cows were walked around their section with the judges looking on. I smiled back and nodded to people - everyone was so friendly. The cows were narrowed down from 12 to 4 and stood in a line for the final judgement.

The Head Judge stepped forward and began to hand out the rosettes – 4th, 3rd, oh my, Daisy was either 2nd or 1st. I smiled as I was approached and felt overwhelmed when I was handed 1st but then, to my utter embarrassment, the judge leaned forward and whispered in my ear *“You've got a trail of toilet paper hanging out of your trousers!”*

I do plan to return next year although I think it will be a long time before I live that moment down but still, at least there's one consolation, it wasn't Royalty passing the information on to me!

Jill Dyer

Creative Writing: A Good Clear Out

A man was shot dead in the street, some years ago. It was in the small hours of a cold, winter's night, a dry, calm, no moon or stars kind of a night. I remember because that man was my dad.

I'd suspected my mother was having an affair. I didn't know who with, just suspected. At fifteen, I was that kind of a boy, suspicious, street-wise, didn't miss a thing. Too knowing by half, my mother

used to say. My dad hadn't a clue what was going on under his nose, he was that kind of a man; always saw the best in everyone. He was dead at 41, no age for a good man to be lying in his coffin, but that's what happened to Gordon Pearson.

The police were up a gum tree with this murder. There was no weapon found, no evidence they could pin on anyone. The case was never solved. Not long after the case had gone cold, Jinty Pearson disappeared. You wouldn't believe my mother could just up and leave after something so terrible had happened. By the way, her real name was Thelma but she called herself Jinty. She went out one morning and never came back, no note, no goodbye, nothing. I had my suspicions, but never breathed a word, because I was that kind of a boy, secretive, close, kept myself to myself.

The authorities wouldn't let me live on my own. I could've done, easy, I knew how to look after myself. They made me go and live with my Nan, a few streets away. She was my grandmother, on my mum's side. You'd probably have called her a rough diamond, and you'd have been right. There wasn't much love lost between us, but we rubbed along, until she snuffed it. That was thirty years ago.

Now I'm moving out, into a nice little retirement flat, with a warden to keep an eye on things, no maintenance or gardening, no responsibilities. My new place is pretty small, but will suit me down to the ground. I'll take some furniture from here to make it comfortable, and get rid of the rest of the stuff. The sale of this house has left me with a bit of spare cash, so I'm treating myself to a couple of fancy armchairs and a nice big TV. You'd do the same if you saw Nan's old chairs I've been making do with. My bum hangs through the rotten old webbing, and the colour on the TV keeps changing to black and white.

This old house has been good to me, especially since Nan went. She wanted me to settle down with a nice girl, but I wasn't that kind of a boy, if you get my drift. I'm sticking labels on all the stuff for the salerooms. Perhaps it should all go, but then it would feel like disposing of Nan's memories. You have to show a bit of respect.

I make a start at the top. I'm completely out of breath after climbing two flights of stairs. Nan's old treadle sewing machine stands under the window in the attic, covered with a dusty, floral cloth. I come over all dizzy and grab on to the side of the sewing table, to steady myself. I almost fall because the bit I grab moves. You'd think the same as me, woodworm, but you'd be wrong; it's a little drawer, curved and hidden between the top of a proper drawer and the flat surface of the table. Lying there, shiny and terrifying, is a small gun, which exactly fits the drawer; could've been made for it, except it was meant for spools and stuff. My knees turn to jelly and my heart thumps as if trying to jump through my rib cage. I slam the drawer shut and sink to the floor.

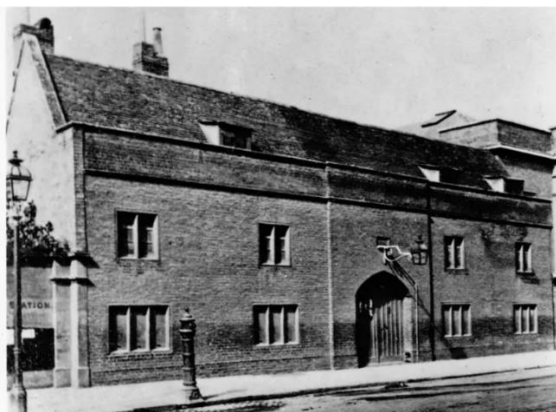
Shock does funny things to your mind and body. I feel as though I'm in one of those dreams, where you're trying to run away and your legs won't work. Only this isn't a dream. I'm on the floor and can't get up. After what feels like hours of struggling, I haul myself onto a rickety chair. I remember I have to get downstairs to fetch the wood glue, but how the hell am I going to get back upstairs again? Short answer, I'm not. I'll stick a label on the machine, and leave the rest to fate.

