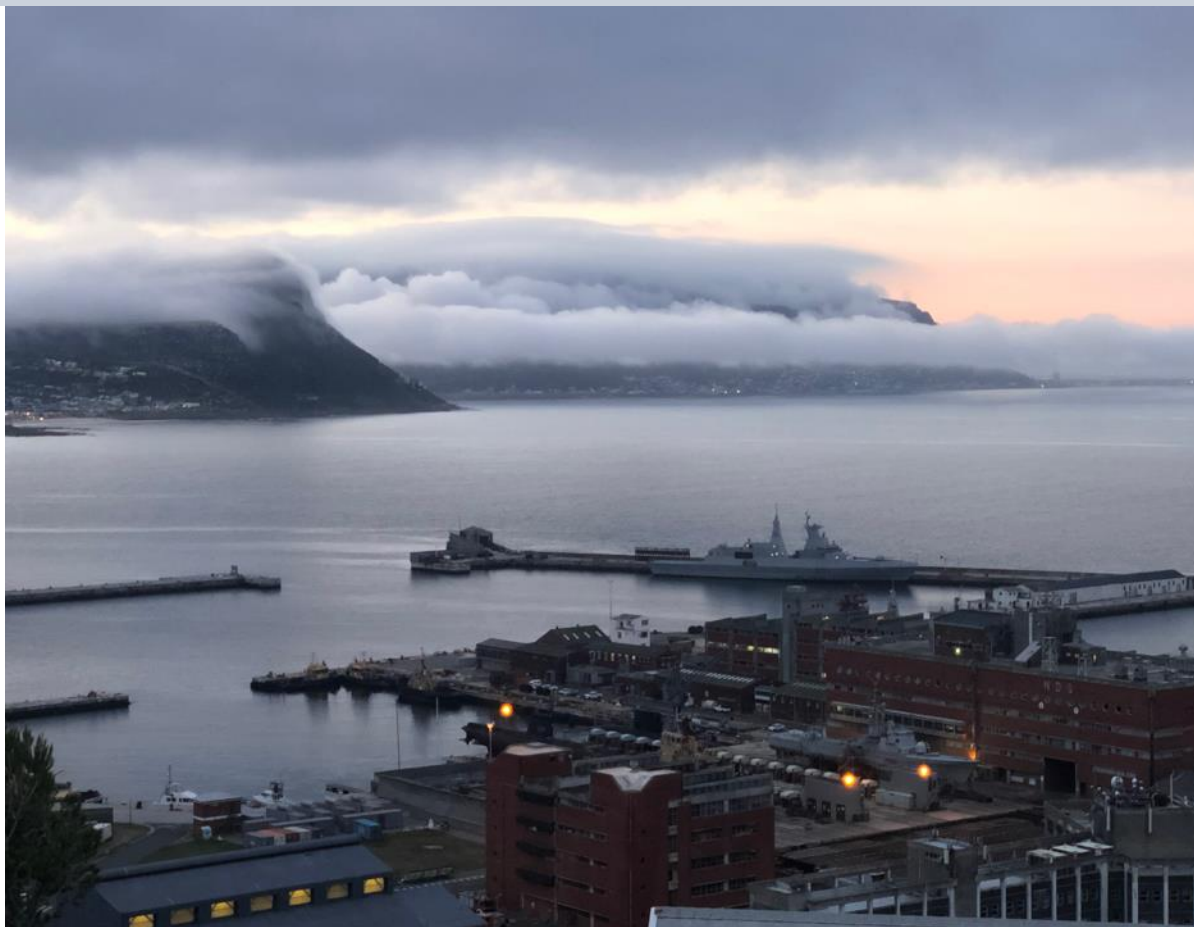




Good Day fellow club members and other readers. Phew, November already! Welcome to this month's edition.

This month we feature a variety of topics (as we attempt to do each month!) including cricket, rugby and some facts on probably our least endearing mammal, the bat. After exploring the origins and everything else there is to know about a “Pork Pie”, your editor provides a run down on the Hangover – how it happens (the chemistry of it”) and some tips for minimising the impact. All of this just in time for the festive season. Also, read about the Battle of Toronto and the varied and interesting life of Agatha Christie.

We hope you find items of interest and cause a chuckle or two. Each month we ask for comments and wish to stress that we really do seek these. Your constructive criticism, ideas on subject matter and, what we most desire, your own contributions, particularly anything involving our club. As always these can be sent to jonathanagolding@gmail.com or colettepatience@gmail.com. We look forward to items for our December edition!

“November derives from the Latin root novem- meaning “nine,” because in the Roman calendar there were only 10 months in the year, and November was indeed the ninth month. The word November was first recorded before the year 1000.”

Source: Dictionary.com

Editorial

The left-hand and right-hand combination of Graeme and Herschelle. These two were one of the finest opening partnerships in all of cricket.

They opened the batting together in 56 test innings, amassing 2,983 runs at an average of 55.24 including 7 ton stands.

The pair put on 300+ opening stands on three occasions (there have only been 15 in test cricket and no other pair has more than one).

Their highest stand was 368 for the opening wicket against a Waqar Younis led Pakistan at Newlands in 2003. Graeme was the first one to go after having scored 151 while Herschelle went on to score a magnificent 228.

Graeme ended with a test average of 48.25 and Herschelle with an average of 41.95



A bit of trivia regarding one of the better bowlers in the history of cricket.

(From SA Cricket news)

Dale Steyn had more consecutive weeks as the #1 bowler in the world (263) than Roger Federer had as the #1 Tennis player in the world (237 weeks).



Schalk Burger versus Jerry Collins - Two of the most physical and least compromising rugby players in the history of the game.



It was the stuff of legends whenever these two met. Both loose forwards, they had a true "love/hate" relationship. Actually "hate" is an inappropriate word, because there was so much mutual respect. Love? More about that later.

(The late) Jerry Collins, like our Schalk, was a "meneer". An enforcer and tough as teak. Although he was born in Samoa, he grew up in New Zealand and played for the New Zealand national team, earning 48 caps. He played as a flanker and number eight, and was considered to be one of the hardest tacklers in the sport. Collins was a cousin of former All Blacks captain and Hurricanes teammate Tana Umaga.

Schalk was a Springbok player and won 86 caps for South Africa.

He was a member of the 2007 Rugby World Cup-winning team, has twice been named South African Rugby Player of the Year (in 2004 and 2011), and was named IRB Player of the Year in 2004, among other accolades.

It would appear that they really enjoyed playing against one another, particularly the "one on one" challenges.

Watch this clip by clicking on the image to the right.

In the following clip we watch and hear Schalk paying tribute to Jerry. Click on the image below.



I have heard Schalk talk in more detail about the time Jerry and he played together for the Barbarians on a tour. It would seem that team laws were ignored when it came to late night drinking as the two went out several nights on massive binges. The coach (I forget who he was) summonsed the two after one particularly late night. After a dressing down they were asked if they had any requests. Jerry promptly asked for two vodkas! There is a modern-day word/term that I don't particularly enjoy. But "bromance" certainly fits these two!

