

Issue 224

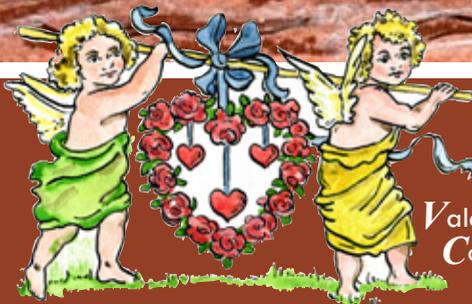
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Central Brittany Journal

February 2023



Nantes
28



Valentine's
Cocktails
6 & 15



Limericks
16 & 18

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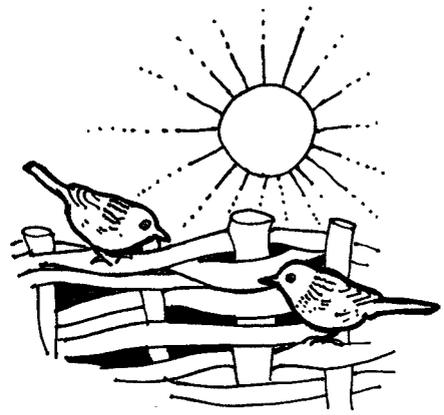
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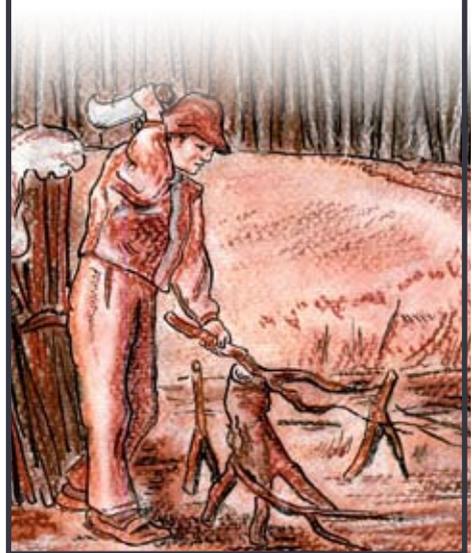


Tim the Gardener pages 20-21 & 32

COVER

Making faggots (from a drawing by
Jean-François Millet 1814 - 1875)

Red chalks and pen and ink,
Bethan Lewis



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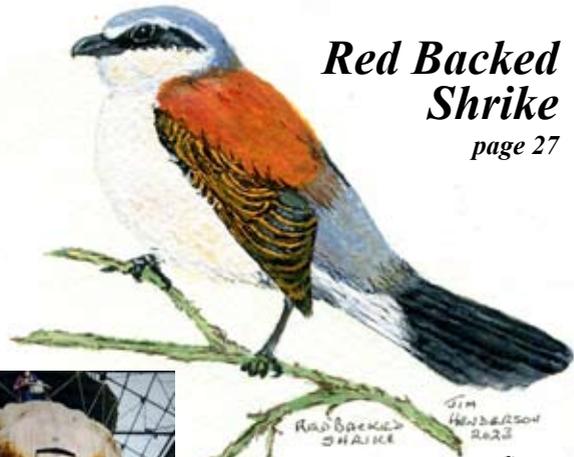
Monday 9:00 - 12:00
Tuesday - Saturday
9:00 - 12:00 14:00 - 17:30

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Red Backed Shrike
page 27



N is for Nantes
pages 28-29

Limericks
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Popular Expressions: Salt
pages 19



Tax. Investing. Inheritance. *So many questions!*

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Wed 8 Mar | PLOËRMEL (56)

Tue 21 Mar | PARIS (75)

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4 Music: Win Tickets

Music : Win Tickets

Pogo Car Crash Control and SBRBS share the billing at La Grande Ourse, St Agathon, Guingamp, on Friday 24th February. Both rock bands will bring their own style and energy to the venue. To have a chance of winning a pair of tickets, answer the following question:

SBRBS are due to play the Vieilles Charrues festival in Carhaix this summer. Previous headliner, Elton John, has been a lifelong supporter (and sometime chairman) of which English football club?

Text answer with name and number to 06 02 31 29 41 by Wednesday 15th February, when the draw will be made.



Altered Five Blues Band bring their blues attitude (and possibly-Grammy-nominated music) all the way from the USA to La Grande Ourse, St Agathon, Guingamp, on Saturday 4th March. To have a chance of winning a pair of tickets, answer the following question:

Altered Five frontman, Jeff Taylor is a powerful American guy, whereas 80s popsters Altered Image's vocalist was a petite Scottish lass. Can you name the girl who went on to become a well-known actress?



Text answer with name and number to 06 02 31 29 41 by Thursday 23rd February, when the draw will be made.

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Dan Lewis	Bridge Puzzle	6
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Editorial:

Judging by the conversations that I have had with people over the past few weeks, I would say that the cost of living crisis is the issue that is causing the most concern at the moment. It is linked to many of the questions that prompted me to start the Journal, back in 2004. We are told that the global economy works to produce goods as efficiently as possible, and make them available to us as cheaply as possible, and that may be true. The problem is that it is out of our control, and the current crisis is showing that it is not just out of our personal control, but it is also out of the control of our national governments, and would probably be beyond the control of a European or even united Western government. I have always thought that a little sanity could be restored if people could work together to provide a significant amount of products and services for each other on a purely local level – we would then be able to set the prices of things for ourselves, and would not be so much at the mercy of forces beyond our control.

Deadline for content for the March issue is 20th February, or earlier if possible.

GL

Central Brittany Journal

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Deadline for classified ads: 20th of the month.

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6 Bridge Puzzle / Hetty's Kitchen

Bridge Puzzle 49

Squeeze

Dealer North, N/S Vulnerable

W N E S

1♦ 2♦ 2NT

Pass 3NT All Pass

East's 2♦ is a Micheal's bid showing both majors 5/5

♠ 8 4
♥ 9 5
♦ 10 9 2
♣ A K 10 9 8 3

♠ 7 5 3 2
♥ K 8 2
♦ A K Q 5
♣ Q 7

	N		♠ A J 10 9 6
W		E	♥ Q J 7 6 4
	S		♦ 6
			♣ 5 4

♠ K Q
♥ A 10 3
♦ J 8 7 4 3
♣ J 6 2

West leads the A♣, K♣, and a third club, hoping to find a weak spot. South wins the third club with the jack, and throws a small spade from dummy. South needs a spade for his ninth trick, so he plays the K♠, taking a small risk that West may have the A♠. East wins with the A♠, and continues with the J♠ to South's Q♠.

At this point South has his nine tricks. Can you see how South can make ten tricks?

Solution page 47

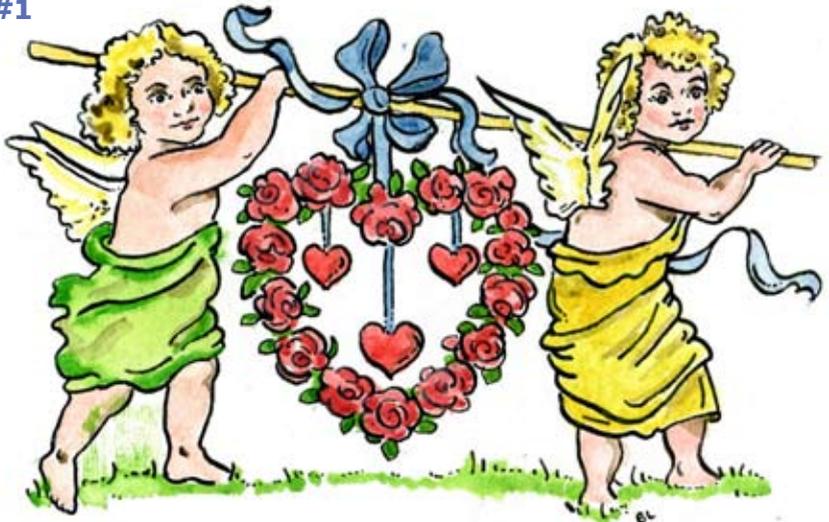
Bridge puzzle contributed by Dan Lewis, buildingmatters@yahoo.co.uk

Valentine's Cocktail #1

(for 2)

- 150ml cranberry juice
- 1 tsp grenadine
- 50ml vodka
- Ice cubes
- ¼ wedge of lime
- 4 raspberries
- Chilled sparkling wine

In a jug, mix the cranberry juice, grenadine and vodka with a handful of ice cubes. Squeeze in the lime wedge and stir. Strain into two champagne flutes, drop a couple of raspberries into each glass and top up with sparkling wine.



