

The Seven Seas Tattler Issue 7.09 February 2024



Welcome to the February Tattler. In 2024, February this year is not an "ordinary" month! It is a leap year so a day gets added. The term leap year probably comes from the fact that a fixed date in the Gregorian calendar normally advances one day of the week from one year to the next, but the day of the week in the 12 months following the leap day (from 1 March through 28 February of the following year) will advance two days due to the extra day, thus leaping over one day in the week. For example, Christmas Day (25 December) fell on a Friday in 2020, Saturday in 2021, Sunday in 2022, and Monday in 2023, but then will "leap" over Tuesday to fall on a Wednesday in 2024.

This month we feature the posthumous recognition of Petty Officer Charles French, the largest cruise ship to date and the lowdown on rabbits and hares! We touch on the Rio Carnival, get to know some veterans of their sport and share a delicious Strawberry Vanilla Sponge Cake recipe. We hope you find a few items that interest you, bring a smile maybe, or even provide some food for thought.

As always we are very keen to receive feedback, comment and contributions. These can be sent to Jonathan or Colette (jonathanagolding@gmail.com; colettepatience@gmail.com).

From the Chair

Dress Code. Members are reminded that the dress code, including guests, for the Club is a collared shirt (No T shirts). Avoid embarrassment of members and/or their guests not being served by the bar staff because they are inappropriately dressed.

Members are also reminded that they are responsible for the conduct of their guests whilst in the Club. It is considered inappropriate that members leave the Club, leaving their guests behind. Guest may be refused service from the bar if their hosts are no longer present.

See you at the Club

Kevin

Club Manager's Report

**Congratulations to our January
100 Club Draw Winners**

Mr P Van Aswegen - R300

Mrs S Belshaw - R300

Capt KE Packer (Ret) - R300

Mr M Nixon - R1000

We wish the following members a very Happy Birthday. May the year ahead be filled with good health and happiness. For our usual bit of fun we note some historic events and dates.

Cdr O. Pfuhl (Ret) – 01 February

1884: First Volume of the Oxford English Dictionary is Published:

The first part of the first volume of the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) was published on February 1, 1884. The complete dictionary was eventually published in multiple volumes over several decades.

Mr P. Berrange – 01 February

2003: Space Shuttle Columbia Disaster:

The Space Shuttle Columbia disintegrated upon re-entry into Earth's atmosphere on February 1, 2003. All seven crew members tragically lost their lives.

Dr J.W.J. Van Wyk – 03 February

February 3 1959: A plane crash claimed the lives of Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens, and J.P. "The Big Bopper" Richardson, a tragedy later referred to as "The Day the Music Died."

Mr W. Fourie – 03 February

February 3, 1809 - Felix Mendelssohn:

German composer, conductor, and pianist of the Romantic era, known for his compositions such as "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

Mr D.S.T Tunbridge – 08 February.

February 8 1587: Mary, Queen of Scots, was executed in England after being implicated in plots to assassinate Queen Elizabeth I.

Lt Cdr K.W. Baker (Ret) – 09 February

February 9, 1943 - Joe Pesci:

American actor, known for his roles in films like "Goodfellas" and "Home Alone."

Mr P.V Dines – 13 February

Battle of Dien Bien Phu (February 13 – May 7, 1954):

The Battle of Dien Bien Phu was a significant confrontation in the First Indochina War between the French Union and the Viet Minh. The Viet Minh emerged victorious, leading to the end of French colonial rule in Vietnam.

Mr H.A. De Jongh – 13 February

1542: Catherine Howard, the fifth wife of King Henry VIII, is executed:

Catherine Howard, the young Queen of England, was executed for adultery, marking a tragic chapter in the Tudor history.

Mr E.J. Smith – 14 February

Battle of Agincourt (February 14, 1415):

The Battle of Agincourt was a key conflict during the Hundred Years' War between England and France. Despite being heavily outnumbered, the English, led by King Henry V, secured a remarkable victory.

Capt R.H.L. Harrison (Ret) – 15 February

February 15 1898: The USS Maine exploded in Havana Harbour, contributing to the start of the Spanish-American War.

Mr B. Lowson – 15 February

February 15, 1493: Columbus Returns to Spain after First Voyage:

Christopher Columbus returned to Spain on his third and final voyage to the Americas, marking the end of his first journey in 1493.

February 15 1564: Galileo Galilei, the Italian astronomer, physicist, and mathematician, was born in Pisa, Italy.

Cdr A. Schulze – 16 February

February 16 1959: Fidel Castro became the Prime Minister of Cuba after overthrowing Fulgencio Batista's regime.

Mr T. Van Zyl – 17 February

February 17, 1930: Nylon (Patent No. 1,757,504)

Wallace Carothers, working for DuPont, received a patent for the synthetic polymer nylon, which would go on to revolutionize the textile industry and be used in various applications.

Mr G. Mc Queen – 17 February

February 17 1600: Giordano Bruno, an Italian philosopher, was burned at the stake in Rome for heresy.

Capt G. Filmalter (Ret) – 18 February

February 18, 1970: Range Rover

The Range Rover, a luxury sport utility vehicle, was launched by British Leyland. It went on to become an iconic and influential model in the SUV segment.

Mr C.T. Tosio – 20 February

February 20, 1927 - Sidney Poitier:

Bahamian-American actor, film director, author, and the first African American to win an Academy Award for Best Actor.

R Adm (JG) E.T. Beddy (Ret) – 20 February

February 20, 1966 - Cindy Crawford:

Cindy Crawford, the American supermodel and actress.

Mr G.A. Hewitt – 24 February

February 24, 1955 - Alain Prost:

Alain Prost, the French Formula One racing driver.

Capt W. Stassen – 26 February

February 26, 1878: Safety Pin (Patent No. 198,450)

Walter Hunt received a patent for the safety pin, providing a simple and effective way to fasten clothing.

Capt D.P. De Wet (Ret) – 28 February

February 28, 1993: Waco Siege Begins (United States)

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) attempted to execute a search warrant.

We welcome the following new members to our club:

Captain Vusumuzi Andries Mabula married to Vumeka and resides in Clivia Road Montclair. Vusumuzi is currently serving at the Fleet Command in Simon's Town.