RIP Jerry and carry on the great punditry Schalk!



***Tattler* has a bit of a problem - The idiosyncrasies of Hollywood**

When you are a woman on foot and being chased:

find the darkest place to run to;
find the least inhabited space to run to;
don't forget to make lots of noise so they know exactly where you are;
when you fall (not if, but when, because they all fall) do not jump up and run some more, rather stay on your back and do that crawl thing;
(if you are on a road with a vehicle behind you) run right in the middle of the road. Do not seek a narrow alley or any other place a car can't drive into.

If you are in a car being chased by another car:

your rear view mirrors immediately don't work, so you must look over your shoulder frequently;
find the darkest, least inhabited place to drive to;
even if you are in a Ferrari, you cannot outrun his truck. Accept it, In car chases all cars become equal in speed.

When you are in a gunfight and your pistol is outgunned by their sub-machine guns:

take them out one by one but never take one of their guns;
then, when you run out of bullets, take them on with your fists;
if you render him unconscious, leave his weapon with him.

When you are a policeman searching for a suspect/criminal:

if you are inside a building, never switch on the lights as your little torch is much better;
call out to him so he knows where you are;

if there are 5 of you, all go in the same direction.

When you find him:

never aim for his arms or legs. Kill him or try to overpower him;
let him shoot you in your bulletproof vest. He will never take a head shot at you.

If he has hold of a hostage

ask him to release her (it is always a her!);
ask him to drop his weapon;
drop yours when he tells you to (now he can shoot you and the hostage).

When you are in a gunfight:

your revolver is much more accurate than his rifle or machine gun even at 50 meters;
hide behind a car - their military weapons can never penetrate a metal or fibreglass car body.

Whenever a car is hit by a bullet or rolls over it will explode.

Tattler finds it difficult to remember meeting anybody who does not enjoy a pork pie (Obviously excluding Vegans and Vegetarians). So, we found this interesting -

The story behind the pork pie

This portly pastry, filled with pork and savoury jelly, is a British classic dating back centuries.

By Felicity Cloake

Few dishes link Britain so closely to its gastronomic past as the pork pie. Indeed it's one of the rare everyday foodstuffs that would be instantly recognisable to our medieval forebears. Perfect for picnics but spectacular enough to form the centrepiece at a party — they were the Christmas Day breakfast of novelist DH Lawrence — a pork pie is a foodstuff for every occasion.



Origins

According to *The Oxford Companion to Food*, by Alan Davidson, the pork pie is a direct descendant of the medieval raised pie, or coffyn, in which a sturdy crust acted as packaging for something more delicate and valuable. One might send wild venison into town wrapped in pastry, for instance. The likes of veal and ham, or mixed game, are still popular in raised (i.e. freestanding) pies; chef Calum Franklin has recipes for everything from coronation chicken to mac and cheese raised pies in his book *The Pie Room*. Plain pork, however, is now by far the most common filling.

How are pork pies made?

The most important element of a pork pie is the pastry, for it's this robust casing that sets it apart from sausage rolls or hand-held, pasty-like pies. Rather than crumbly shortcrust or airy puff, it's made from hot water crust

pastry, a dense dough of flour, lard, salt and boiling water, thoroughly kneaded to develop the gluten and make it as strong as possible. Traditionally this was formed around a wooden 'dolly' mould and then baked without support, leading to a pie with the slightly bulging silhouette still found in the Melton Mowbray version, but others today are often packed into straight-sided tins instead.

Once upon a time such pies were probably a repository for more unusual parts of the pig, but these days they tend to be made with shoulder (as in Mark Hix's recipe), belly (as preferred by the late Keith Floyd), or a mixture of both, minced — but not too finely. Because it contains fresh — rather than cured — meat, the inside of a Melton Mowbray pie is the grey of roast pork, rather than the ham-like pink common elsewhere, and seasoned with salt, pepper and nutmeg or mace. This filling shrinks during cooking, so once the pie has cooled, a savoury jelly is poured in through a hole on top to stop it drying out.

Some (very) random trivia

A Nobel Prize in Chemistry winner owes his achievement to his wife being cheap.  Herbert C. Brown's wife bought him the book "The Hydrides of Boron and Silicon" as a graduation gift because it was the cheapest in the book store. In 1979, he won the Nobel for his work with Boron.	On January 22, 1943, the temperature in Spearfish, SD, changed from -4°F to 45°F in just two minutes.  The temperature eventually rose to 54°F before dropping back to -4°F. This was caused by a Chinook wind, setting a world record. CRACKED NOW YOU KNOW
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Hangovers

Tattler - We found this piece which readers may find interesting especially with the festive season looming....

Hair of the dog (or water) cures a hangover? (By Ivor Vegter)

It is commonly believed that a drink the next morning ("hair of the dog") will cure you of the hangover that resulted from the previous night's excess. It is also believed that hangovers are largely the result of dehydration, so drinking sufficient water after drinking alcohol can reduce or prevent hangover symptoms. Neither of these is likely to be true to any significant degree.

Alcohol has been an extraordinarily popular drug for thousands of years, plays a very significant role in modern society, underlies a great many ailments, physical, mental and social, comprises an enormous industry and a



large source of revenue for the state, causes a significant number of injuries and deaths to innocent bystanders, and widely impacts economic productivity. It is startling, therefore, to discover that one of the most common sequels of alcohol consumption, the common hangover, has been the subject of only a limited number of studies, and remains fairly poorly understood.

Hangovers reach their worst symptoms when the ethanol in a drink has been fully metabolised, and the blood alcohol level reaches zero. After this, symptoms can persist for many hours, or even days. There are multiple theories about what exactly causes hangovers, though it appears that dehydration is a coincidental after-effect of alcohol consumption which does not play a significant role in hangovers.

One theory holds that the severity of a hangover is in part determined by the presence of congeners – substances other than ethanol, such as methanol, polyphenols and histamine – in a drink. This may explain why pure ethanol in a mixed drink causes very little by way of hangovers, but dark spirits like brandy and bourbon cause fairly severe hangovers. Ethanol is metabolised into acetaldehyde, which is toxic, and is in turn broken down into acetic acid, but this doesn't seem to be the full explanation. Methanol, by contrast, is broken down into formaldehyde and formic acid, which are far more toxic.

This may also explain why a drink the next morning appears to reduce hangover symptoms: the newly introduced ethanol blocks (or rather, postpones) the formation of the metabolic compounds of methanol, masking their toxic effects on the body.

There are many other causes of hangover symptoms, however, since alcohol has numerous disruptive effects on various bodily processes. Rehydration alone doesn't cure hangover symptoms, and neither does the hair of the dog the next morning.

Ultimately, the only way to avoid hangovers is not to drink to excess.

As an interesting aside, the phrase "hair of the dog", short for "a hair of the dog that bit me", dates back to the 16th century. At the time, and in complete ignorance of the germ theory of disease, it was believed that hair from the dog that bit you, when placed into the bite wound, could prevent rabies.

This belief was based on the ancient Greek dictum that *similia similibus curantur*, or "like cures like". Today, this is one of the pillars of the pseudo-scientific practice of homeopathy.