See another cocktail on page 15

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Hetty's Kitchen
page 26

**Truffled Mushroom Paté
Chicken & Wine Traybake
No Bake Strawberry Cheesecake
Valentines Cocktails pages 6 & 10**

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Spotlight on Brittany:

February: This month the focus is on Brittany's heritage. Widely travelled, but now a guide in Huelgoat, Pierre Pinat recalls his Breton roots and, together with Marie-Laure Callec, consider how the importance of knowing something of Brittany's history and culture can enhance your life if now resident here, or even just visiting. Then our travelling music man, Carl Smith, concludes his musical voyage around Europe, here in Brittany and looks into its strong Celtic connections.

All this and much more can be heard by joining us on Radio Kreiz Breizh on Wednesdays at 14h00 and Saturdays at 12h00 (102.9Mhz-106Mhz) or on Radio Bro Gwened (101.7Mhz-92.6Mhz) on the first Wednesday of the month at 14h00 and the third Sunday at 09h.30. More simply perhaps, you can listen anytime to this month's programme, and others from the archive, by following the links on our website: www.spotlightonbrittany.fr

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Help & Advice page 10

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See also, Yves de Reviere, Generali Insurance on back page.

What's On in February

Thurs 1 - Sun 5 February

Friday afternoons

Craft afternoons 'Les doigts de fée'. From 2pm-5pm. Sew, knit, mend. From 2pm every Friday. 'La convergence des loutres' (the old girls' school) 10, route du Dresnay 22780 Loguivy-Plougras.

Mon 6 - Sun 12 February

Tuesday 7th February

Royal British Legion Monthly Social at the Relais de L'Oust, Josselin. Open to non-members as well as members, lunch, quiz, bric a brac, book, poppies, and there is a raffle each month. Starts around midday and lunch is served about 1pm. For further information please contact Greg on CentralBrittany. Secretary@RBL.Community. For Poppies please contact Kissmekate1@orange.fr.

Tuesday 7th February

Soirée du Sept. Open mike and variety evening. Music, poetry and sketches. Register from 7pm for 7.30 start. St Nicodème (22160) salle des fêtes.

Saturday 11th February

Fest Noz. Breton music and dancing. 8.30pm - 2am. Food and bar. Lan Meur 22810 Plougonver (on the road btw Plougonver & Gurnuhuel).

Sunday 12th February

Bluegrass & Old time jam session at the Ch'ty Coz Cafe, Bulat Pestivien (22160). 2.30pm. Traditional American music. Come and listen or join in. For more info call Emmanuelle: 02 96 45 75 74

Mon 13 - Sun 19 February

Tuesday 14th February

Quiz at Le P'tit Pelem, St Nicolas du Pelem (near the church) 7.5€ each for chicken with sauce or omelette or vegetarian steak with chips. Plenty of parking nearby. Please pre-book. Maximum 20 teams of 4. To find out more please email dalefraser01@gmail.com

Thursday 16th February

AIKB Guided Tour in English of a Submerged Landscape Photo Exhibition. Meet at 2.30pm at Centre d'Art Gwinze-gal, 3 rue Auguste Pavie, Guingamp. 3€ per person. Please reserve in advance by email to info@aikb.fr

Sunday 19th February

Vide Grenier, Bulat Pestivien. Organised by the Mairie. 8am-1pm.

Mon 20 - Tues 28 February**Friday 24th February**

Rock concert with co-headliners Pogo Car Crash Control and SBRBS. 9pm, 16€ on the door. La Grande Ourse, St Agathon, Guingamp. Contact 06 59 15 18 32, or www.ourse.fr

Friday 24th February

Chinese 3 course meal. Starts 7pm. Starter of chicken / veggy nems served with sweet chilli dip on a bed of salad or veggy chinese noodle soup with prawn crackers. Main course, chicken or veg chinese curry. or chicken or veg chinese sweet and sour. Dessert ice cream gateau. 16€ per person. Bar Le Pommier, Landelau.

Friday 24th February

Monthly Quiz at La Pergola, Plouray. Starts 7.30pm. Quiz master Andrew Chamberlain. A mere ten-minute drive from Rostrenen, along a very quiet road, the D790.

March**Saturday 4th March**

Blues concert with Altered Five Blues Band. 9pm, 22€ on the door. La Grande Ourse, St Agathon, Guingamp. Contact 06 59 15 18 32, or www.ourse.fr

Thursday 9th March

AIKB guided tour of Rosquelfen - a village between Laniscat and Gouarec. You will need walking boots and though it is not difficult, it does involve some hilly terrain. Meet at the Chapel at Rosquelfen at 2 pm. 3€ per person. Please reserve in advance by email to info@aikb.fr. Any extra donation to the Chapel would be appreciated on a voluntary basis.

Sunday 30th April

Flea Market, Lohuec. 9am-4pm. Salle Polyvalente. Goal: to raise money for Amicale Laique RPI Calanhel-Lohuec. Tel 07 04 00 63 19.

Cinemas page 10**ANTIQUES & SECOND HAND****BUY and SELL****Goods Wanted For Cash****NEW: WE NOW OFFER HOUSE CLEARANCE SERVICE****All white goods, stereos, TVs,****Furniture & all electrical goods****Best prices paid !! We turn your goods into cash****Callac 02.96.45.58.35 See our main ad on page 2**

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Saturday 18th February
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English Language Films in February

Rostrenen Cinema

Thursday 2nd February

The Banshees of Inisherin, directed by Martin McDonagh and starring Brendan Foster and Colin Farrell. Starts 8.30pm.

Sunday 12th February

Babylon, directed by Damien Chazelle and starring Brad Pitt. Starts 8.30pm.

Sunday 19th February

Tár, directed by Todd Field and starring Cate Blanchett. Starts 8.30pm.

Monday 27th February

Knock at the Cabin, directed by M. Night Shyamalan and starring Dave Bautista and Rupert Grint. Starts 8.30pm.

Tuesday 28th February

Aftersun, directed by Charlotte Wells and starring Paul Mescal and Frankie Corio. Starts 8.30pm.

Callac Cinema

Saturday 11th and Friday 17th

Babylon. Directed by Damien Chazelle. Starring Brad Pitt, Margot Robbie, Diego Calva. Starts 8.30pm.

Sunday 19th

Tár. Written and directed by Todd Field. Starring Cate Blanchett Starts 5.30pm.

Jeanne D'arc Cinema, Gourin.

Thursday 9th February

COW, starts 2pm

Friday 10th February

Lost Highway, (Restored 4k version followed with a Coffee) starts 4 pm

Saturday 11th February

Avatar, starts 5.40pm

Sunday 12th February

Babylon, starts 8pm

Wednesday 5th February

Tár, starts 8pm

Monday 27th & Tues 28th February

Vivre, starts 8pm

www.cinegourin.fr

News

English-Language News Site for Brittany

Brittany News is a new web media entirely in English which aims to fill a void on the Breton media scene. It hopes to reach some of the 1.5 billion English-speakers (or people who can read English) in the world, with news about Brittany. It specifically targets tourists wishing to come to Brittany, but who do not know a word of French, as well as researchers interested in the Breton language, English-speaking residents, or even people interesting in investing in Breton businesses or buying Breton products, such as the autonomous electric buses built in Quimper.