Cdr Steve Artman (Ret) married to Kathryn and resides in Appaloosa Crescent Table View. Steve is retired from the South African Navy.

Lt Cdr Peter John Underwood (RN) (Ret) married to Yvonne and resides in Afrikander Road Simon's Town. Peter, who is a past Vice Commodore and past Treasurer of the FBYC is a freelance Corporate Systems Consultant.

Lt Patrick Edward John Pols (Ret) married to Jacqui and resides at the Seven Oaks Farm Bree River. Patrick is retired from the South African Navy and is currently a wine Farmer.

Mr Eric William Mawhinney resides at Living Waters, Runciman Drive Simon's Town. Eric has more than 30 years association with the South African Navy as a supplier of electronic equipment.

Mr Charles Hugh Ryan resides in Hillside Road Fish Hoek. Charles who is a past member of both the Magalies and Cape Gliding Clubs is a retired Property Lawyer.

Mr James Robert Page who resides in Blue Bay Mews Kommetjie. Jim, who is now retired was a Port Manager of various ports in Africa and the Middle East.

Aye,

Glen

January Quiz

The January 2024 Quiz was well attended. Thanks to the six teams!

Tattler - Some of the contestants "at it"!



Seventy questions asked and answered! The winning team (pictured at their table) who snuck up at the end were Nadima Smith, Jim Page, Phil and Eileen Maybanks. Well done!

We hope to continue receiving good turnouts. Come and join the competitive fun. Here is a sample set of questions. The answers can be found elsewhere in Tattler

Category - Sport

- 1) How many crew, in total, participate in the annual Oxford vs Cambridge boat race?
- 2) Winter Olympics - Speed skating. What is the record for the men's 1500m? 1min 40.17, 2min 40.17 3min 10.17?
- 3) Which water sport event featured in the 2020 summer Olympics for the first time (South Africa bagged a silver medal) ? Skiing, kite-boarding, surfing?
- 4) Which country won the 2023 Rugby Six Nations competition?
- 5) Which rider stopped Ducati getting all top 4 places in the 2023 Motogp competition? For a bonus point, what brand of bike did he ride?
- 6) Which nation was the beaten finalist in the 2023 cricket world cup?
- 7) (As at early January 2024). Which nation is the top ranked Women rugby team?
- 8) The men's javelin record of 98.48 meters was set by Jan Železný (CZE). When? May 1996, May 2006, May 2016?
- 9) Who has the most Formula 1 starts in moto racing history (377 starts!)
- 10) Who has scored the most football (soccer) World Cup goals? Pele, Lionel Messi, Miroslav Klose, Gerd Muller?

Answers elsewhere in Tattler



Giant Bluefin Tuna caught by the trek fishermen. Photo from Jillian and Brian's fabulous book. Fish Hoek Beach. Circa 1967. Facebook Group Cape of Diab.

Maritime and Naval - Stories, News and Sport

Local is :Lekker” – SA’s First Locally Designed and Produced Unmanned Surface Vessel

Source: Contributed by Eddie Noble

Tattler – Thank you Eddie Noble for this interesting contribution. We look forward to hearing more as the project progresses.

The history of unmanned vessels in the maritime environment dates back to the early twentieth century, when the first remotely controlled boats and torpedoes were developed for military purposes. Since then, unmanned vessels have evolved into various types and sizes, ranging from small underwater drones to large autonomous surface ships. Unmanned vessels have been used for a variety of missions, such as mine countermeasures, ocean exploration, environmental monitoring, search and rescue, and scientific research.



Lately unmanned surface vessels (USVs) are being used extensively in the conflict between Russia and the Ukraine, and the Ukrainians have successfully sunk many Russian vessels with these unmanned vessels. Now the unmanned vessels are also being used to cause havoc in the Arabian Gulf and Red Sea with the conflict in Yemen.

The swarming concept of sending a dozen or more of such lethal unmanned boats poses a serious threat to any naval force.

However, the use of USV can also aid in the defence against such threats, but more importantly in non-conflict times, serve as a valuable platform for the monitoring and protection of marine protected areas and installations, surveillance and patrol of national key points, extend the reach of maritime domain awareness systems, etc.

Noble Concentric Solutions, a local maritime consulting company managed and led by Eddie Noble (a Club member), has been awarded a contract from a Middle East research organisation for a multi-purpose USV. Led by Eddie, this will be the first locally designed, built and tested USV in South Africa. To be designed by Icarus Marine and will be built in Port Elizabeth by Legacy Marine. The systems installed and integration thereof will be done by Noble Concentric Solution.

The USV, named SEA SERPENT, is 9.2m long, has a top speed of 40 knots (single Volvo Penta D6-400 engine with a stern drive and duo prop) and a range endurance of 390Nm. The vessel is fully autonomous (IMO Level 4) – the USV ship is able to make decisions and determine actions by itself, full anti-collision avoidance, route planning, return to port, etc. Using state of the AI processing, the autonomous system uses all navigation sensors and cameras to perform its autonomous control of the vessel.

Control and monitoring of onboard systems and surveillance cameras is done through a base Control Station. The USV can operate line of sight and also beyond line of sight using SatCom and meshed radio networks.

The USV, although unmanned, has a space for a helmsman. Why you ask? Well, local Maritime Safety Authority are unsure how to test and approve the USV as a vessel in open seas when operating autonomously, and hence for initial trials, we have had to make allowance for a human being onboard to monitor and control the USV if need be. But this human control won't be necessary.



Furthermore, the SEA SERPENT has a dedicated mission bay which can be used for deploying a variety of later-added equipment. A typical addition will be a tethered UAV to do aerial surveillance and over-the-horizon observations.



On the bow provision is made for a strengthened mounting which could include a remote-controlled weapon system, a fire monitor (for firefighting at sea) or a lifting device. For the version being constructed now, no weapons are being installed.

Construction begins early February and sea trials will commence in September of this year – so watch this space for further updates on this exciting locally produced USV.

US Navy – Names Destroyer after WW11 Hero Charles J. French

Source: Maritime Executive

Petty Officer Charles Jackson French.

The U.S. Navy has named its next destroyer after a World War II hero, Petty Officer Charles Jackson French, known as the "Human Tugboat" for his efforts to tow injured shipmates to safety.