Ann Mundler

Were they really all Ladies of the Night?

From the reign of **Elizabeth 1**, the senior officials of **Cambridge University** were allowed to arrest any woman who was out after dark on the grounds that she may have been a prostitute. No evidence was needed, there was no trial and sentencing was completely arbitrary. The women were then imprisoned in appalling conditions.

In 1825 the University was given its own **private police force** (via an Act of Parliament) who accompanied the proctors responsible for discipline. They were known in the town as '*Bulldogs.*' Throughout the 19th century over 6,000 women were arrested by the proctors, and sentenced by the Vice Chancellor to imprisonment in **The Spinning House**, which had a notorious reputation.



The Spinning House



Inside the Spinning House

Inspectors called for improvements to be made to the prison but it was not until the death of 19-year-old **Elizabeth Howe** in 1864 after '*being placed in a damp bed*' in The Spinning House that the University was forced to make minor changes to the prison. Anyone associated with it would have found it very difficult to find employment on their release and there is evidence that some women lost their business as dressmakers, even those who had been found to be innocent.

The aim allegedly was to protect the undergraduates, and the women were only supposed to be arrested if found in their company. However, when **Jane Elsdon**, aged 17, was arrested in 1891, despite being alone at the time, there was an outcry about the lack of due process for women. A few months later, another 17-year-old, **Daisy Hopkins**, was also arrested despite a man admitting to soliciting her. This became a landmark case still referred to today, after a judge had to decide whether she was being imprisoned legally or illegally. It made national and international headlines, and in 1894 there was an Act of Parliament revoking the University's right to arrest and imprison women.

Historian **Caroline Biggs** has been researching the archives of Cambridge University prison and found many examples of the treatment of working-class women in the town, particularly during the 19th century. Her findings were published in a book '**The Spinning House**' in March 2024.

Sue Hutt

Adrian's Pick of the Month: Hats & Shoes









All images courtesy of Carrick u3a Photography group

Quiz

TV - who played

1. "Genial" Harry Grout in Porridge?
2. Private Godfrey in Dad's Army?
3. Ross Poldark in the rerun?
4. James Herriot in the first series?
5. Betty Spencer in Some Mothers do 'Ave 'Em?
6. Villanelle in Killing Eve?
7. Lady Mary Crawley in Downton Abbey?
8. Inspector Fowler in The Thin Blue Line?
9. D.I Fleming in Line of Duty?
10. Celia in Last Tango in Halifax?

In which European city would you find the following?

1. The Sagrada Familia?
2. The Colosseum?
3. Charles Bridge?
4. The Brandenburg Gate?
5. The Acropolis?
6. The Tuileries Gardens?
7. The Basilica Cistern?
8. The Anne Frank House?
9. The Uffizi Gallery?
10. The Tivoli Gardens?
11. The Game of Thrones studio?
12. Techniquet
13. The Atomium
14. The headquarters of The World Bank?
15. The Schönbrunn Palace




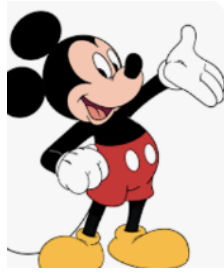


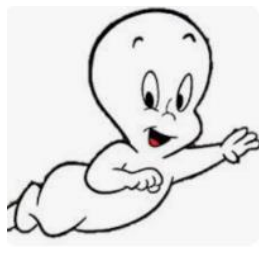









Complete song titles with weather related words

1. Singing in the _____
2. Ain't no _____
3. _____ Days and Mondays
4. Blowin' in the _____
5. _____ Keep Falling on my Head
6. Walking on _____
7. Candle in the _____
8. Here comes the _____
9. Fire and _____
10. Electrical _____

Gene Kelly
 Bill Withers
 The Carpenters
 Bob Dylan
 B.J.Thomas
 Katrina and the Waves
 Elton John
 The Beatles
 James Taylor
 U2

[Answers on page 30](#)