Tattler explored the subject a little further and found this piece in Harvard Health Publishing, Harvard Business School.

What causes hangovers?

The causes are as varied as the symptoms. Alcohol is metabolized into acetaldehyde, a substance that's toxic at high levels. However, concentrations rarely get that high, so that's not the complete explanation.

Drinking interferes with brain activity during sleep, so a hangover may be a form of sleep deprivation. Alcohol scrambles the hormones that regulate our biological clocks, which may be why a hangover can feel like jet lag, and vice versa. Alcohol can also trigger migraines, so some people may think they're hung over when it's really an alcohol-induced migraine they're suffering.

Hangovers begin after blood alcohol levels start to fall. In fact, according to some experts, the worst symptoms occur when levels reach zero.

The key ingredient seems to be "drinking to intoxication"; how much you drank to get there is less important. In fact, several studies suggest that light and moderate drinkers are more vulnerable to getting a hangover than heavy drinkers. Yet there's also seemingly contradictory research showing that people with a family history of alcoholism have worse hangovers. Researchers say some people may end up with drinking problems because they drink in an effort to relieve hangover symptoms.

7 hangover remedies

Obviously, not drinking any alcohol is the best solution. But if you do drink, here are simple tips to help prevent and relieve the misery.

1. Drinking fluids. Alcohol promotes urination because it inhibits the release of vasopressin, a hormone that decreases the volume of urine made by the kidneys. If your hangover includes diarrhoea, sweating, or vomiting, you may be even more dehydrated. Although nausea can make it difficult to get anything down, even just a few sips of water might help your hangover.

2. Getting some carbohydrates into your system. Drinking may lower blood sugar levels, so theoretically some of the fatigue and headaches of a hangover may be from a brain working without enough of its main fuel. Moreover, many people forget to eat when they drink, further lowering their blood sugar. Toast and juice is a way to gently nudge levels back to normal.

3. Avoiding darker-coloured alcoholic beverages. Experiments have shown that clear liquors, such as vodka and gin, tend to cause hangovers less frequently than dark ones, such as whiskey, red wine, and tequila. The main form of alcohol in alcoholic beverages is ethanol, but the darker liquors contain chemically related compounds (congeners), including methanol. The same enzymes process ethanol and methanol, but methanol metabolites are especially toxic, so they may cause a worse hangover.

4. Taking a pain reliever — but not Tylenol. Aspirin, ibuprofen (Motrin, other brands), and other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) may help with the headache and the overall achy feelings. NSAIDs, though, may irritate a stomach already irritated by alcohol. Don't take acetaminophen (Tylenol): if alcohol is lingering in your system, it may accentuate acetaminophen's toxic effects on the liver.

5. Drinking coffee or tea. Caffeine may not have any special anti-hangover powers, but as a stimulant, it could help with the grogginess. However, it's important to keep in mind that caffeine and alcohol should never be mixed because the caffeine can mask the depressant effects of alcohol, making drinkers feel more alert than they would otherwise. ([Tattler - Oops for those that enjoy a good Irish coffee or two](#)).

6. Taking B vitamins and zinc. A study published in The Journal of Clinical Medicine evaluated the diets for 24 hours before and after excessive drinking occurred. It was a small study and results were based on the participants saying what they ate. However, they did find that people whose food and beverage consumption contained greater amounts of zinc and B vitamins had less severe hangovers.

7. Hair of the dog. Drinking to ease the symptoms of a hangover is sometimes called taking the hair of the dog, or hair of the dog that bit you. The notion is that hangovers are a form of alcohol withdrawal, so a drink or two will ease the withdrawal. However, the hair of the dog just perpetuates a cycle. It doesn't allow you to recover.

Bats are blind?

I guess most of us don't know a whole lot about bats but most would probably agree that these creatures don't see too well

(This I borrowed from an article by Ivo Vegter)

Bats famously use echolocation to navigate in the dark, and to hunt if they are insectivores. They produce high-pitched sounds or clicks, and detect their echoes to create an auditory “image” of the world



around them. This, and their largely nocturnal behaviour, produced the myth that bats are blind. "Blind as a bat," goes the phrase.

The thing is, bats aren't blind. Only about half of all bats use echolocation at all, and all bats can not only see, but often prefer visual to sonic information. Bats that feed on fruit or nectar tend to have particularly sharp vision, and can often see well into the ultra-violet spectrum. Even insectivores, however, tend to use a combination of echolocation and visual feedback to hunt.

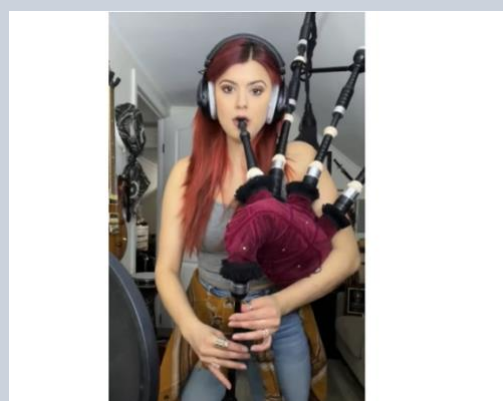


Unusual Music - Rock 'n Roll on Bagpipes- you joking?

Watch Musician Piper Ally performed an incredible cover of the Lynyrd Skynyrd anthem "Free Bird" in action. Click on the image to the right.

She says : "It's not like a clarinet. The bagpipes have only nine notes and, for the most part, we can't play anything outside of those nine notes. When it comes to sharps and flats, there are very few that are even remotely possible on the bagpipes. So, because of the range of the instrument and its limits, I can't play solo on a lot of songs.

Tattler thinks she does a pretty good job on this one!



The Oresund Bridge

The bridge that comes from Sweden turns into a tunnel under the sea and reappears in Denmark; both countries united by this wonderful work of Engineering.

It has a total length of 16 kilometres and connects Denmark with Sweden through the Oresund Strait. The Oresund Bridge was built in 2000 and allows the passage of cars (highway) and trains between Denmark and Sweden. Before its construction, all traffic between the two countries was carried out by ferry.

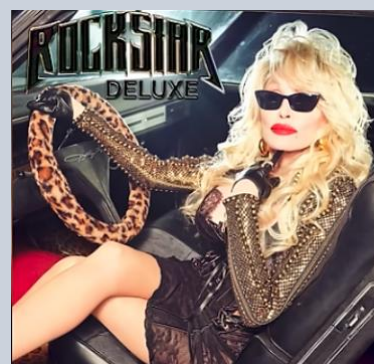


Credit: World Archaeology

Tattler - whilst on the subject of bridges.....

The Simon and Garfunkel classic "Bridge over troubled waters", has been recorded in over 400 versions according to an entertainment news source.

Click on the image to the right to hear this version by the **one and only....Ms Dolly Parton.**



Club Matters

Club Manager's Report

Congratulations to our October winners 100 Club Draw

Mr C Tosio (Two Wins) – R600
Mr C Black – R300
Mrs N Green – 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.

Lt G.M. Munro - 02 November.