French, an orphan, joined the Navy in 1937 and served one tour as a mess attendant aboard the cruiser USS Houston. He left the Navy with an honourable discharge in November 1941 and moved to Omaha, but not for long.

He had been out of the service for barely a month when the Japanese armed forces attacked Pearl Harbour.

He re-enlisted and was assigned to the high speed transport USS Gregory, a former destroyer refitted to carry Marines and launch boats for amphibious assault operations.

After a training workup in the spring and summer of 1942, USS Gregory and three sister ships headed west to join the Guadalcanal campaign, the first shoreside step in the Pacific Theatre "island-hopping" strategy. Gregory's Marine Corps complement was part of the first assault wave at Guadalcanal on August 7. After the landing, the transport worked in the area to shuttle supplies and patrol for Japanese submarines.

In the early hours of September 5, USS Gregory and sister ship USS Little had finished a transport mission to Savo Island and were transiting just offshore. At 0056 hours, their crews saw cannon fire in the distance.

Three Japanese destroyers - Yudachi, Hatsuyuki and Murakumo - had snuck into position and were bombarding the Marine Corps emplacements at Henderson Field. Before the lightly-armed Gregory and Little could flee, they were silhouetted against the night by a string of flares, which had been dropped by a Navy pilot who thought he was illuminating an enemy submarine. The Japanese destroyer crews spotted the transports, opened fire, and their cannon fire left both Gregory and Little disabled and sinking. Gregory's commanding officer, Lt. Cmdr. Harry F. Bauer, ordered to abandon ship. The bombardment did not entirely cease: At 01:23, the Japanese destroyers began shelling the survivors in the water.



Those in the water had a choice: stay at sea and hope to evade Japanese fire or a shark attack, or swim for shore and risk capture or death at the hands of Japanese forces on Guadalcanal. Petty Officer French was aboard a raft of survivors, most of whom were hurt. He tied a rope around his waist, got in the water and swam for hours, hoping to keep the raft out of harm's way. All aboard survived and were safely rescued by a Marine Corps landing craft in the morning.

French received a letter of commendation for his actions, but did not receive a medal in his lifetime. Later in the war, he returned to sea as a messman aboard USS Endicott and USS Frankford, serving in the Atlantic Theatre. French's history after the war is less clear; he died in 1956, at the age of 37, and was buried at a military cemetery in San Diego.

He was posthumously awarded the Navy Marine Corps Medal in 2022. "For too long, we did not recognize Petty Officer French appropriately, but we've begun to correct that," said Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro on Wednesday. "Today, with profound conviction and a heart brimming with long overdue recognition, I am proud to announce the name of our newest destroyer, DDG 142, will be the USS Charles J. French." USS French will be the Navy's 91st Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, and will be built at Ingalls Shipbuilding in Mississippi beginning in 2026.

First voyage of the biggest cruise ship ever built

Source: CNN

World's biggest cruise ship undergoes checks just weeks before first-ever voyage

Royal Caribbean's Icon of the Seas, the world's largest cruise ship, arrived in Ponce, Puerto Rico on January 2.

The world's largest cruise ship has been spotted in the Caribbean ahead of its highly anticipated inaugural voyage later this month.

Royal Caribbean's 1,198-foot Icon of the Seas, due to set sail from Miami, Florida on January 27, 2024, was pictured arriving in Ponce, Puerto Rico for "regulatory inspections" earlier this week.



At 250,800 tons, Icon of the Seas is the first in a new series of ships at Royal Caribbean that will be bigger than anything seen before.

The giant vessel is, notably, more than 6% bigger than the current size leader among cruise ships, Royal Caribbean's 1-year-old Wonder of the Seas. It's able to hold up to 7,600 passengers — a new record for a passenger ship.



Add in 2,350 crew members, and Icon of the Seas could sail at times with nearly 10,000 people on board — also a new record.

Royal Caribbean's massive, 20-deck-high Icon of the Seas arrived in Miami in mid-January after undergoing regulatory inspections in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Icon of the Seas was officially handed over to Royal Caribbean at the Meyer Turku shipyard in Turku, Finland, on November 27, 2023.



The ship, which took 900 days to build, is now preparing to welcome passengers for its maiden voyage, a seven-day trip around the Caribbean.

It will offer year-round Eastern or Western Caribbean adventures from Miami, with the likes of St. Maarten, Mexico, St. Thomas and Royal Caribbean's private island, Perfect Day at CocoCay in the Bahamas, on the itinerary.

Those on board will be able to enjoy a host of exciting features, including the world's largest waterpark at sea, eight neighbourhoods and 40 or so different bars and dining options.

The Hideaway will be home to the world's first suspended infinity pool at sea, while Chill Island will hold four of the ship's seven pools and an adults-only zone. Thrill Island will feature a ropes course/thrill ride that allows guests to swing 154 feet above the ocean, as well as a FlowRider wave simulator and a mini golf course.

"Today, we are celebrating more than a new ship; it's also the celebration of the culmination of more than 50 years of innovation and dreaming at Royal Caribbean to create the ultimate vacation experience," said Royal Caribbean Group President and CEO Jason Liberty during a ceremony at the shipyard in November.

Argentine soccer star Lionel Messi was named as its official icon. According to a statement from the cruise company, Messi, who was named Time Magazine's Athlete of the Year for 2023, will participate in the naming celebration for the vessel later this month.



Royal Caribbean's Icon of the Seas pulls into Miami for the first time.



Category 6 water park on Icon of the Seas.



Central Park, Royal Caribbean's most-loved experience, is more lush and livelier than ever on Icon of the Seas.

Editorial

Picture of the Month

Lions Head at night. Photographer: Oscar Orpen



Seventy Five and counting.....

Two rugby players that one can only admire currently run out to regularly play for the Stormers rugby Team. Between them, they are well over 75 years young! Given the immense resilience required to participate in top level rugby for any period, these are modern day marvels!





Deon will turn 38 later this year and Brok, a mere 39 later this month (February).