In 2016, Remy Peneg (from webmedia NHU Bretagne) launched the concept of an English news media for Brittany. An idea that went much further than a simple inter-Celtic media. The original team included Jacques-Yves Le Touze from the Institut Culturel de Bretagne, Charles Kergaravat from Breizh Amerika, Rozenn Miliin (formerly TV Breizh Executive Director) and Philippe Argouarch (ABP founder). Unfortunately this team was not able to agree on the web platform for the site nor on an editorial line, so nothing did start. Seven years later, the Breton association for digital media (ABPMN) an association based in Rennes, which also manages the ABP (the webmedia Agence Bretagne Presse) decided to set up a website for Brittany News. The news.bzh domain had been reserved for several years and was just waiting for a web site. The site is now live, it just needs citizen journalists and volunteer contributors. Its URL is <https://news.bzh>.

Bro Nevez

Bro Nevez (New Country) is the quarterly newsletter of the U.S. Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language (U.S. ICDBL). While there is a focus on the Breton language and work in its support, notes cover a wide range of topics on contemporary Breton culture. You can find all the issues published since 1981 on the website ICDBL.org

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Tax & Investment

French taxation in 2023

While France's annual budgets can often include tax reforms, considering the current local and international economic context, the 2023 budget did not carry any significant tax changes or any tax rises. Instead it focused on protecting households and companies against the impact of inflation.

Income tax

The income tax bands will increase by 5.4% to match inflation – thereby reducing tax liabilities.

Up to €10,777	Nil
€10,778 to €27,748	11%
€27,749 to €78,570	30%
€78,571 to €168,994	41%
Over €168,994	45%

This means that employees who received a pay rise because of inflation are less likely to be hit by a higher tax rate. Those whose income has not changed will benefit by paying less tax on it.

Note that these new tax brackets apply to your 2022 income (as declared in the tax return you submit in spring 2023).

Taxe d'habitation

The taxe d'habitation reform which began a few years ago reaches its conclusion in 2023, with the complete suppression for the remaining 20% of households who were still paying it.

Succession taxes reform

During his presidential campaign, Emmanuel Macron promised to reform and diminish succession taxes by increasing the tax-free deduction for inheritances between parents and children to €150,000, and by lowering the taxes for other relatives such as stepchildren.

However, given the current economic context, the government does not support this reform at the present time and succession tax rates and allowances remain unchanged.

Social charges

Social charges are maintained at the same rates as 2022:

Employment income	9.7%
Pension income	9.1%
Investment income	17.2%

The special lower rates also remain in place:

Pensions – Social charges on pensions are reduced to 7.4% for those whose taxable income is less than approximately €2,000 a month (€3,000 for a couple). If you have Form S1, and/or are not subject to the French health care system, you do not need to pay any social charges your pension income.

Investment income – If you are covered under the health care system of another EU/EEA country, or have Form S1, social charges are reduced from 17.2% to 7.5% for investment and property income. Last year the French government confirmed this continues to apply to UK residents and to UK nationals living in France.

Real estate wealth tax (IFI)

The threshold remains unchanged at €1,300,000 for 2023 and there are no changes to the scale rates of wealth tax.

Assurance-vie

The budget does not include any changes to the taxation of assurance-vie policies.

The savings and investment 'wrappers' remain very attractive from both a tax and succession planning point of view.

French taxation can be complicated enough, cross-border taxation and international tax planning for expatriates even more so. Take specialist advice from a professional with deep knowledge of tax and financial planning in France to ensure your tax planning is up to date and compliant, and that you are holding your assets in the most tax-efficient way for France.

*Dave Lamont, Blevins Franks
rennes@blevinsfranks.com*

Tax rates, scope and reliefs may change. Any statements concerning taxation are based upon our understanding of current taxation laws and practices which are subject to change. Tax information has been summarised; individuals should seek personalised advice.

Keep up to date on the financial issues that may affect you on the Blevins Franks news page at www.blevinsfranks.com

CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

CANCER SUPPORT FRANCE

Cancer Support France provides help and support to English speaking people in France who are touched by cancer. Contact 0800 240 200 or helpline@cancersupportfrance.org

THURSDAY MORNINGS

Book Mark II - English Book Exchange. More than 7000 titles available. Open Thursday mornings from 10am until 12 noon.

Bis 10 rue des Ecole. As you leave the traffic lights in Malestroix driving away from the river and bridge in the direction of Vannes, we are about 350 metres on the right just before the sharp bend to the left in the road. For further info contact Adrian at adrian@telsweb.net

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

Rue Faber, Dinard. English speaking worship :

A warm welcome to all. St Bart's website: circa.tees.ac.uk/stbarts/

"THE BIBLE IN BRITTANY"

You are warmly invited to come to a Bible Reading and Discussion Group. Held in Departments 22 or 56 each week Every Thursday evening in homes at 8pm, God Willing. For Details ring 02 97 28 81 45 or 02 97 51 27 40.

ALCOHOL SUPPORT GROUP: CARHAIX

Poher Alcool, weekly meetings, different places, different times. Call 02 98 93 48 95, louis-marie.mondeguer@orange.fr

PONTIVY: JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Bible meetings in English every week:

2pm Sunday afternoons: 30 minute bible-based discourse followed by a discussion of important bible topics.

7:30pm Wednesday evenings: Practical bible study and scriptural discussion of how to handle current events and concerns.

No collections. Everyone welcome, bring the family.

Address: Kingdom Hall, 44 rue Blaise Pascal, 56300 PONTIVY

CHRIST CHURCH BRITTANY

Acting Chaplain: Rev Jeremy Cross,

e-mail: jandscross@aol.com, tel: 02 97 93 27 24

Churchwardens:

Chris Wilson 02 97 72 19 29 and Janet Lageveen 02 98 99 63 14

We have provisionally planned for the following mix of live and online services, but please check our website at www.churchinbrittany.org for any changes that may be made to this schedule.

HUELGOAT (Holy Communion services held in the parish church, Huelgoat)

5th – Third before Lent – Zoom Service 10am

12th – Second before Lent – Holy Communion 2.30pm

19th – Sunday next before Lent – Zoom Service 10am

25th – Ecumenical Service for Christian Unity – Holy Communion 3pm

26th – Lent 1 – NO SERVICE

For more details contact:

Henk Lageveen 02 98 99 63 14 ccb.huelgoat@gmail.com

For more details contact:

Henk Lageveen 02 98 99 63 14 ccb.huelgoat@gmail.com

PLOËRMEL (in the Chapel at 14 rue Général Dubreton)

Ploërmel

5th – Third before Lent – Holy Communion 11am

12th – Second before Lent – Holy Communion 11am

19th – Sunday next before Lent – Word and Worship 11am

26th – Lent 1 – Holy Communion 11am

For more details contact:

Chris Wilson 02 97 72 19 29 chriselbeau@gmail.com

REDON (Eglise St Charles, 10 avenue Gaston Sébilleau, Redon)

12th – Second before Lent – Word and Worship 10.30am

26th – Lent 1 – Word and Worship 10.30am

For more details contact redon@churchinbrittany.org

ROSTRENE

Word and Worship services in the salle paroissiale, 4 Rue Joseph Pennec, Rostrenen. Holy Communion services in the Chapelle du Collège de Campostat, 5, place du Bourg Coz, Rostrenen (off Rue de la Marne)

5th – Third before Lent – Zoom Service 10am

12th – Second before Lent – Holy Communion 10.30am

19th – Sunday next before Lent – Zoom Service 10am

26th – Lent 1 – Holy Communion 10.30am

For more details contact:

John Cullingford 02 56 43 11 27 cullingj47@gmail.com

The Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club (AFVBC Brittany)

Saturday 11th February

The Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club (AFVBC Brittany) will be meeting at le Black Dog pub, le Corboulo, 15 Rue du Blavet, Saint-Aignan, 56480. Tel: 02 97 27 84 22. Starts 10:30am. If you wish to attend please contact venue with the number in your party to avoid disappointment on the day. Facebook page for contact on how to join us is, Brittany Armed Forces & Veteran's Breakfast Club Brittany.