Marie Antoinette (French queen) born 1755. Marie-Antoinette was the Austrian queen consort of King Louis XVI of France (1774–93).

Mr A.J. Ritchie – 10 November.

On this day in 1871, according to his journal, explorer Henry Stanley greeted David Livingstone, the fellow explorer in search of the source of the Nile River, with the famous words “Dr. Livingstone, I presume?”

Capt K.B. Wise (Ret) – 14 November.

Claude Monet (artist) born in Paris in 1840, King Charles 111 (British royal) born 1948.

Mr I. Kelfkens – 14 November.

Harper & Brothers published Herman Melville's masterpiece Moby Dick in 1851.

Mrs A. Stannard – 16 November.

Benazir Bhutto, elected prime minister of Pakistan on this day in 1988, became the first woman in modern history to lead a Muslim country, serving as prime minister from 1988 to 1990 and again from 1993 to 1996.

Mr D.C. Le Roux – 18 November.

The American dramatic film Ben-Hur, arguably the best of Hollywood's biblical epics, had its world premiere (1959); it later won an unprecedented 11 Academy Awards.

S Lt B.E.J Klocke – 20 November.

The American whaling ship Essex was rammed by a sperm whale (1820) and later sank, inspiring the climactic scene in Herman Melville's Moby Dick (1851).

Mr E. Potgieter – 22 November.

1963 – U.S. President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas.

Capt R.G.W. Thompson (Ret) – 23 November.

The first issue of Life was published, and the magazine later became a pioneer in photojournalism and one of the major forces in that field's development. 1936.

Mr WE. Eiserman – 23 November.

Billy the Kid (born November 23, 1859?, New York, U.S. He was an American outlaw who was one of the most notorious gunfighters of the American West. Although he claimed to have killed 21 men, the actual number is likely less than 10. At about age 21, Billy the Kid was gunned down by Sheriff Pat Garrett.

Cdr RW. Henderson (Ret) – 27 November.

Jimi Hendrix (musician) born in Seattle, Washington in 1942.

R Adm (JG) A.A. Cole (Ret) – 29 November.

Henry Kissinger, who was one of the most influential and controversial diplomats during the second half of the 20th century, died (2023) in Connecticut at age 100.

Mr S. Bothma – 29 November.

1975: Graham Hill, one of Britain's greatest motor racing drivers is killed in a plane crash in south-east England.

Capt J.F. Gower (Ret) – 30 November.

Britain and the United States signed the preliminary articles of the Treaty of Paris as part of the Peace of Paris, a collection of treaties concluding the American Revolution. (1782)

Mrs A. Palmer – 30 November.

Mark Twain (American author), born in Missouri in 1835. Winston Churchill (British Prime Minister) (born 1874), Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire, England.

New Members.

No new Members for the month.

Aye,

Glen

Club Quiz Night

On Wednesday the 9th of October the club quiz took place.

We had 5 teams in action and it was another close race. The eventual winners, pictured below, snuck in with a margin of just 1 point. Congratulations to them!

Euan and I thank all those who competed and are still hopeful that a few more will participate in the future. Thanks also to our ever-polite and efficient barman Chris.

The November quiz will be held on the 13th starting at 19h00.



A sample set of questions (from the October Quiz) below:

None of these was a "Mickey Mouse" sportsman, but they are all Michaels or Mikes!

- 1) He was known for his Christian beliefs, which meant he chose not to play on Sundays. He was named by Rugby World magazine as the third best All Black of the 20th century after Colin Meads and Sean Fitzpatrick. A brilliant flank forward who was knighted.
- 2) He played cricket for England from 1977 to 1995, captaining the national side in twenty-three Test matches between 1986 and 1988. He toured South Africa as captain of the rebel tour party in 1990.
- 3) He is known for his prolific career in basketball, and is considered one of the greatest athletes in history.
- 4) He was born on June 30, 1966 in Brooklyn, New York, emerged from a challenging upbringing to become one of the most influential figures in the sport of boxing. With his ferocious and intimidating style, as a heavy-weight, he dominated the boxing scene in the late 1980s and early 1990s.
- 5) He was born in Baltimore, Maryland on June 30, 1985, is widely recognized as one of the greatest swimmers and most decorated Olympians of all time.
- 6) One of 3 brothers who all played rugby for the Springboks. He partnered Danie Gerber (at centre) for several test matches.
- 7) He was born 3 January 1969 and is a retired German racing driver who raced in Formula One for Jordan Grand Prix, Benetton and Ferrari, where he spent most of his career, as well as for Mercedes upon his return to the sport. Widely regarded as one of the greatest Formula One drivers ever, and regarded by some as the greatest of all time
- 8) He was born 29 October 1974 and is an English cricket commentator and former batsman who played all forms of the game. He served as England captain for the test team from 2003 to 2008, the one-day international team from 2003 to 2007, and was the first Twenty20 England captain from 2005 to 2007.
- 9) He was born 14 December 1979 and is an English former professional footballer who played as a striker for Liverpool, Real Madrid, Newcastle United, Manchester United and the England national team. Since retiring from football in 2013, he regularly features as a sports pundit and commentator.
- 10) Known as "Mike the bike", he was an English professional motorcycle racer. A nine-time world champion, he won 76 Grand Prix races.

[Answers elsewhere in Tattler.](#)

Maritime and Naval / Military - Stories, News and Sport

SAS Amatola returns to the fight with successful Ibsamer V111

Source: *DefenseWeb* (18/10)

The sea phase of the multinational maritime Exercise Isamar VIII has wrapped up successfully off the Cape West Coast, showcasing the combined efforts of South Africa, Brazil and India. This latest iteration of the naval drill involved South Africa's SAS Amatola, India's INS Talwar and Brazil's BNS Defensora, which departed Simon's Town Harbour on 10 October after an alongside phase from 7 to 9 October.

Upon departing the safety of the harbour, the ships immediately faced simulated attacks by fast incoming attack craft, setting the stage for a series of complex manoeuvres and exercises over the week-long training period. The drills included close-proximity ship manoeuvring, helicopter operations, replenishment at sea (RAS) exercises, seamanship evolutions and air defence activities with two South African Air Force Hawks which had deployed to Air Force Base Langebaanweg.



The fleet also simulated warfare against each other as well as a live Gunex evolution using a "Killer Tomato" added to the range of training. According to Captain Dieter Jones, Officer Commanding SAS Amatola, the exercise emphasised the enduring cooperation between South Africa, Brazil and India, having taken place eight times over the past 16 years. For SAS Amatola, the exercise marked a significant milestone. After years of inactivity due to maintenance issues, the ship was brought back into service earlier this year through the dedicated efforts of its crew. Initially, the extensive work required for safe operational readiness had been underestimated, resulting in the cancellation of a planned ambitious voyage in July to participate in the Russian Navy's anniversary parade in St Petersburg. However, since then, Amatola has regained operational momentum by conducting border safeguarding patrols under Operation Corona off the West Coast of South Africa and participating in exercises with a visiting Chinese frigate.