Wikipedia records them as follows:

Deon André Fourie (born 25 September 1986) is a South African professional rugby union player who plays for Western Province in the South African Provincial Currie Cup competition. His regular playing positions are Hooker and Loose forward. He is known for his work rate and power at the rucks. He made history as the oldest Springbok debutant and became part of the squad that won the 2023 Rugby World Cup in France, playing 76 minutes in the final, which South Africa won.

Juan "Brok" Harris (born 22 February 1985) is a South African rugby union footballer. He matriculated from Hoërskool Bastion in Krugersdorp, after which he attended Potchefstroom University. He plays as a prop for the Stormers having returned from the Welsh Pro14 side Dragons where he played between 2014 and 2021. He previously played for the Stormers in Super Rugby and Western Province in the Currie Cup. Harris can play on both sides of the scrum, and, in 2017, he had spent the required three years in Wales to qualify for the Welsh national side on residency grounds.

Although Deon plays most of his rugger on the side of the scrum these days, he entered the scene in the middle of the front row. Brok can play either side of the front rank. All of these positions require massive strength and endurance.

A two year old article sums it up: (Source – Wikipedia)

"The Stormers' old brigade proved their worth over the past weekend with massive performances from their most senior players, Brok Harris and Deon Fourie, in their United Rugby Championship win over the Sharks.

Harris, who turns 37 later this month, was playing his 100th match for the Stormers and put in a huge shift in the front row, while 35-year-old Fourie was brilliant all over the park and was deservedly awarded the Man-of-the-Match award.

Harris and Fourie have had startlingly similar careers at the Stormers, with Harris making his debut in 2007 and playing 93 games, and Fourie making his debut in 2008 and playing 84 games.

Back in my day, to qualify to play "old crocks" rugby you needed to be 35. These two make a mockery of such a number.

Tattler - These guys are heroes in my book!

Tattler - Whilst on the subject of "old bullets", let's not forget these two!

Combined age of 73!



Rafael Nadal Parera (born 3 June 1986) is a Spanish professional tennis player. Nadal has been ranked world No. 1 in singles by the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) for 209 weeks, and has finished as the year-end No. 1 five times. Nadal has won 22 Grand Slam men's singles titles, including a record 14 French Open titles. He has won 92 ATP-level singles titles, including 36 Masters titles and an Olympic gold medal, with 63 of these on clay courts. Nadal is one of only two men to complete the Career Golden Slam in singles. His 81 consecutive wins on clay constitute the longest single-surface win streak in the Open Era.

Novak Djokovic (born 22 May 1987) is a Serbian professional tennis player who is currently ranked world No. 1 in singles by the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP). Djokovic has been ranked No. 1 for a record total of 408 weeks in a record 13 different years, and finished as the year-end No. 1 a record eight times. Djokovic has won an all-time record 24 Grand Slam men's singles titles, including a record ten Australian Open titles. Overall, he has won 98 singles titles, including a record 71 Big Titles: 24 majors, a record 40 Masters, and a record seven ATP Finals. Djokovic is the only man in tennis history to be the reigning champion of all four majors at once across three different surfaces. In singles, he is the only man to achieve a triple Career Grand Slam, and the only player to complete a career Golden Masters, a feat he has achieved twice. He was competing in the current Australian Open but failed to keep his hopes of a 25th major title alive, by losing to Jannik Sinner in the semi-finals.

Veteran Sportsmen

The term "veteran age" for a sportsman is not a universally defined concept, and its interpretation can vary based on the sport and the individual athlete's career span. Generally, in the context of sports, the term "veteran" is often associated with athletes who have been competing for an extended period and have accumulated significant experience.

Here are a few examples from different sports where athletes are often considered veterans due to their age and experience:

Tennis: In tennis, players in their 30s are often referred to as veterans. However, many tennis players continue to compete at a high level well into their 30s and even 40s. For example, Roger Federer, and Serena Williams have had successful careers well past what is considered the prime age for tennis

players. Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic are still competing at the highest level at their collective age of 73 years.

Golf: Golf is a sport where players can have long and successful careers. Golfers in their late 30s and beyond are commonly referred to as veterans. Players like Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson, and Ernie Els continued to compete at a high level into their 40s and even beyond. Fred Couples makes Masters history as the oldest player to make the cut at The Augusta Masters in 2023, aged 63 years, six months and five days.

Soccer (Football): In soccer, players in their 30s are often considered veterans, given the physical demands of the sport. However, several footballers, such as Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi, have maintained their elite performance well into their 30s.

Basketball: In basketball, players in their mid to late 30s are often considered veterans. NBA legends like LeBron James and Dirk Nowitzki have extended their careers and remained competitive into their late 30s.

Athletics (Track and Field): Track and field athletes, particularly in distance running, can continue competing at a high level into their 30s and 40s. These athletes are often considered veterans due to their longevity in a physically demanding sport.

Rugby: At 38 years and 199 days, Creevy is the fourth oldest player to play a Rugby World Cup game, after Uruguay's Diego Ormaechea (40 years, 26 days at RWC 1999), Namibia's PJ van Lill (39 years, 297 days at RWC 2023), and Canada's Spence McTavish (38 years, 278 days at RWC 1987).

The term "veteran age" can be subjective and may not always correlate with a decline in performance. Advances in sports science, nutrition, and training methods have allowed athletes to maintain peak performance for more extended periods than in the past. Athletes are continuing to achieve remarkable feats and break records as they age, challenging traditional notions of when a sportsman reaches the veteran stage.

This month sees the annual Rio Carnival



Tattler - Do we have any members attending? Have any members attended this event in the last few years? Decades? If you have, please write in and share your experience with us.

The Carnival in Rio de Janeiro (Portuguese: Carnaval do Rio de Janeiro) is a festival held every year before Lent; it is considered the biggest carnival in the world, with two million people per day on the streets. The first Carnival festival in Rio occurred in 1723.

The typical Rio carnival parade is filled with revellers, floats, and adornments from numerous samba schools which are located in Rio (more than 200 approximately, divided into five leagues/divisions). A samba school is composed of a collaboration of local neighbours that want to attend the carnival together, with some kind of regional, geographical and common background.

There is a special order that every school has to follow with their parade entries. Each school begins with the "comissão de frente" (meaning "Front Commission"), that is the group of people from the school that appear first. Made of ten to fifteen people, the comissão de frente introduces the school and sets the mood and style of their presentation.