Picture Quiz: Cartoon Characters

 1	 2	 3	 4
 5	 6	 7	 8
 9	 10	 11	 12
 13	 14	 15	 16

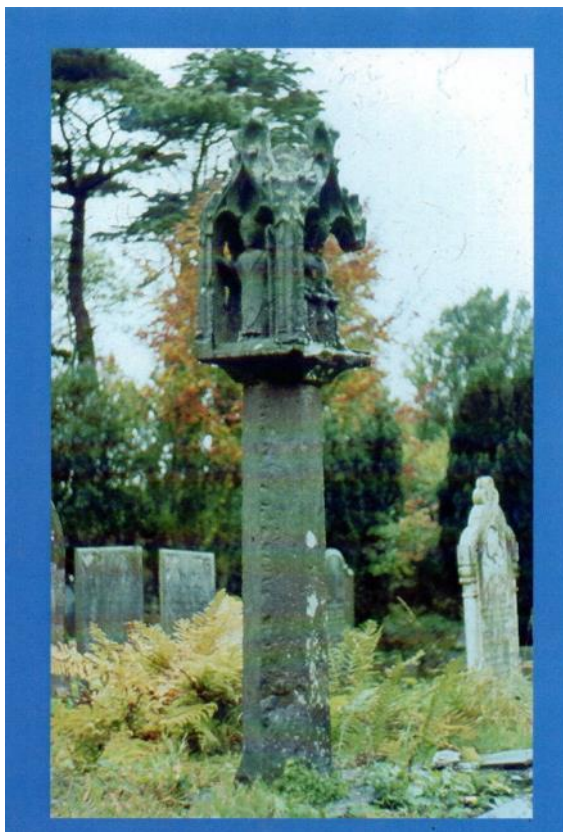
[Answers on page 31](#)

Poem: Heed the Warning

*Twas about February time last year
 I noticed I had a problem, with my rear!
 At least twice a day, I had to sit on the loo,
 Not my usual pattern, flippin' right to do.
 Homemade Christmas cake and pickled onions all gone
 And still my problem went on an' on.
 Tis about time to put it right,
 So I rang the Doc, and told him my plight,
 He gave me some pills and that was that.
 If symptoms persist, please do come back.
 Then shortly after, Bare Knees - Woolly Hat,
 Dropped a lil packet on my mat.
 Oh, what's the postman bought me today?
 'Bowel Cancer screening Test 'is what it did say.
 So easy, I did it that very same day
 Went down Post office and sent it away.
 Still taking the pills, giving them a while to settle in,
 Was thinking of ringing doc, nothing really doin'
 Then a few days later, Bare Knees -Woolly Hat
 With a magazine, dropped a letter on my mat.
 Sure enough twas addressed to me,
 Telling me I had to have a Colonoscopy.
 So off I went for them to explore,
 My head full of stories from those who'd gone before.
 Not half as bad as I thought it could've been,
 Watched the whole thing on quite a large screen.
 The last corner was a bit of a bummer
 several polyps later and there it was,. a big bad tumour.
 Was told it was cancer and tattooed with a tag
 because it was on my right side I wont need a bag.
 Having been a bit sedated and not really taken it in,
 My head was flooded with info, not sure what's happenin'*

The St Mawgan Lantern Cross

In the churchyard at St Mawgan in Pydar, just a stone's throw from Newquay airport, stands one of the best-preserved examples of a late medieval lantern cross.



The Lantern Cross

Image copied from a purchased postcard by the author

Dated to the second half of the fifteenth century, it's listed Grade II*. Thought to be in its original location near the top of the steps by the church porch, it consists of three parts: the cross-head, a hexagonal shaft and a small hexagonal base, set on a low stone platform.

Lantern crosses were highly decorated; each had four faces containing 3-D carvings, which were probably coloured. In the book, **ILLUMINATING OUR lantern Crosses**, its co-author Andrew Langdon says,

'The crosses were carved when devotion to the saints was at its greatest and symbolism, imagery and icon worship at its peak.

The English parish church was full of colour, with stained glass windows and wall paintings depicting stories from the bible. The carved roof bosses, screens and sometimes even bench ends were painted and sometimes gilded.

The lantern cross was an extension of this imagery out in the churchyard.'

There are 17 of them in Cornwall but many more would have been lost following the Reformation. Some were deliberately buried or hidden, so the St Mawgan cross is one of the fortunate few to survive almost intact.