Saturday 18th February

The Armed Forces & Veterans Breakfast Club (AFVBC Brittany) will be meeting at Café de la place, 13 pl. du 9 Avril 1944, 22160 Callac on 18th February 2023 and every third Saturday of the month at 10:30 moving forward. If you wish to attend please contact me (Remy) by Facebook page no later than the Wednesday before the meeting.

Facebook page for contact on how to join us is: Brittany Armed Forces & Veteran's Breakfast Club Brittany.

Remy Savigar

CBJ Quiz

Target: 20 points. Answers page 32

Set by Jon Chambers: jonchambers1825@hotmail.com

I: General Knowledge & Current Affairs

- 1 How is the collection of parliamentary debate transcripts better known? It's named after the first official printer to Parliament.
- 2 Alfred Hitchcock directed the horror film, *The Birds* (1963). But who wrote the 1952 story upon which it's based?
- 3 In 2022, Oxford Road station gained an unwelcome first place for the most cancellations in Britain, narrowly beating Preston and Huddersfield. In which city is it located?
- 4 Which UK post carries an annual stipend of £5,750 and a butt of sack (equivalent to about 600 bottles of sherry)?
- 5 Roberto de Zerbi is the manager of which Premiership club?
- 6 What is special about a temperature of -273.15°C ?
- 7 Which antipodean leader has just thrown in the towel?
- 8 Which of the following languages is considered to be the oldest: Galician, Basque, Icelandic, Greek?
- 9 Which country exports most brazil nuts: Bolivia, Brazil, Peru?
- 10 Genesis and Exodus are the first two. What is the third book of the Old Testament?

II: French Language & Culture

- 1 William Burroughs' novel has the French title *Le Firstin Nu*. What is it in English?
- 2 As well as Cassis, what's the alcoholic ingredient of Kir Breton?
- 3 So there's Kir Royale and Kir Breton. What is the name of the drink made with cassis and chouchen?
- 4 France is home to the largest museum in the world. What is it?
- 5 Who famously said: 'How can you govern a country which has 246 varieties of cheese?'
- 6 What is the official residence of the French president?

- 7 What is the national symbol of France?
- 8 Which is the highest selling brand of car sold in France, Renault, Peugeot, or Citroen? (Using 2019-21 figures.)
- 9 In what part of France did crêpes originate?
- 10 What is the name of the sovereign state in the Eastern Pyrenees bordered by France in the north and Spain in the south?

III: History & Geography

- 1 What is the most southerly state of the US mainland?
- 2 Which country has the international driving code L?
- 3 General Blucher was a leader of which army?
- 4 Admiral Rooke's forces seized which Spanish territory in 1704?
- 5 Who succeeded Queen Anne?
- 6 Who did Jaime Ramon Mercader assassinate in Mexico City in August 1940?
- 7 What is the capital city of Croatia?
- 8 Which strait separates the island of Anglesey and mainland Wales?
- 9 In terms of area, how many US states are smaller than Wales?
- 10 Which explorer was the first to reach the South Pole?

IV: Connections

- 1 Natalie Portman man starred in which 2010 psychological thriller based on a Tchaikovsky ballet?
- 2 Which term, first used in 1821 but with origins in the ancient régime and French Revolution, signifies 'the power of the press'? Although now rather dated, it's still used to refer to the importance that journalists have in political life.
- 3 The Farne Islands, off the Northumberland coast, is well-known as a sanctuary for which bird?
- 4 Which group of writers, intellectuals, philosophers, and artists 'lived in squares, painted in circles, and loved in triangles', according to Dorothy Parker?

CBJ Quiz

- 5 What six-letter English word is defined as 'loud, violent and ill-tempered woman; scold; shrew'?
- 6 Which British Prime Minister was also the First Earl of Stockton?
- 7 According to Greek mythology, who was god of the wild?
- 8 What term is used of a person on horseback who goads the bull with a lance in bullfighting?
- 9 What was Lyndon B Johnson's wife's nickname as First Lady, 1963-69?
- 10 What rivers run through the cities of London and New York respectively? What is the connection?

Tuesday 14th February

Quiz at Le P'tit Pelem, St Nicolas du Pelem

Friday 24th February

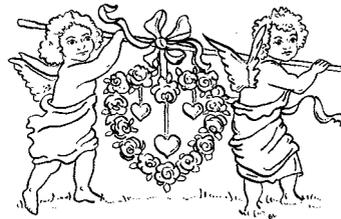
Monthly Quiz at La Pergola, Plouray.

More details - What's On pages 8-10

Valentine's Cocktail #2 (for 2)

100ml pink gin (berry or rhubarb flavour)
 Few raspberries
 2 tbsp fresh pink grapefruit juice
 2 tsp sugar syrup (optional)
 Ice
 Champagne or sparkling wine
 Rose petals

Put the gin, raspberries, grapefruit juice and sugar syrup and a handful of ice into a cocktail shaker (or a screw top mason jar – not so romantic but it does the job!). Shake until the container is ice cold to touch. Strain into two cocktail or coupe glasses and top up with champagne. Float a rose petal or two on top.



Telephone: 0033 (0) 2 97 27 01 71

Mobile: 0033 (0) 6 77 35 67 34

Mon-Sat - 9:30am-6pm

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Limericks

Pot Plants

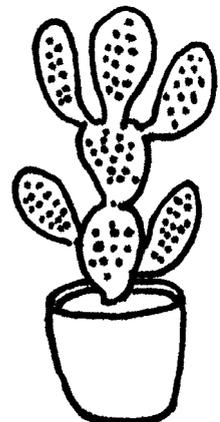
*Pot plants, hmmm ... what makes it a pot?
 Is it size or shape or is it the lot?
 Tall and thin, squat and rotund,
 Or even my disused, earth-filled bund?
 No, unlike a leopard, a plant can change its spot.*
Sally Wilson – Rosporden

*Plants in a pot makes a whole lot of sense,
 Since out in the sun some have no defence,
 So being indoors instead,
 Then watered and fed,
 They'll thrive for many weeks hence.*
Jim Henderson, Carhaix

*Gardening is so upsetting,
 Disturbing clay and unearthing
 Creatures I detest,
 Squirmy, wormy pests
 Ready potted plants me delighting.*
Bláithín Ní Liatháin, Lanouée

*I could grow pot plants; tall, green and quite regal,
 Down in the basement, where safe from the seagull,
 With lots of bright lights,
 They'd grow days and nights,
 But though 'pot' plants make money - I know it's illegal!*
Tony Pendleton, Gouarec

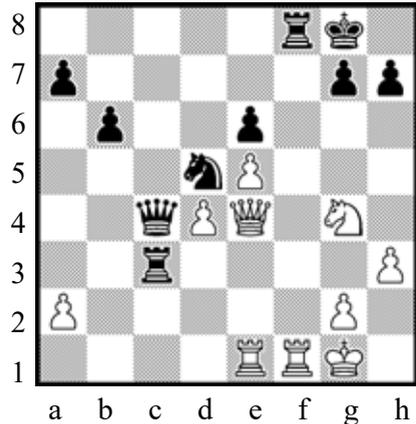
*I had a great stone pot plant with a chink that had been plastered,
 With columns up all sides – so stunningly pilastered,
 I found out who had caused the chip,
 And now my pot plant's in the skip,
 My brother's fault – drunk at the wheel, the annoying, silly denigrate.*
Steven Daniels, St Brieuc
Limericks continued overleaf



Chess Puzzle

White to play and win.

Hint: The black king does not have many friends to help with the defence, one little sacrifice and he will be completely open.



Solution page 48

*The Knight in Shining Armor,
 Huelgoat Chess Club,
 chrisandmalbody@yahoo.co.uk*

March Limerick Challenge: 'Names for a New Planet'

The James Webb telescope seems to be discovering new planets in the far reaches of the universe, almost every day. This made me wonder, given the chance to name one, what would I offer?