These people have choreographed dances in elaborate costumes that usually tell a short story. Following the "comissão de frente" is the first float of the samba school, called "abre-alas" ("Opening Wing"). These are followed by the Mestre-sala and Porta-Bandeira ("Master of Ceremonies and Flag Bearer"), with one to four pairs, one active and three reserve, to lead the dancers, which include the old guard veterans and the "ala das baianas", with the drum line battery at the rear and sometimes a brass section and guitars.

This brass section was included in the early 20th century as part of a more diverse musical ensemble which began to be offered at this time



Carnival Eccentricities



Bizarre Costumes
Giant Puppet Heads
Unusual Instruments
Unconventional Parade Floats
Street Performers
Body Paint and Glitter

Cross-Dressing and Gender-Bending
Midnight Exorcism
Cordão Umbilical Parade
Galo da Madrugada (Rooster of the Dawn)



The Green Thing

Tattler – I borrowed from a post I read. Found it quite thought provoking.

“Checking out at the supermarket recently, the young cashier suggested I should bring my own bags because plastic bags weren’t good for the environment. I apologized and explained, “We didn’t have this green thing back in my earlier days”.

The clerk responded, “That’s our problem today. Your generation did not care enough to save our environment for future generations”.

She was right about one thing—our generation didn’t have the green thing in “Our” day. So what did we have back then?

After some reflection and soul-searching on “Our” day, here’s what I remembered we did have....

Back then, we returned milk bottles, pop bottles and beer bottles to the store. The store sent them back to the plant to be washed and sterilized and refilled, so it could use the same bottles repeatedly. So they really were recycled. But we didn’t have the green thing back in our day.

Most importantly we never had plastic bags for our shopping - we took a basket or a box and considered ourselves very lucky if we could afford to shop where they gave you a paper bag.

We walked up stairs, because we didn’t have an escalator in every store and office building. We walked to the grocery store and didn’t climb into a 300-horsepower machine every time we had to go two blocks. But she was right. We didn’t have the green thing in our day.

Back then, we washed the baby’s nappies because we didn’t have the throw-away kind. We dried clothes on a line, not in an energy gobbling machine burning up 240 volts — wind and solar power really did dry our clothes back in our early days.

Kids got hand-me-down clothes from their brothers or sisters, not always brand-new clothing. But that young lady is right. We didn’t have the green thing back in our day.

Back then, we had one TV, or radio, in the house — not a TV in every room. And the TV had a small screen the size of a handkerchief (remember them?), not a screen the size of Wales.

In the kitchen, we blended & stirred by hand because we didn’t have electric machines to do everything for us. When we packaged a fragile item to send in the mail, we used wadded up old newspapers to cushion it, not Styrofoam or plastic bubble wrap.

Back then, we didn’t fire up an engine and burn petrol just to cut the lawn. We used a push mower that ran on human power. We exercised by working so we didn’t need to go to a health club to run on treadmills that operate on electricity. But she’s right. We didn’t have the green thing back then.

We drank from a water fountain when we were thirsty instead of using a cup or a plastic bottle every time we had a drink of water. We refilled writing pens with ink instead of buying a new

pen, and we replaced the razor blades in a razor instead of throwing away the whole razor just because the blade got dull. But we didn't have the green thing back then.

Back then, people took the bus, and kids rode their bikes to school or walked instead of turning their mums into a 24-hour taxi service. We had one electrical outlet in a room, not an entire bank of sockets to power a dozen appliances. And we didn't need a computerized gadget to receive a signal beamed from satellites 2,000 miles out in space in order to find the nearest pizza joint.

But isn't it sad the current generation laments how wasteful we old folks were just because we didn't have the green thing back then?"

Do you like rabbits?

Tattler - Ever seen such a large rabbit?

This is a Flemish Giant Rabbit.



This on the other hand is the largest hare species, the European Hare.



Rabbits and hares are often confused due to their similar appearance, but they belong to different genera within the family Leporidae. Here are some key differences between rabbits and hares:

Physical Characteristics:

Size: Hares are generally larger than rabbits. Hares have longer legs and larger feet, giving them a more powerful and swift appearance.

Ears: Hares typically have longer ears compared to rabbits.

Fur: Hares often have a more coarse and longer fur coat compared to the softer and shorter fur of rabbits.

Behaviour:

Speed and Agility: Hares are known for their incredible speed and agility. They are adapted for running and can reach high speeds to escape predators. Rabbits, while agile, are not as fast as hares.

Nesting Habits: Rabbits create elaborate burrow systems, while hares usually make nests on the ground called forms. Hares do not dig burrows as extensively as rabbits.

Life Cycle:

Birth and Development: Rabbits are altricial, meaning their young are born hairless and with closed eyes, requiring more care and protection in the burrow. Hares, on the other hand, are precocial, and their young are born fully furred with open eyes, ready to move around shortly after birth.

A female rabbit is called a doe. A male rabbit is called a buck. A baby rabbit is called a kit.

A female hare is called a jill or doe. A male hare is called a jack or buck. A baby hare is called a leveret.

A group of rabbits is known as a colony or nest (or, a warren, though this more commonly refers to where the rabbits live).

A group of baby rabbits produced from a single mating is referred to as a litter and a group of domestic rabbits living together is sometimes called a herd. A group of hares is called a drove.

A female hare can be pregnant twice, simultaneously. Hares can conceive their next litter whilst still pregnant with the first.

Location of Young: Rabbit kits stay in the burrow for protection, while hare leverets are left alone in their forms shortly after birth.

Habitat:

Distribution: Hares are generally found in open fields and grasslands, preferring more open spaces. Rabbits are often associated with burrows in a variety of habitats, including grasslands, forests, and deserts.

Geographic Range: Rabbits are found worldwide, while hares are more commonly distributed in the Northern Hemisphere.

Social Structure:

Social Behaviour: Rabbits are more social animals, often living in groups. Hares are generally more solitary, except during the mating season.

Territoriality: Hares are known to be less territorial than rabbits.

Adaptations for Survival:

Camouflage: Hares often have a fur colour that changes with the seasons, providing better camouflage in their open habitats. Rabbits may not exhibit such pronounced seasonal colour changes.