Reflecting on the challenges and achievements during the exercise, Jones emphasised the remarkable growth of the crew, especially the younger sailors. "The most rewarding part as a Captain is seeing how my young people have developed over the six days at sea," he said. "Their knowledge base, competence and confidence have grown significantly." Continuing, he said: "We don't get the opportunity to do these exercises often, so operating at sea in a multi-threat environment with other ships in close proximity really hones the skills." "We have skilled warfare operators on board who operate various systems," Jones noted.

"During the exercise, we operated in both Combat State One and Two threat environments, staying in a tense warfare setting for several hours. This involved conducting surveillance, compiling a recognised maritime picture and defending ourselves against simulated attacks. You can't fully replicate the real thing, but this time it was real, and they did it." The crew also gained valuable experience in RAS operations, which involved conducting tight formations and transferring gear between ships. "These are tasks we don't often get to perform, so from a command perspective, it was great exposure," Jones explained, "The precise pilotage required for station-keeping demonstrated the capability of the teams on board."

The exercise also strengthened the interoperability between the participating navies. "The culmination of very close manoeuvres showed that we have all grown in our ability to operate together," Jones observed. He highlighted the camaraderie that developed among the younger sailors, who bonded with their counterparts

from the other nations. "Seeing the youngsters who have never been involved in these types of exercises bond with others from different countries was a positive outcome. When we exchanged personnel or brought visitors on board, it was clear that these experiences left a lasting impact," he said.

The successful completion of Exercise Ibsamar VIII has not only bolstered the maritime skills of all involved but also deepened the ties between South Africa, Brazil and India. As the ships returned to Simon's Town on 16 October, they did so with enhanced capabilities and stronger bonds, ready for the next chapter in their ongoing efforts to ensure regional maritime security. Following a brief rest period for the crew, Amatola is set to undertake a three-month anti-piracy mission in the Mozambique Channel as part of Operation Copper. These deployments underline the ship's return to active service and its ongoing contributions to regional maritime security.

Portuguese OPV arrives in Cape Town

Source: DefenseWeb (14/10)



NRP Viana do Castelo

Saturday 12 October saw another naval visit to the Port of Cape Town, this time from the Portuguese Navy Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) NRP Viana do Castelo.

The Viana do Castelo left Lisbon in August and is making its way around Africa, having previously visited Namibia, in September, and Mozambique, at the beginning of October. The vessel is slated to make its next stop in Angola, before participating in the Grand African Nemo exercise in the Gulf of Guinea. The Viana do Castelo will then continue north to Cabo Verde and Mauritania before returning to Portugal in December. On concluding its journey, it will have visited Cabo Verde, Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Namibia, Mozambique, Angola, Sao Tome and Principe, Gabon, and Mauritania.

The first of its class, the Viana do Castelo was commissioned in March 2011, and measures 83.1 metres in length, with a beam of 12.95 metres and a draught of 3.82 metres. Specifically designed to operate in the North Atlantic Ocean, the vessel's primary role is fisheries protection and search and rescue (SAR) operations.

The Portuguese Navy has slowly upgraded its OPVs during maintenance cycles, to ensure its capabilities remain relevant and effective. Initially the Viana do Castelo was armed with an old 40 mm naval gun but has since received a 30 mm Oto Melara Marlin main gun. Future upgrades are planned to include anti-submarine warfare (ASW) capabilities, and the ability to enable vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) drones, to provide intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities.

The Viana do Castelo arrived in Cape Town a day after the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) vessel Lyme Bay. Other foreign naval visitors include the Brazilian Niteroi-class frigate BNS Defensora with a Super Lynx helicopter and a Special Forces team, and the Indian Navy frigate INS Talwar with a Ka-31 airborne early warning helicopter and an Indian Special Forces team. These last two vessels are currently taking part in Exercise Ibsamar with the South African Navy frigate SAS Amatola. Viana do Castelo was due to depart Cape Town on Monday 14 October.

Remote-Controlled Lifesaver

Source: *My Modern Met*

Remote-Controlled Lifesaver Designed To Rescue People in Challenging Conditions

Is this a game changer in terms of sea rescues?



The company describes their lifebuoy as a “self-propelled, remotely controllable system designed to be a fast and accurate ‘aquatic robot.’”

Watch it in action. Click on the link below:



The Battle of Taranto

Source: www.navywings.org.uk, www.BBC.co.uk, www.maritimefoundation.uk

The Battle of Taranto, on the night of 11-12 November 1940, was a bold and unprecedented naval mission that dramatically changed naval warfare. It saw the British Royal Navy launch a surprise aerial assault on the Italian fleet at Taranto, using canvas-winged Fairey Swordfish biplanes launched from the aircraft carrier HMS *Illustrious*. This attack proved to be a turning point, not only in the Mediterranean campaign of World War II but also in the way naval power would be projected from that point onward.

In 1940, with Italy's entry into the war, the Royal Navy faced a major challenge in the Mediterranean. Italy's fleet, anchored at Taranto, was a direct threat to British operations, particularly to the vital convoy supply routes to Crete and Malta. Taranto was home to some of Italy's most formidable battleships, including the brand-new *Littorio* and *Vittorio Veneto*, along with four modernized battleships: *Cesare*, *Duilio*, *Andrea Doria*, and *Conte di Cavour*. Additionally, numerous cruisers and destroyers were stationed at the port.

The British recognized that neutralizing this fleet would significantly weaken Italian power in the region and help secure British naval superiority. Thus, Operation Judgement was conceived, a daring plan to cripple the Italian fleet at its home base using aircraft launched from HMS *Illustrious*.

Originally, the plan had called for a strike on 21 October 1940, using 36 Swordfish bombers from both HMS *Illustrious* and HMS *Eagle*. However, a series of setbacks, including a fire aboard *Illustrious* and damage to *Eagle*, reduced the force to just 21 aircraft and delayed the operation. While frustrating, the delay allowed for further reconnaissance, confirming that the entire Italian fleet was in port, creating a prime target for the attack.

On the night of 11 November, 21 Swordfish aircraft took off from *Illustrious* under radio silence and without navigation lights, flying 170 miles through the night. These slow, canvas-winged biplanes, some armed with torpedoes and others with bombs or flares, rumbled toward their target at a mere 75 knots.

The first wave arrived at Taranto just before 23:00, approaching from the southwest under the cover of darkness. The flare carriers illuminated the ships in the harbour, signalling the torpedo bombers to dive into action amidst heavy anti-aircraft fire. Despite fierce resistance, within ten minutes the Italians had suffered catastrophic damage. The battleships *Littorio*, *Caio Duilio*, and *Conte di Cavour* were crippled, with four other ships either sunk or heavily damaged. Shore installations, including the seaplane base and oil depot, were also destroyed.

A second wave of eight aircraft arrived around midnight, facing even heavier anti-aircraft fire from the over 800 guns defending the port. Despite these formidable defences, the Swordfish pressed on, and by 01:20, all the planes had completed their attacks and began the long flight back to *Illustrious*. Though two aircraft were lost, the operation was a resounding success.