Perhaps readers of CBJ could send suggestions – via the limerick route next month!! *Cyril Young*

Please send limericks on this theme by the 20th Jan. to: info@thebj.com CBJ, BP4, 22160 CALLAC

Prize Crossword

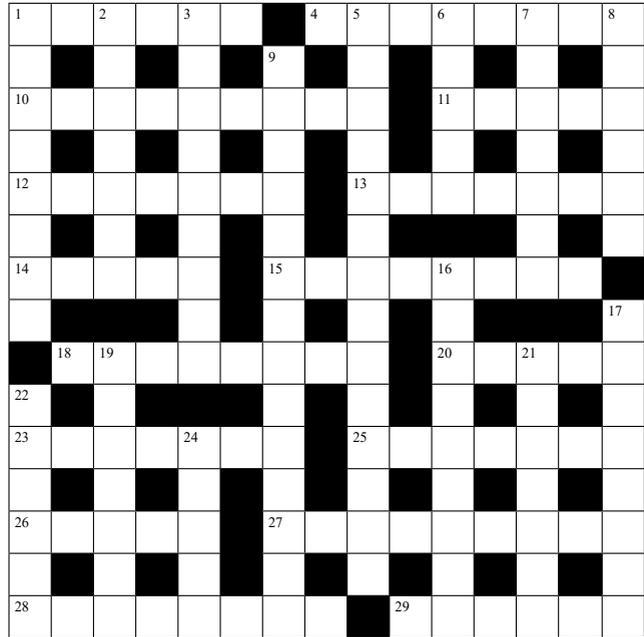
February Darren Milsom

Across

1. About a couple who'll patch things up (6)
4. Tablet wrapped in herb leaks and makes a mess (8)
10. Giving Siamese a pep-up puts him in a trance instead (9)
11. Various axe options (5)
12. Seaside attraction suffering from decay – like an old clown (7)
13. Function where Don Giovanni meets Tchaikovsky and Elgar at the beginning (7)
14. Fertile, but without iron casing, only an amount of liquid is returned (5)
15. Opening bowler wears bowler to deceive batsmen 1, 3 and 4 (3-5)
18. Lazing about, Leo in bed is just typical! (4, 4)
20. Arrived with nothing, for a short performance (5)
23. Odd couple take time – eight times! (7)
25. United Nations second team get to do the twist (7)
26. Chez angels – but not the second sanctuary (5)
27. Races a lot up and downstairs (9)
28. Services lottery helps get it sorted (8)
29. Latitudes changed without tie to grown-ups (6)

Down

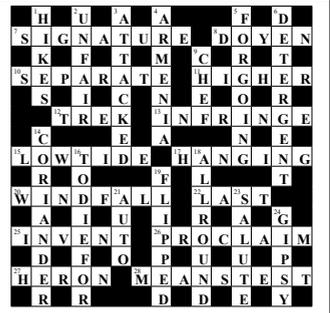
1. Pickle or stew for the chain gang at work (8)
2. Don't rush the sick! (7)
3. Stick your oar in and re-enter if adrift (9)
5. Top banana! (4,2,3,5)
6. Could break be shortened in California, please? (5)
7. Richard faces turmoil without Fred's old-fashioned style (7)
8. Oriental last to drop excuse to eat chocolate in two months (6)
9. High diver has ominous start (2,2,3,4,3)
16. Very well-built granite stable (4,5)
17. Rugby players don't retreat! (8)
19. How flighty avocets' birdsong is measured? (7)
21. In grammar, it allows words to be spliced together (7)
22. Push on regardless for a blow-out (4-2)
24. Forever young and in charge of alarm (5)



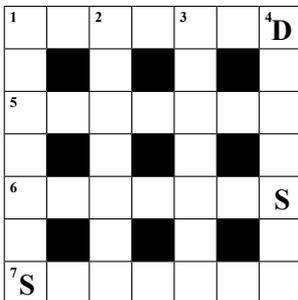
Solution January Prize Crossword:

Winner: S. Strudwick, Plestin-les-Grèves

Twenty euros to the first correct solution drawn from the hat for the February prize crossword. Please send completed solutions to: Prize Crossword, CBJ, BP4, 22160 CALLAC, by 20th Feb.



The 'Little Toughie' Jim Henderson



Clues Across

- 1 Coward (7)
- 5 Patrols (7)
- 6 Lozenge shaped (7)
- 7 Smartened up (7)

Down

- 1 Diverges (7)
- 2 Relief (7)
- 3 Bitter (7)
- 4 Abandoned (7)

The following numbers of letters are required to solve this puzzle – a few have been inserted already to help you to get started.

A – 3; B – 1; C – 4; D – 3; E – 4; H – 1; I – 3; K – 1; M – 1; O – 1; P – 2; R – 4; S – 4; T – 3; U – 5.

Solution in the January issue. Solution November Little Toughie page 47

Limericks : Pot Plants

*Some people really love pot plants, no joke,
Enjoying the pleasures of inhaling the smoke,
But watch out they must,
To avoid a police bust,
We're not in the US, it's illegal to toke.*

Barry Shields, Guingamp

*There was an old man from South Shields,
Who once grew his flowers in fields,
Then he opted for pots,
And found he sold lots,
So now he's dead chuffed with his yields.*

Gerard Dunmoore, Pontivy

*There once was a young man from Skye,
Who bought a whole box of cacti,
But in his despair;
With the box on a chair,
He sat down and then let out a cry.*

Sally Wilson, Rospenden

*Some plants love pots and are easy to grow,
While others need root space and seem to be slow,*

*With bonsais – it's the aim,
"Container-grown" their name,
So for 2023 why not give it a go?*

Gerard Dunmoore, Pontivy

*The history of the pot plant is surprising and terrific,
It originates in Egypt just like the hieroglyphic,
The Pyramids and temples,
And Sphinx, just examples,
In crafting things from stone,
they were truly prolific.*

*Gerard Dugdale,
Gourin*



Callac Seed Swap and Plant Exchange 2023

Saturday 25 March 11:00 - 16:00

Callac Salle des Fêtes

Entry - Free

A small band of volunteers from a local association, D2, have joined together to organise a new event in Callac town centre this Spring 2023.

Callac's first seed and plant swap event will take place in Callac's Salle des Fêtes on March 25th 11am - 4pm. The event is a charitable fundraiser aiming to bring the local community together in their love for all things plants and will include :

Seed swap

Plant exchange

Plants for sale

Exhibition by Jardin Solidaire

A talk by CBJ resident garden expert and author 'Tim the Gardener' at 2.30pm

Seeds and plants can be swapped for free at the relevant tables or if you have nothing to swap – a small optional donation can be made.

Beneficiaries of the event are D2 and Jardin Solidaire. Both organisations provide invaluable services for local communities in and around Callac.

The various exhibitors will be selling items to satisfy your spring garden cravings and there will be refreshments available for purchase including crepes, cakes and hot and cold drinks.

A tombola provides another chance to go home with some goodies and at 3pms judging will conclude for the 'Children's Best Plant' competition. Contact Sybil at D2 for details of how to enter this free competition. Sybil tel: 0675092637

Tables are available to book for sellers. Each 2 meter pitch will be 10€ plus a tombola gift. Tables and chairs will be provided for vendors.

Any vendors interested in selling at this indoor event, or anyone wishing to make a seed, plant or prize donation, please contact Emma Bauld for more information.

Email: emmakinneavy@hotmail.co.uk or tel: 0673314357

Hoping to see many of you there for this new fun event and to support our local communities.

Emma Bauld

Popular phrases & sayings involving the word:

SALT

Salt has been a very important commodity throughout history. Spilling salt was thought to be an unlucky omen by the Romans, and the superstition remains to this day – though we avert the evil by throwing a pinch of salt over our left shoulder from our right hand. It is still not uncommon to put salt into a coffin, because, apparently, Satan hates salt, because it is the symbol of incorruption and immorality. In Scotland it has been customary to throw a handful of salt on the top of the mash when brewing, supposedly to keep the witches from it, but it may also have had some effect in moderating the fermentation and fining the liquor.

Salt of the earth – the best of mankind.

He won't earn enough salt for his porridge

– He will never earn a penny.