Ecological Role:

Dietary Habits: Both rabbits and hares are herbivores, but their dietary preferences and adaptations may differ based on their respective habitats.

Understanding these differences helps in recognizing the unique characteristics and behaviours of rabbits and hares. While they share similarities, particularly in being herbivorous mammals with long ears and strong hind legs, their adaptations and lifestyles have evolved to suit their specific ecological niches.

February Quiz Answers	
1) 18	6) India
2) 1 min 40.17 sec	7) England
3) Surfing	8) May 1996
4) Ireland	9) Fernando Alonso
5) Brad Binder, KTM	10) Klose (16), Pele (12), Messi (13), Muller (14)

This month in History – February 1974 50 years ago

General

1 Feb - Acting without authority from the Brazilian government, British detectives captured master thief Ronald Biggs in Rio de Janeiro at the Hotel Trocadero on the Copacabana Beach. Biggs, who had been sentenced to 30 years imprisonment for the "great train robbery" of 1963, had been living in Brazil under the alias Michael Haynes and working as a carpenter after escaping from prison in 1965.

4 Feb - In one of the most famous kidnappings in U.S. history, three members of the left-wing terrorist Symbionese Liberation Army kidnapped 19-year-old Patty Hearst, a granddaughter of newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst, from her apartment in Berkeley, California. At 9:30 p.m., two African-American men (one of whom was Donald Defreeze) and a white woman invaded the Berkeley, California apartment of Hearst, a 19-year-old sophomore at the University of California. Hearst's fiancé Steven Weed and a neighbour were beaten, and gunshots were fired at nearby witnesses as the group loaded Hearst into the trunk of a car in the apartment's parking garage.

7 Feb - After being unable to resolve his nation's strike of coal miners, Prime Minister Edward Heath of the United Kingdom said in a televised speech that he would ask for the Crown to dissolve Parliament and to call for a new election for the House of Commons to take place on February 28.

8 Feb - After a record 84 days in orbit, the crew of the fourth Skylab mission — astronauts Gerald Carr, Edward Gibson and William Pogue — returned to Earth. Seventy-six minutes after the 84-day mark, the Apollo space capsule separated from the space station and landed in the Pacific Ocean 176 miles (283 km) southwest of the U.S. coast, and was recovered by the amphibious assault ship USS New Orleans (LPH-11). The recovery was the first splashdown of a crewed NASA spacecraft since 1966 not to be broadcast live on U.S. television.

12 Feb - Soviet police agents arrested Russian writer and dissident Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, author of *The Gulag Archipelago*, at his apartment in Moscow. He would be deported to West Germany and stripped of his Soviet citizenship the following day.

17 Feb - At 2 a.m., 20-year-old U.S. Army Private First Class Robert K. Preston landed a stolen helicopter on the South Lawn of the White House, about 100 yards (91 m) from the residence, after the Executive Protection Service fired with shotguns and struck the aircraft. Preston had stolen the helicopter from the Tipton Airfield at Fort Meade in Maryland.

20 Feb - Second Lieutenant Hiroo Onoda, a member of the Imperial Japanese Army's intelligence unit who had been hiding on Lubang Island in the Philippines for 29 years after World War II, was located by a Japanese adventurer, Norio Suzuki. After being told that World War II had ended, 2nd Lt. Onoda told Suzuki that he would not surrender until ordered to by a superior officer, and finally gave up on March 9 when his former commander, Major Yoshimi Taniguchi, delivered the order. Onoda was the second-to-last Japanese officer to surrender after World War II. The last one, Teruo Nakamura, was located in Indonesia on December 18, 1974.

28 Feb - The British general election ended in the first hung parliament since 1929, with no party having the required 318 seats to form a majority government in the 635-seat House of Commons. Prime Minister Edward Heath's Conservative Party lost its majority, losing 28 seats to fall from 330

seats to 297, while Harold Wilson and the Labour Party gained 14 to win a plurality of 301 seats. The Liberal Party, led by Jeremy Thorpe won 14 seats, its largest share ever, while 21 other seats went to six other parties. After being unable to form a coalition government, Heath stepped down and was replaced as Prime Minister by Wilson on March 4.

Sport

1 Feb - On the last day of the 1974 British Commonwealth Games in Christchurch, New Zealand, Tanzanian athlete Filbert Bayi set a new world record of 3 minutes, 32.2 seconds in the 1500 metres race.

2 Feb - Ireland and Wales drew 9 - 9 in the Rugby Five Nations Competition. Scotland beat England 16-14.

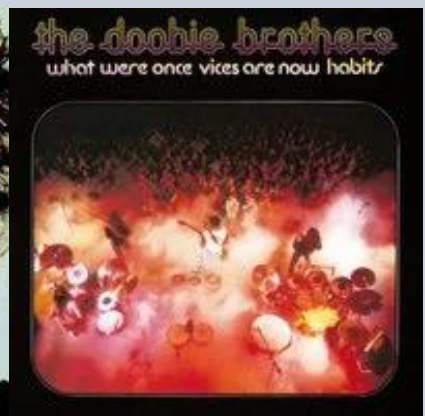
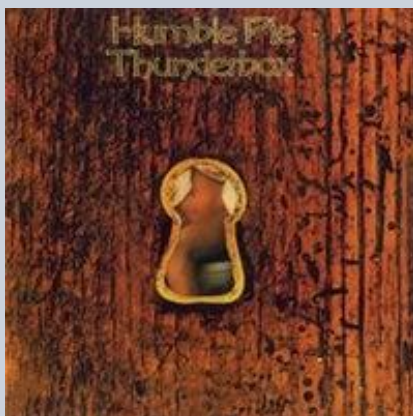
7 Feb - West Indies beat England by 7 wickets. Alvin Kallicharran got 158, Lance Gibbs took 6 – 108.

9 Feb - Carlos Monzón retains the world's Middleweight title with an embarrassingly easy seventh-round knockout over world Welterweight champion José Nápoles in Paris, France.