The damage inflicted at Taranto rendered the Italian fleet ineffective for the remainder of the war. The *Littorio* was out of action for months, while the *Duilio* and *Conte di Cavour* were beached, with *Conte di Cavour* remaining out of service until the end of the war. This sudden decimation of Italy's naval power shifted the balance in the Mediterranean in favour of the British and was a significant morale booster at a critical juncture of the war.

More importantly, Taranto marked the dawn of a new era in naval warfare. It was the first time in history that a fleet had been defeated by an enemy it had never seen, highlighting the growing dominance of airpower in naval strategy. The success of carrier-based aircraft in disabling large capital ships foreshadowed the future of naval engagements, a lesson that was not lost on the Japanese, who would employ similar tactics in their attack on Pearl Harbor just a year later.

As Admiral Andrew Cunningham, the Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet, remarked: “Taranto and the night of 11 November 1940 should be remembered forever as having shown once and for all, that in the Fleet Air Arm, the Navy has its most devastating weapon.”

The Battle of Taranto stands as a tribute to the bravery, resourcefulness, and skill of the young pilots who flew the antiquated Swordfish into a storm of anti-aircraft fire and barrage balloons. Their success not only crippled the Italian fleet but also paved the way for the future of naval air power, proving that carriers, not battleships, would dominate the seas in the wars to come.



Conte di Cavour – Battleship



HMS Illustrious



The Fairey Swordfish was a biplane torpedo bomber.



“Mussolini has become boastful; he has got into the habit of referring to the Mediterranean as ‘Mare Nostrum’, which means ‘our sea’. We are going to change all that ... we are going to change it to ‘Cunningham’s Pond’. I tell you that with no uncertain voice...”

— Attributed to Captain Boyd, in David Wragg's *Swordfish: The Story of the Taranto Raid*

This month in History - November 1974

50 years ago

General

9 Nov - The fiery collision in Tokyo Bay of the Taiwanese freighter Pacific Ares and the Japanese oil tanker Yuyo Maru killed 33 sailors, all but one of them on the freighter. The Pacific Ares had departed from Kawasaki with cargo for Los Angeles and was 4 miles (6.4 km) out to sea when it encountered the incoming Yuyo Maru. Rescue boats saved 34 survivors, and 19 bodies were found, but 14 other sailors listed as missing were not recovered.

12 Nov - The United Nations General Assembly voted, 91 to 22, to suspend South Africa from participation in Assembly matters for the remainder of the 1974-1975 session. The suspension would remain in effect for almost 20 years until June 23, 1994.

16 Nov - Four Egyptian passenger ships entered the Suez Canal, the first commercial vessels to do so since the Six-Day War in 1967.

23 Nov - U.S. President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger arrived in the Soviet Union at the Vozdvizhenka Airbase near Vladivostok, where they were greeted by Soviet Communist Party General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev and Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko for a summit meeting on arms control.

25 Nov - The first "double heart" transplant on a human being was performed at the Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town, South Africa, by Dr. Christiaan Barnard, introducing a new technique of supplementing a diseased heart with a donor heart that "takes the brunt of pumping the blood through the body" while "the blood still passes through the patient's original heart." The first recipient, Ivan Taylor, received the donor heart of a 10-year-old girl. Taylor survived for four and a half months, dying on April 5, 1975.

Sport

22 to 27 Nov - West Indies beat India in 1st test (in India). Kallicharran 124, Greenidge 107, Lloyd 163, Andy Roberts 6 wickets.

23 Nov - New Zealand All Blacks beat Ireland (in Ireland) 15 - 6.

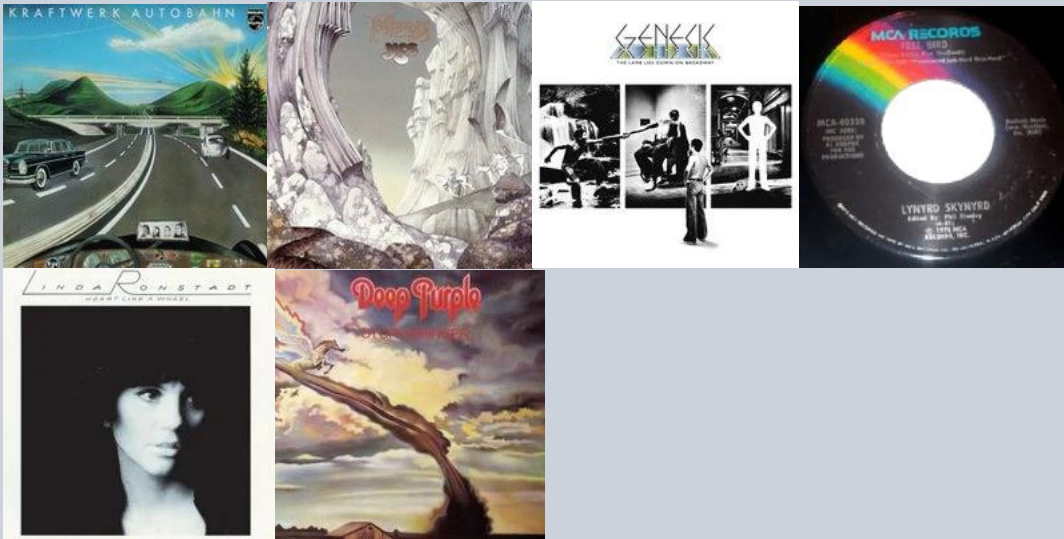
23 Nov - WBA World Featherweight Title fight - Ruben Olivares vs Alexis Arguello - With a knockout at 1:20 in the 13th round, Alexis Arguello claimed the WBA World Featherweight Title.