Not worth your salt – not worth your wages.

The reference is to the salary, composed of rations of salt and other necessities served out by the Romans to their soldiers.

Put some salt on his tail – catch or apprehend him.

The phrase is based on the direction once given to small children to lay salt on a bird's tail if they want to catch it, not realising of course that if they can do this then they must have already caught the bird.

To eat a man's salt – to partake of his hospitality.

Among the Arabs to eat a man's salt was a sacred bond between the host and guest. No one who had eaten of another's salt should speak ill of him or do him a bad turn.

True to his salt – faithful to his employers.

Salt in this case refers to salary.

To salt a mine – to place pieces of ore etc in the workings of a mine to delude prospective share-holders or purchasers into believing that a worthless mine is a profitable investment.

To sit above the salt – to sit in a place of distinction.

From the time when the family 'saler' – salt cellar – was of silver and was placed in the middle of the table. Prominent persons sat 'above the saler', i.e. between it and the head of the table, while dependents and other inferior guests sat below.

With a grain or pinch of salt – with profound reservations – allowing it only a grain of truth.

As salt is sparingly used in condiments, so is truth in remarks to which the phrase is applied.

Attic Salt – Elegant and subtle wit.

Salt in Latin and Greek was a common term for wit or scintillating thought, well expressed. The Athenians were noted for their wit and elegant turns of thought. Attica was the region around Athens.

By the way

New advertisers

Brittany Home and Garden Services page 43

Vide Bibliothèque page 4

Classified ad form page 38

Subscribe 35

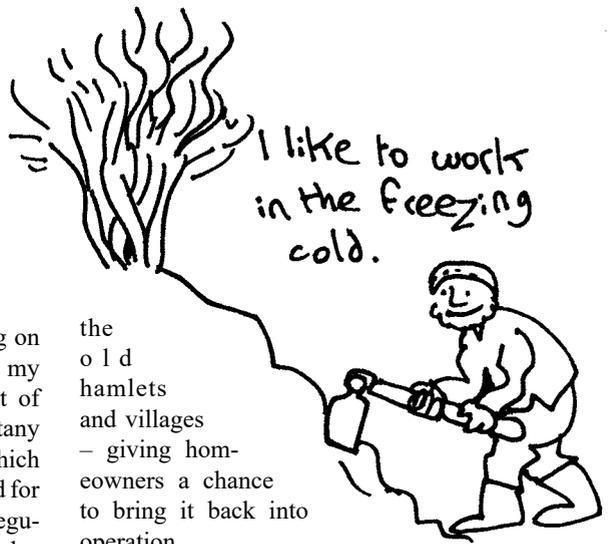
Tim the Gardener

I managed to spend most of January working on some overgrown hazel trees at the far end of my garden – despite the cold. Traditionally, most of the banks around the fields and gardens of Brittany were planted with a mixture of trees, some of which were coppiced, to produce wood for burning, and for crafts, some of which were managed through regular pruning to produce single, unbranched trunks, suitable for carpentry, and some of which yielded a crop of fruit and nuts. In some ways the traditional Breton bocage was a sophisticated form of the type of forest gardening that many progressive gardeners are pioneering today.

The post-war depopulation of rural Brittany, plus the introduction of modern agricultural techniques, has led to most of these banks being neglected, even if they have managed to survive the ravages of the bulldozer. Consequently, they now present a rather unkempt appearance, giving a misleading impression of their original purpose.

Brittany is one of the areas of Western Europe where some remnant of traditional rural life survived the longest. Even up until the second world war, many 'farms' were little more than one or two acres in size, and in the modern world would be viewed more as self-sufficient smallholdings, rather than as commercial farms: only a small proportion of the produce was sold away from the farm, and the focus was on producing the necessities of life directly from the land itself. This led to a focus on growing as many trees as possible, as close to the house as possible, providing that this was consistent with growing a certain amount of crops – vegetables, and cereals – from the same area of land. All the trees were carefully managed, and produced timber for building work, logs, craft material, and faggots, which were the main source of fuel in the countryside.

Much of this heritage has been lost (in the apparently-fruitless rush to try to make commercial farming financially viable in Brittany), but it has survived around many of



the old hamlets and villages – giving homeowners a chance to bring it back into operation.

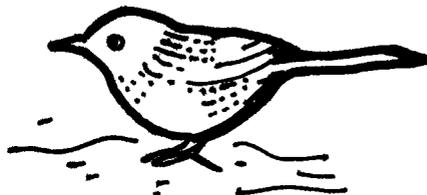
Faggots

The hazel trees that I have been working on would once have been cut down every five to ten years, and the wood used principally for making faggots. This involves cutting all the trunks down to the ground, a job that can be done fairly easily with an axe, or a billhook, provided that it is done regularly, and then cut to a suitable length on a chopping block. Bundles of twigs and branches can then be tied together to make the faggots. Faggots are relatively difficult to transport, which partly explains why there is no demand for them as a fuel in modern cities. They are also much better adapted to being burnt on an open fire than in a wood-burning stove – which explains why Breton houses had such big fire places.

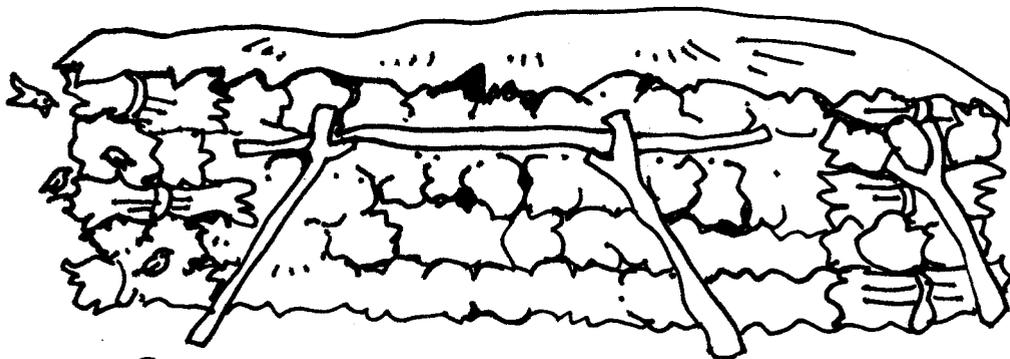
Continued page 32



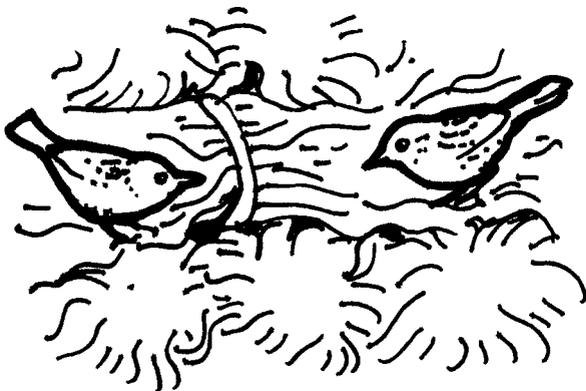
All the birds seem to lose their shyness when the weather gets cold.



I have been watching the little dunnock, or hedge sparrow.



They aren't the noisiest of birds in the garden, but definitely some of the most active.



Exploring the Worlds of Beer and Wine

"A person with increasing knowledge and sensory education may derive infinite enjoyment from wine."

- Ernest Hemingway

"God made only water, but man made wine." - Victor Hugo

HOW GOOD ARE WINE KITS ?

When the first wine kits began to appear in the 1970s they consisted of cans of pasteurized grape juice concentrate from which much of the water had been extracted, and packages of acid, nutrient, tannin, oak and yeast - they weren't that great ! In the mid-1980s Brew King, one of the first wine kit companies, created the modern kit by mixing concentrate with fresh grape juice and adjusting and balancing it, just like a winery. This is the basic method that is still followed in making wine kits today.

One of the two largest kit manufacturers in the world is a gigantic international winery, and the other is the largest winery in Canada. They buy grapes and juice from contracted vineyards that must meet rigid specifications for flavor, aroma, sugar, acidity and tannin in order to maintain consistency. The grapes are harvested when they reach required ripeness and taken to a winery in the region where the vineyard is located. Many are in Canada's major wine region of Niagara in southern Ontario.