16 Feb - Wales drew 16 - 16 with France in the Five Nations Rugby. Ireland beat England 26 – 21.

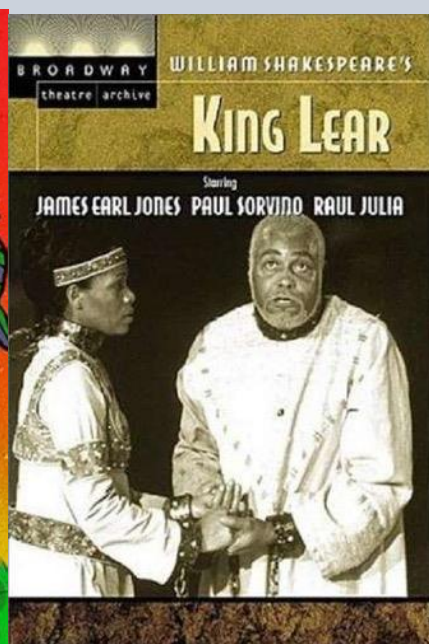
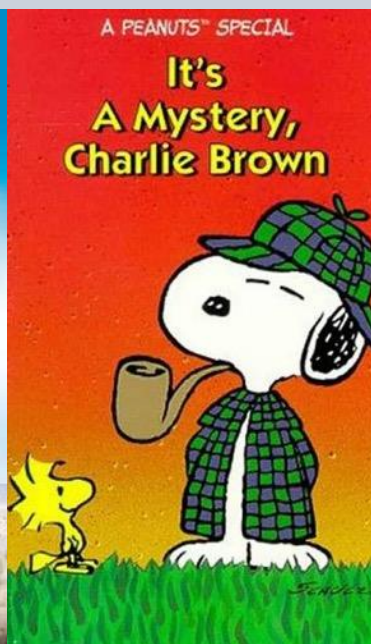
21 Feb - West Indies and England drew the 2nd test. Lawrence Roe got a ton.

Music





Movies



The Volkswagen Beetle known as "Herbie" is a fictional character that appeared in a series of comedy films produced by Walt Disney Productions. The first movie featuring Herbie is titled "The Love Bug," which was released in 1968. Herbie is a white, anthropomorphic 1963 Volkswagen Beetle with red, white, and blue racing stripes and the number 53 painted on the car.

The name "Herbie" was likely chosen simply as a whimsical and friendly-sounding name for the character. The films portray Herbie as a sentient and lovable car with a mind of its own, capable of human-like emotions and behaviours. The character became iconic in popular culture, and several sequels were made over the years, contributing to the enduring popularity of Herbie as a symbol of charm and personality in a car.



Laurence Olivier, one of the most celebrated actors of the 20th century, had a prolific career on stage and screen.

While Olivier is primarily remembered as an actor, he was also a highly skilled director. He directed several successful films, including "Henry V" (1944), "Hamlet" (1948), and "Richard III" (1955). "Hamlet" earned him two Academy Awards, one for Best Actor and another for Best Picture as the film's producer.

Olivier holds the record for the most Academy Award nominations for acting (in both lead and supporting categories) for a single film. He received four nominations for his work in "Hamlet" (1948) as an actor, director, and producer.

Olivier played a significant role in bringing Shakespearean performances to a wider audience. His film adaptations of Shakespearean plays, such as "Henry V" and "Hamlet," were

critically acclaimed and helped popularize the Bard's works on the big screen.



In 1970, Laurence Olivier became the first actor to be elevated to the peerage and given a life peerage as Baron Olivier of Brighton. This recognition highlighted his contributions to the arts.

Despite his public success, Olivier faced personal challenges. He battled stage fright throughout his career and openly discussed his struggles with depression. Despite these challenges, he continued to produce remarkable work.

During World War II, Olivier served in the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve. His military service interrupted his acting career, but he returned to the stage and screen after the war.

Olivier had a tumultuous but highly publicized relationship with actress Vivien Leigh. They were married from 1940 to 1960, and their partnership extended to both personal and professional realms, including collaborations on stage and screen.

In addition to his numerous acting accolades, Olivier received various honours, including being knighted in 1947, and later, as mentioned, receiving a life peerage. He was also awarded the Order of Merit, one of the highest civilian honours in the United Kingdom.

The marriage between Vivien Leigh and Laurence Olivier ended in divorce in 1960 after 20 years. There were several factors that contributed to the breakdown of their marriage.

Both Olivier and Leigh were dealing with personal issues, including mental health struggles. Leigh, in particular, faced challenges related to bipolar disorder, which was not fully understood or effectively treated at the time. Her mental health issues strained their relationship.

There were reports of infidelity on both sides. Olivier had an affair with actress Joan Plowright, whom he later married. Leigh was also rumoured to have had affairs during the course of their marriage.

Both Olivier and Leigh were highly successful and accomplished actors, but the demands of their careers may have added stress to their relationship. The intense schedules, long periods of separation due to work commitments, and the challenges of being in the public eye can strain any marriage.



Over time, Olivier and Leigh developed different interests and pursued separate career paths. Olivier was deeply involved in the theatre and had a successful career as a director, while Leigh continued to work in film. Their diverging professional pursuits may have contributed to growing apart.

In 1961, shortly after his divorce from Leigh, Olivier married Joan Plowright, with whom he had three children. Vivien Leigh's health continued to decline, and she faced additional challenges until her death in 1967. The end of the Olivier-Leigh marriage marked the conclusion of one of the most high-profile and scrutinized relationships in the entertainment industry.

And, 100 years ago - February 1924

12 Feb - Howard Carter and his archaeological team had the lid of Pharaoh Tutankhamun's stone sarcophagus raised, revealing his solid gold mummy case. The case itself would not be opened until October 28, 1925.

14 Feb - The Computing-Tabulating-Recording Company (CTR) renamed itself the International Business Machines Corporation, or IBM.

21 Feb - British dock workers rejected the terms offered to them for a settlement of the strike. Their employers had offered them an immediate 1 shilling-per-day raise with another shilling to be added June 1.

26 Feb - Trial began in Munich for charges of treason arising from the Beer Hall Putsch of November 9, 1923, with Adolf Hitler, Erich Ludendorff and eight other Nazis began in Munich. Security was heavy and onlookers were thoroughly searched for weapons before being allowed in.