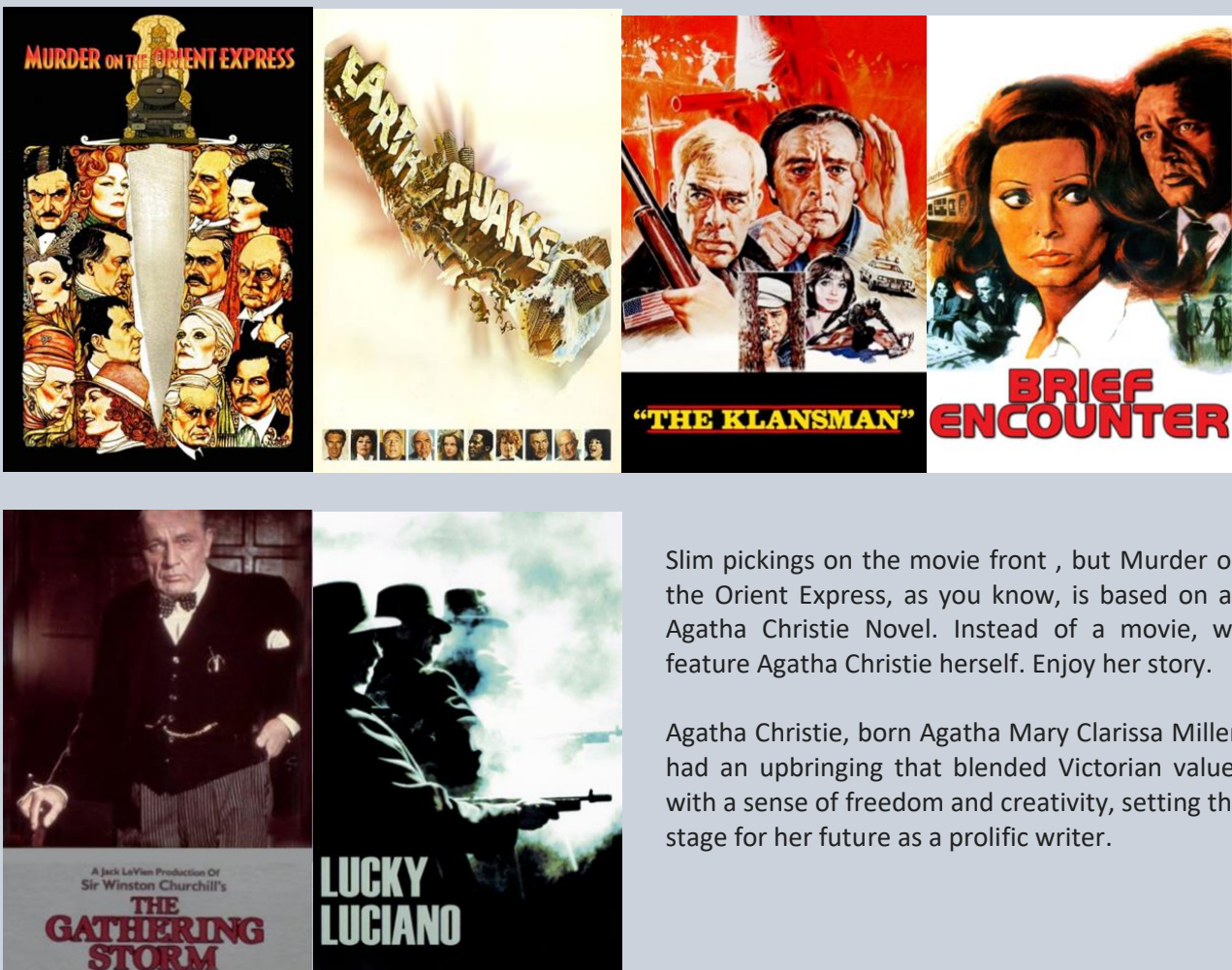
27 Nov - All Blacks beat Wales 12 – 3.

29 Nov to 4 Dec - Australia beat England 1st test in Brisbane. No centuries for Australia, Tony Greig got 110. Jeff Thomson got 9 England wickets.

Music



Movies



Slim pickings on the movie front , but Murder on the Orient Express, as you know, is based on an Agatha Christie Novel. Instead of a movie, we feature Agatha Christie herself. Enjoy her story.

Agatha Christie, born Agatha Mary Clarissa Miller, had an upbringing that blended Victorian values with a sense of freedom and creativity, setting the stage for her future as a prolific writer.

She was born on September 15, 1890, in Torquay, Devon, England, to Frederick Alvah Miller, an American stockbroker, and Clara Boehmer, an Englishwoman. Raised in a comfortable, upper-middle-

class family, Christie grew up with two older siblings, Madge and Monty, who played essential roles in her early years.

Agatha's mother, Clara, was a central figure in her life, encouraging her creativity and imagination from a young age. Clara believed Agatha should not learn to read until she was eight, thinking it would stimulate her intellect. Nevertheless, Agatha taught herself to read by age five, devouring books and exploring worlds beyond her own.



Much of Christie's early years were spent in a world of her own. Her family home, Ashfield, offered her a secluded environment where she would create stories and imaginary friends. This solitude may have nurtured her inventive mind and sparked the creativity that would later define her work as a novelist.

Due to the family's values and lifestyle, Christie didn't attend formal school until her teenage years. Instead, she was educated at home, receiving a somewhat informal education that allowed her to pursue her interests. In 1905, she was sent to a finishing school in Paris, where she studied piano and singing. Though she excelled in both, she ultimately abandoned her musical pursuits due to severe stage fright.

Christie was an avid reader from an early age, finding inspiration in the works of authors like Charles Dickens, Lewis Carroll, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Her sister Madge challenged her to write her first story, sparking her lifelong ambition to become an author. These early experiences fuelled her love for literature and would later influence her mystery writing.

As a teenager, Christie travelled to Egypt with her mother, where they spent three months in Cairo. Egypt's exotic surroundings and historical intrigue made a lasting impression on her, which later inspired some of her stories, including *Death on the Nile*. Although Christie remained modest about the influence of Egypt on her work, it ignited her fascination with foreign settings and cultures.



Christie's childhood also exposed her to mysteries, both real and imagined. Her family would often discuss news stories and mysteries at the dinner table, and she became especially intrigued by Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories. This exposure to mystery narratives planted the seeds for the genre she would one day come to dominate.

These formative years, shaped by freedom, travel, and a love for storytelling, crafted Christie's unique perspective on the world and inspired her eventual career as an author. Her imaginative childhood, close family relationships, and early exposure to mystery fiction all contributed to her future as one of the world's best-known and most-loved mystery writers.

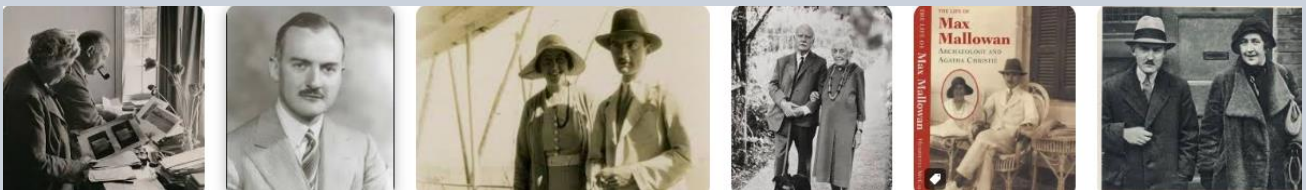
Known for her detective characters Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple, Christie authored 66 detective novels, 14 short story collections, and the world's longest-running play, *The Mousetrap*.

Christie showed early talent as a pianist and singer. Although she considered pursuing a career in music, stage fright and shyness led her to leave that path. However, music would later feature subtly in some of her works, reflecting her lifelong interest.

During both World Wars, Christie served as a volunteer nurse. During World War I, she trained as an apothecary assistant, which gave her knowledge of poisons—a detail that became essential in many of her mysteries.

Besides writing the longest-running play (*The Mousetrap*), Christie holds the Guinness World Record as the best-selling novelist of all time, with over two billion copies of her books sold worldwide. Her works have been translated into at least 44 languages, trailing only behind the Bible and Shakespeare.

Christie had a deep interest in archaeology, which she shared with her second husband, Sir Max Mallowan, an archaeologist. She often joined him on digs in Syria and Iraq, documenting their findings and even helping clean artifacts. Archaeology influenced several of her works, especially *Murder in Mesopotamia* and *Death on the Nile*.