The largest juice and concentrate processors are in California and Ontario and look like huge oil refineries. As in all wineries, the grapes are first sorted and passed through a destemmer and crusher. The juice is coarsely strained, pumped into settling tanks, chilled to promote clarification, filtered again, then pumped into "must" holding tanks. For red wine, the grape skins are left in the must longer in order to extract additional colour, aroma, flavor and tannin. Some must is converted into concentrate as it requires less storage space and can be kept for longer periods without deterioration.

When the winery is ready to make wine, must is drawn off in smaller batches so that wine production is evened out during the year. Normally batches are allowed to ferment due to the natural yeast from the grapes reacting with the fruit's sugar and turning it into alcohol and carbon dioxide, and the fermented wine is adjusted, balanced and refined to achieve the desired character. In the production of wine kits, however, the natural fermentation process is blocked, leaving unfermented grape juice, because kits are not legally allowed to contain alcohol. The unfermented juice and concentrate are packaged into plastic bags of between 6 and 14 litres and boxed along with packets containing all the additives needed by the home winemaker to ferment the grape juice into wine.

Table wines made from wine kits are ready to drink within weeks of bottling while still delivering a delightful wine experience. The best, premium wine kits will also improve over time with many reds aging and evolving for several years. The days of generic, homemade plonk are long gone ! The choices available today encompass a wide spectrum of varieties from the great wine regions of the world. For a big red in the classic style of a Spanish Rioja try Winexpert's 2021 Limited Edition Grenache Carignan from Manchuela, a four mile drive south of the Rioja region. It is a deep ruby red colour and described as "intense and harmonious flavours of black fruit, cherry, red berry and plum with well-integrated oak and accents of licorice and spice, rich velvety tannins, moderate acidity, and a long savoury finish." Alternatively, consider Winexpert's Private Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon from Lodi Ranch 11 in California's San Joaquin Valley, described as "black currant and dark cherry flavours enhanced with notes of baking spice and toasted oak with well-integrated tannins". Both these reds include packets of the actual grapeskins to enhance the wine's varietal character.

If your preference is for white wines, Winexpert's 2022 Limited Edition Viognier Roussanne Marsanne, a blend of the only three white wine grapes permitted to be grown in the Northern Rhône, will delight your taste buds with "rich expressive peach, apricot, and Meyer lemon flavours, just hinting at honeysuckle and brioche."

Wine kits have come a long way, so if you have not made your own wine in the last forty years it may be time to give premium wine kits a chance. You have a delightful surprise coming !

Questions or suggestions? We'd love to hear them!

Roger Dawson
rogeralan.rd@gmail.com

AIKB Photography Club
January Challenge



In December the AIKB Photography Club challenge was 'Seasonal Close'

First place: John Sullivan, Red Snowflake; Second place: Chris Platts, Spinning decoration; Third place: John Sullivan, Reflections

To find out more about the AIKB Photography Club e mail aikb.hopmg@gmail.com



Further Off the Beaten Track

The Peace Road

Returning from our recent trip to Germany, we took the A4 which runs close to Verdun. We did not intentionally stop at the Verdun services, but you will recall that there was a fuel shortage at the beginning of October and as we approached it was clear that this particular aire had fuel.

It is an aire whose layout is designed to confuse, as we noted when an unfortunate, bemused lady drove the wrong way up a no entry road trying to find her way out. Since we had a picnic, we stopped in an extended parking area, well away from the actual services and looked across the hazy terrain to the fields beyond. You could not miss the sculpture, so, intrigued, I crossed to take a closer look. Sanef, which manages the motorway, commissioned it to commemorate the deaths of the first two combatants of WWI on 2nd August 1914 and the last two who died in 2008, so that “this motorway between France and Germany would constitute a symbol of peace.” The first casualties were a Frenchman, Jules Peugeot, and a German, Albert Mayer. They were 21 and 22 respectively.

Sanef chose an artist called Paul Flickinger who was born in Colmar in 1941. He is a celebrated painter and sculptor, producing work that commands considerable sums. Given his reputation and origins in eastern France he would have been a natural choice for such a commission.

The sculpture itself consists of a face formed of two blocks of stone surmounting what appear to be shoulders. One of the faces is smaller than the other and overall it is reminiscent of Janus, although the eyes stare at the viewer rather than backwards and forwards. The then members of the EU are symbolised by a circle of 28 stars. While it is not particularly to my taste – I think the style would qualify as Brutalist, but no doubt someone will correct me if I’m wrong – it is nonetheless a fine work and rather moving as yet another reminder – they are everywhere – of the war that ravaged that part of France for four years.

It took me back to our first visit to Verdun in February 2005 when we visited the fort of Douarumont and the French ossuary there. I wrote at the time:

“Leaving the car, we are suddenly aware of a single bell tolling. It is now 7 a.m. So that was the other set of tyre tracks. On this Sunday morning and perhaps every day, an unseen hand tolls the ossuary bell in memory of the one and quarter million men who died, or were gassed or wounded here. Slowly we pick our way up the approach ramp to the fort itself. Then a sharp, rutted path takes us to the summit.

It is still too dark to see the detail, but the snow gives off its own eerie light. Battered blocks of reinforced concrete protrude, black like empty eye sockets. We stumble across the cratered terrain, falling and sinking knee deep in the drifting snow. A lone flagpole surmounts the fort. We are 1,200



feet up. The cold is vicious. It is now 7.15 a.m. on the 20th February 2005. At precisely this time, 89 years ago bar a day, the guns began the barrage that would see this land ruined for generations. Today there is silence, broken only by the slapping of the halcyon that secures a battered tricolour.”

That piece also talked of the heroic death of Colonel Driant who held the German advance with just two companies of light infantry for long enough for the French to bring up reinforcements and so to save the town of Verdun itself.* Driant was killed

as he led his men in a strategic withdrawal. His death is described on a plaque placed by military cadets 70 years later:

“He had just applied a temporary dressing to a wounded chasseur in a crater and was continuing on his way when he was hit by several bullets. ‘Oh my God,’ he shouted. Nancy’s MP fell to ground facing the enemy on a piece of ground in Lorraine.”

Thoughtfully, we found our way out of the service station (avoiding the trap that the lady had fallen into) reflecting that just 20 hours to the east another brutal war was ravaging both population and countryside. So much for the hollow “peace dividend” and The End of History predicted by some after the fall of the Berlin wall. I always thought it was nonsense and so it has proved to be.

*Richard Griffiths,
rpf@orange.fr*



Facing page: Flickinger sculpture Aire de Verdun; Above: Verdun Osuary; Below: Douarumont; Left: Monument Lt. Col. Driant



* For an accessible and beautifully written history of the battle of Verdun in English, read Alastair Horne's *The Price of Glory, Verdun 1916*, published by Penguin Books

26 Hetty's Kitchen

Hetty's Kitchen

Truffled Mushroom Pate *(for 6)*

50g dried porcini mushrooms
2 tbsp butter
3 shallots, finely chopped
250g chestnut mushrooms, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed to pulp
250g mascarpone
1½ tsp white wine vinegar
30g parmesan, finely grated
3 tbsp truffle oil

Topping:

100g salted butter
2 tbsp truffle oil
1 tsp mixed pink and green peppercorns, crushed

Soak the porcini in a bowl of boiling water for 10 minutes to rehydrate.

Melt the butter in a frying pan and add the chopped shallots. Cook over gentle heat until soft and translucent. Add the chestnut mushrooms and fry gently for a few minutes.

Drain the porcini and discard the liquid. Finely chop and add to the pan. Cook for a further 5 minutes, add the garlic and cook one minute more. Set aside to cool.

In a food processor, whizz the mushroom mix, mascarpone, vinegar, parmesan and seasoning to taste while drizzling in the truffle oil. Divide between 6 ramekins and chill.