Colette's Kitchen

It is my birthday this month and my lovely neighbour in England, surprised me with a birthday cake. It was honestly the nicest cake I've had in a very long time.

I thought I would share this recipe with you.

Victoria Sponge with strawberry jam and butter cream (courtesy Pam Bretèchè)

Ingredients

100 grams soft butter

100 grams of castor sugar

100 grams of self-raising flour sifted

2 eggs

Method

Cream the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy

Beat in one egg at a time with a little flour

Stir in remaining flour gently by hand

Pour into 2 small cake tin 7/8/ inches

Cook @ 160° fan for 13 to 15 mins - check your own oven settings.

Use strawberry jam & butter cream to fill

To make the butter cream use 1 part butter to 2 parts icing sugar – volume up to you.



Tattler – Laughs



BLONDE: "I want to sell my car but it's hard to do because it's got 230,000 miles on it."

FRIEND: "Call my Cousin Joe. He'll run the odometer back for you and make it easier to sell."

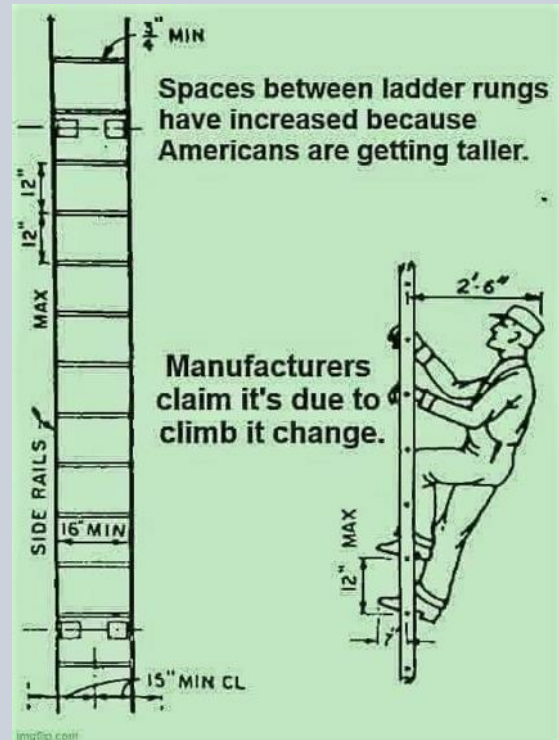
A month later they meet again.

FRIEND "Did you see my Cousin Joe?"

BLONDE: "Yes I did"

FRIEND: "Well then did you sell your car?"

BLONDE: "Why should I, it's only got 50,000 miles on it!"



A Rear Admiral was about to start the morning briefing to his staff.

While waiting for the coffee machine to finish brewing, he decided to pose a question to all assembled.

He explained that his wife had been a bit frisky the night before and he failed to get his usual amount of sound sleep. He posed the question of just how much of sex was "work" and how much of it was "pleasure?"

A Captain chimed in with 75%-25% in favour of work.

A Commander said it was 50%-50%.

A lieutenant responded with 25%-75% in favour of pleasure, depending upon his state of inebriation at the time.

There being no consensus, the Admiral turned to the Petty Officer who was in charge of making the coffee and asked for HIS opinion?

Without any hesitation, the young man responded, "Sir, it has to be 100% pleasure."

The Admiral was surprised and as you might guess, asked why?

"Well, sir, if there was any work involved, the officers would have me doing it for them."

The room fell silent.



Jennifer, a manager at a local Lidl store, had the task of hiring someone to fill a job opening. After sorting through a stack of resumes she found four people who were equally qualified. Jennifer decided to call the four in and ask them only one question. Their answer would determine which of them would get the job.*

The day came and as the four sat around the conference room table, Jennifer asked, 'What is the fastest thing you know of?'

The first man replied, 'A THOUGHT.' It just pops into your head. There's no warning.

'That's very good!' replied Jennifer. 'And, now you sir?', she asked the second man.

'Hmmm...let me see 'A blink! It comes and goes and you don't know that it ever happened. A BLINK is the fastest thing I know of.'

'Excellent!' said Jennifer. 'The blink of an eye, that's a very popular cliché for speed.'

She then turned to the third man, who was contemplating his reply.

'Well, out at my dad's property, you step out of the house and on the wall there's a light switch. When you flip that switch, way out across the pasture the light on the barn comes on in less than an instant. 'Yep, TURNING ON A LIGHT is the fastest thing I can think of'.

Jennifer was very impressed with the third answer and thought she had found her man. 'It's hard to beat the speed of light,' she said.

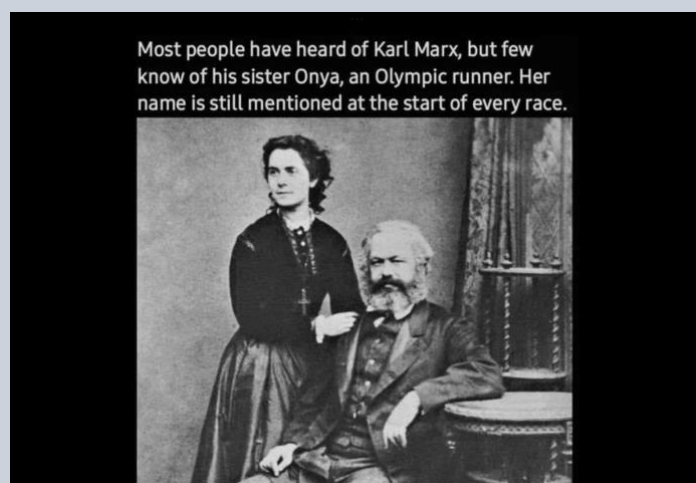
Turning to Wally, the fourth and final man, Jennifer posed the same question.

Old Wally replied, 'After hearing the previous three answers, it's obvious to me that the fastest thing known is DIARRHOEA.'

'WHAT !?' said Jennifer, stunned by the response.

'Oh sure', said Wally. 'You see, the other day I wasn't feeling so good, and I ran for the bathroom, but before I could THINK, BLINK, or TURN ON THE LIGHT, I had already shit myself..'

Wally is now working at a Lidl near you!



Your video treat - Billy Connolly
(Warning - some expletive
Click image below to watch!



Tattler - That's it for this month folks!