Under the pseudonym Mary Westmacott, Christie wrote six romance novels that were distinctly different from her mystery writing. These novels gave her a different creative outlet, though they are less known compared to her mysteries.

Christie often twisted mystery stereotypes of her time. Hercule Poirot, the methodical Belgian detective, and Miss Marple, the unassuming elderly spinster with a knack for solving crimes, both defied the conventional, glamorous hero of mystery novels, which helped establish Christie's unique style.

Christie wrote two novels, *Curtain* and *Sleeping Murder*, intending them to be published after her death. They marked the final appearances of Poirot and Marple, respectively, providing closure to her most iconic characters.

While she wrote prolifically, Christie had difficulty with spelling and some aspects of written language due to dysgraphia. She dictated most of her books to a typist or a recording device, a factor that contributed to her impressive writing speed.

Although Christie shied away from public life, she accepted a DBE (Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire) title in 1971 for her contributions to literature. Her fictional detective Poirot was even honoured with an obituary in *The New York Times* upon his last appearance in *Curtain*, marking the first time the paper published an obituary for a fictional character.

Agatha met her first husband, Archibald "Archie" Christie, a Royal Flying Corps pilot, in 1913 at a dance. Their whirlwind romance led them to marry on Christmas Eve, 1914, during World War I, just before Archie was deployed to France. This marriage brought excitement and challenges, as they endured long separations due to the war.

In 1919, Agatha and Archie welcomed their only child, Rosalind Margaret Clarissa Christie. Agatha was devoted to Rosalind, balancing motherhood with her burgeoning writing career. Rosalind would remain close to her mother throughout her life, particularly during tough times.

Agatha's marriage to Archie began to unravel in the early 1920s. In 1926, Archie revealed he was in love with another woman, Nancy Neele, and asked for a divorce. This led to Agatha's infamous disappearance for 11 days, a period of emotional distress and confusion. She was eventually found at a hotel in Harrogate, where she claimed to have suffered from amnesia. The couple finalized their divorce in 1928, and Archie soon married Nancy.

The heartbreak of this failed marriage influenced some of her darker, more introspective novels. Many literary critics and biographers see reflections of betrayal, grief, and resilience in her later works, especially her depictions of relationship dynamics and themes of trust.

Agatha met her second husband, Max Mallowan, an archaeologist, during a trip to Mesopotamia (now Iraq) in 1930, shortly after her divorce. Despite their 14-year age difference—Agatha was 40 and Max was 26—their shared love for travel and adventure brought them close, and they married later that year.

Agatha's marriage to Max was more stable than her first, with each maintaining their professional independence. Despite Max's occasional affairs, their relationship endured, and they remained together until Agatha's death. Max later described their marriage as one based on mutual respect and companionship.

Throughout her life, Agatha remained close to Rosalind, especially after her separation from Archie. Rosalind was a constant source of support for her mother, particularly during Agatha's public struggles and later in life when Agatha's health began to decline.

Christie passed away on January 12, 1976, leaving behind a legacy that still defines and inspires the mystery genre. Her works remain iconic for their ingenious plots, memorable characters, and skilful misdirection, making her one of the most enduring authors in literature.

Rosalind became the executor of Agatha's literary estate after her mother's death. She worked to preserve and promote her mother's legacy, overseeing adaptations and publications of Christie's work and later passing this responsibility to her own son, Mathew Prichard.

And, 100 years ago

4 Nov - Stanley Baldwin returned to office as the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom after forming a Conservative Party government, following the October 29 election.

6 Nov - Winston Churchill was named as the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, a surprising move on the part of Stanley Baldwin, as Churchill had no experience in finance.

12 Nov - A new session of the Italian parliament opened without 185 opposition members who had stayed away in an ill-conceived protest against the Fascist Party. The "Aventine Secession" allowed the Fascists to enact the restrictive program of Prime Minister Benito Mussolini.

23 Nov - Edwin Hubble announced his discovery that Andromeda, previously believed to be a nebula, is actually another galaxy, and that the Milky Way is only one of many such galaxies in the universe.



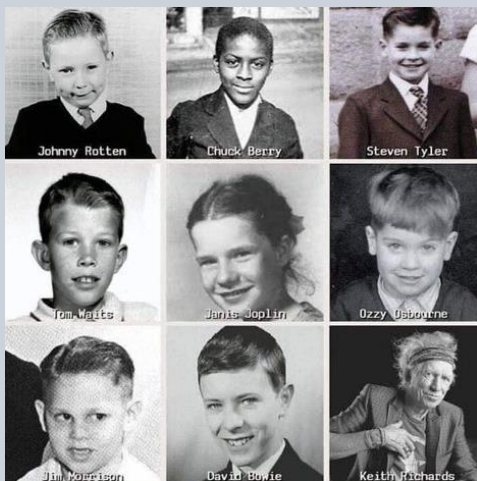
25 Nov - The U.S. Navy dirigible USS Los Angeles (ZR-3) was commissioned, with Lieutenant Commander Maurice R. Pierce leading its crew. The airship was based at Naval Support Facility Anacostia. Among the changes made by the U.S. Navy after the airship was received from Germany was to replace the hydrogen gas with helium as a lifting agent.



Answers to the quiz

- 1) Michael Jones
- 2) Mike Gatting
- 3) Michael Jordan
- 4) Mike Tyson
- 5) Michael Phelps
- 6) Michael du Plessis
- 7) Michael Schumacher
- 8) Michael Vaughan
- 9) Michael Owen
- 10) Mike Hailwood

Tattler – Laughs



AS A KID, I USED TO WATCH THE WIZARD OF OZ AND WONDER HOW SOMEONE COULD TALK IF THEY DIDN'T HAVE A BRAIN. THEN I GOT SOCIAL MEDIA.

Never send a kangaroo to fetch the beer!



And, never turn down a frog!

If I can't have her, no one will



JACKIE GLEASON SECRETS TO THE PERFECT MARRIAGE

1. Two times a week we go to a nice restaurant, have a little beverage, good food and companionship. She goes on Tuesdays, I go on Fridays.
2. We also sleep in separate beds. Hers is in California and mine is in Texas.
3. I take my wife everywhere, but she keeps finding her way back.
4. I asked my wife where she wanted to go for our anniversary. "Somewhere I haven't been in a long time!" she said. So I suggested the kitchen.
5. We always hold hands. If I let go, she shops.
6. She has an electric blender, electric toaster and electric bread maker. She said "There are too many gadgets, and no place to sit down!" So I bought her an electric chair.
7. My wife told me the car wasn't running well because there was water in the carburettor. I asked where the car was. She told me, "In the lake."
8. She got a mud pack and looked great for two days. Then the mud fell off.
9. Remember: Marriage is the number one cause of divorce.
10. I married Miss Right. I just didn't know her first name was 'Always'.
11. I haven't spoken to my wife in 18 months. I don't like to interrupt her.
12. The last fight was my fault though. My wife asked, "What's on the TV?" I said, "Dust!".



To mock a killing bird

Comedy feature - The Iconic Four Yorkshiremen | At Last the 1948 Show. Click below.



That's it for this month folks!