By convention, the four faces of each cross-head display Christ's crucifixion in one variant or another on the principal face, and an image of the Virgin Mary and Child on the reverse. The remaining faces would normally have an image of a saint with a close relationship to the parish church, and an ecclesiastic, such as a bishop, abbot or a priest.

At St Mawgan the Holy Trinity is depicted on its east face, with a scene of the Annunciation on the west face. The crowned Virgin Mary wears a long flowing pleated gown, standing at a reading desk or prie-dieu. The angel Gabriel's wings can be seen in the bottom left-hand corner. The north side displays a figure of a bishop wearing a chasuble and mitre, holding a crozier in his left hand. On the south side is a different bishop, with clear facial features.

The cross-head has been repaired several times; in 1986 over £1,500 was raised by voluntary contributions towards the '**Lantern Cross Appeal**', and after careful restoration it was re-dedicated later that year.

Some of the crosses that were lost were discovered and restored by the Victorians. In 1838 a cross-head and a 10' shaft were found deeply buried in a trench in the churchyard at Lanteglos by Fowey, which were re-erected in 1841. After being cleaned in 2006 the shaft's striking decorated gothic carvings could be fully appreciated once again. The south face of the cross depicts a curly-headed baby Jesus, sitting on Mary's lap. Both images have doll-like faces and facial features are visible.

Langdon explains that lantern crosses may have served several purposes.

'They would have been a focal point in the churchyard, chapel-yard or marketplace. The sculpted images could be used for devotion in the same way as those inside the parish churches. They could be used in processions by the clergy and congregation, and be an object of veneration by individuals or groups. The cross could also be seen as a sign of the wealth of the parish and its status.'

Although the St Mawgan cross-head carvings are worn, it's well worth visiting. Being without a camera I was able to buy a postcard of it in the church.

Sue Amer

Image courtesy: The original postcard was produced by Benchmark Software (01458) 444010 and 92 graphic design (01458) 447534



u3a Carrick Gardening group win the Silver Medal at The Falmouth Flower Show

Quiz answers

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8. Inspector Fowler in The Thin Blue Line?
9. D.I Fleming in Line of Duty?
10. Celia in Last Tango in Halifax?

Peter Vaughn
 Arnold Ridley
 Aidan Turner
 Christopher Timothy
 Michele Dotrice
 Jodie Comer
 Michelle Dockery
 Rowan Atkinson
 Vicky McClure
 Anne Reid

In which European city would you find the following?

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12. The Colosseum?
13. Charles Bridge?
14. The Brandenburg Gate?
15. The Acropolis?
16. The Tuileries Gardens?
17. The Basilica Cistern?
18. The Anne Frank House?
19. The Uffizi Gallery?
20. The Tivoli Gardens?
21. The Game of Thrones studio?
22. Techniquet
23. The Atomium
24. The headquarters of The World Bank?
25. The Schönbrunn Palace
















Barcelona
 Rome
 Prague
 Berlin
 Athens
 Paris
 Istanbul
 Amsterdam
 Florence
 Copenhagen
 Dublin
 Cardiff
 Brussels
 Washington DC
 Vienna

Complete the song titles with weather related words

26. Singing in the **RAIN**
27. Ain't no **SUNSHINE**
28. **RAINY** Days and Mondays
29. Blowin' in the **WIND**
30. **RAINDROPS** Keep Falling on my Head
31. Walking on **SUNSHINE**
32. Candle in the **WIND**
33. Here comes the **SUN**
34. Fire and **RAIN**
35. Electrical **STORM**

Gene Kelly
 Bill Withers
 The Carpenters
 Bob Dylan
 B.J.Thomas
 Katrina and the Waves
 Elton John
 The Beatles
 James Taylor
 U2

Picture Quiz answers

			
Top Cat	Scooby Doo	Jerry	Mickey Mouse
			
Charlie Brown	Yogi Bear	Casper	Snoopy
			
Sylvester	Tweety Pie	Donald Duck	Woody Woodpecker
			
Fred Flintstone	Popeye	Goofy	Bugs Bunny

Thoughts for the day

"You can't use reason to convince anyone out of an argument that they didn't use reason to get into."

Neil deGrasse Tyson

PHILOSOPHICAL RHYTHMS



“ Human greatness does not lie in wealth or power, but in character and goodness.”

~ Anne Frank

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 – Saturday 26th April 2025

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- 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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