For the topping: melt the butter in a small pan. When the solids separate, pour off the clarified butter into a small jug and mix with the truffle oil. Pour equally over each ramekin and sprinkle with the crushed peppercorns. Chill at least 6 hours.

Serve with cornichons and fingers of toast.

Chicken and White Wine Traybake *(for 4)*

250g smoked lardons/alumettes
6 long shallots, skinned and halved (or 2 onions, halved, each half cut into three wedges)
3 cloves garlic, crushed
1 tbsp chopped fresh thyme leaves or 1 tsp dried
4 small sprigs fresh rosemary
8 skin on chicken thighs
2 tsp Ras el Hanout
3 tbsp grapeseed or olive oil
250ml dry white wine
350g mushrooms, quartered if large
400g can cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
Fresh parsley, chopped to garnish

Scatter the lardons, shallots/onions, thyme and rosemary evenly into a baking tray with 1"/2.5cm sides. Rub the ras el hanout over the chicken skin, then arrange on top of the lardons and shallots. Drizzle with

the grapeseed oil and roast for 20 minutes in a preheated oven at 200°C/180°F/Gas 6.

Add the wine, mushrooms and beans and give everything a good stir. Grind some black pepper over everything. Roast for a further 25 minutes, or until the thighs are cooked through.

Sprinkle with parsley and serve. Additional green vegetable optional.

No Bake Strawberry Cheesecake

(make the day before it's needed)

250g digestive biscuits
100g butter, melted
2 tsp vanilla extract, or scrape the seeds from a vanilla pod
600g full fat cream cheese
100g icing sugar
285ml thick cream

Topping:

400g strawberries
25g icing sugar

Grease and line a 9"/23cm loose-bottomed cake tin.

For the base, melt the butter in a pan over gentle heat. Meanwhile, place the digestives in a strong plastic bag and bash to crumbs with a rolling pin or similar heavy object. Tip the crumbs into the melted butter and mix very well. Scrape into the prepared tin and press gently to an even thickness across the base. Chill for a good hour.

With an electric hand whisk, whip the cream until starting to thicken and form soft peaks. In a separate bowl, whisk the cream cheese, icing sugar and vanilla for a few minutes until thickened and smooth. Fold in the whipped cream then scoop onto the biscuit base and smooth the top. Leave in the fridge overnight to firm up.

To serve, purée half the strawberries and the icing sugar in a processor. If using a stick blender, cut up the fruit first. Push the pulp through a sieve.

Remove the cheesecake from the tin and discard the lining paper before sliding it on to a serving plate. Cut the remaining strawberries in half and pile up in the centre of the cake. Drizzle over the purée and serve.

Alternative toppings: Substitute fresh raspberries or passion fruit with mango. Sieve the pulp of four passion fruit and sweeten to taste with icing sugar. Top the cake with chopped mango, with passion fruit purée drizzled over the top.

Bon Appétit!

Valentine's Cocktails pages 6 & 15

Birds to See in Brittany: Red Backed Shrike

French: **Pie-Grieche Ecorcheur**Breton: **Pig – spern kein – rous**

We are among the smallest of our family at 18cm in length. Our male has black bands on top of a grey head and light grey neck and upper back. Wing coverts and scapulars are bright rust red. Lower back and rump are blue/grey – underparts are whitish with pale pink on breast and flanks – flight feathers are black/brown bordered in rust – tail is black in the centre with white outer tail feathers. Bill is black and legs are grey/black. Our female is more grey with brown banding. We are carnivorous and are bold and aggressive birds. We capture mostly insects, but can supplement our diet with small reptiles, rodents, lizards and small birds. We impale these on thorns, twigs or even barbed wire, providing a stockpile of food against periods of shortage. These reserves are known as “larders” and in these periods the victim is impaled carefully where the head meets the body so that it remains alive although paralysed, thus avoiding, or at least delaying, the effects of decomposition. We have earned the nickname of the “Butcher Bird”. We are generally solitary birds, usually found on the edge of woods, areas with scattered trees or even open ground, as long as it provides bushes, dry branches, poles or other vantage points where we can perch watchfully, waiting for prey to come along within reach. Once a movement has been spotted we fly down in a swift pounce. The prey is caught with our feet, but we may use our bill to kill the victim before picking it to pieces. We seldom arrive before May and will begin nesting. Our favourite sites are dense hawthorn, thick brambles or gorse bushes. The nest, usually built a metre above ground, is a bulky and rather untidy structure of twigs, roots, grass, moss and wood, lined with finer roots, hair, wool and sometimes a few feathers. We often use the same nest for several successive years. Four to six eggs are laid in a single clutch in late May or early June. The female incubates the eggs for 14/16 days, only occasionally helped by the male, but both parents tend the young.

Our call is a grating “shack-shack” rather like a shriek – which is where our name comes from- while our song is quiet and musical and is reminiscent of the Garden Warbler. When we produce these plaintive notes it seems to attract small birds which are promptly captured.

Jim Henderson

A Brittany Alphabet

by Hilary Bridewell

N is for Nantes

Nantes is the capital city of the Loire Atlantique, which is, unfortunately, not included in the current boundaries of the region of Brittany - although there is a movement to bring it back in. I for one really hope it succeeds as Nantes is truly a wonderful city.

The transport system is superb. For 11.60€ per day (free at weekends), up to 4 people can enjoy unlimited travel on all Nantes transport system (trams, buses and even the ferry boat that crosses to the island in the middle of the Loire). Small dogs in arms, or in a travel bag, are welcome, so we and our little blind dog made the most of this scheme.

One favourite day out was to see the Elephant at Les Machines de l'Île. This mechanical wonder walks around an area alongside the river. It is free to watch, but there is a charge to ride on it; there is also a separate charge to see the other machines. But there were many people just viewing it and laughing at its antics (covering people in its path with a very fine spray of water).

Another enjoyable day out was visiting the huge Château de Nantes. Yet again, it was free to enter the courtyard, and to walk along the battlements; there was a small charge to enter the museum (well worth it) where there was a replica of a golden heart, the '*écrin du cœur d'Anne de Bretagne*', on display. The original is in the departmental museum of Nantes, which was closed when we were there last September, so I was delighted to find the replica.



Nantes also has brilliant shops and restaurants, gardens, art galleries and museums – something for everyone.

We stayed at the municipal campsite, an oasis of calm right in the heart of this wonderful city. The shower rooms are heated, they have a small on-site restaurant, and crazy golf,



Rock and Blues in Brittany

After a three-month winter hiatus, La Grande Ourse (LGO) at St Agathon, near Guingamp (22), is putting rock and blues back on the menu. With some exciting prospects to whet our appetites, another round of diverse music can be expected.

The short autumn season started in October when pub-rock legends, Dr Feelgood, delivered their customary blistering set of energetic rock, as only they can. Andrew Alli's harmonica complemented Steven Hull's guitar work on 6th November. Often combining in a musical duel, the audience enjoyed the varied blues set list from the two young Americans. Another stateside aficionado of the genre blew in from Chicago in the shape of Mike Wheeler and his guitar, at the end of the month.

The 2023 Spring season begins on **Friday 26th February** with a rock double bill. Punk-metallists, Pogo Car Crash Control (who have entertained at Hellfest twice, already), will share the evening with SBRBS – a Breton rock band who are scheduled to play at the Vieilles Charries festival in the summer.

Saturday March 4th sees Altered Five Blues Band showcasing their Milwaukee repertoire at LGO. There are even whispers of a Grammy nomination, so they are not to be missed! With many awards already on his mantelpiece, legendary bluesman, Joe Louis Walker, will captivate us with his six-string on **Sunday 26th March**.

The seasonal LGO rock night (called Clubster No. 3) is on **Saturday 1st April**, and will involve another co-headline of two more impressive bands. Endless bud will serve up some 70s style blues rock, and will share the limelight with Guingamp hard rockers Dandy Monkeys.

Gaelle Buswel and her husky blues voice will play her re-scheduled gig on **Sunday 14th May** – exactly the same date on which the guitar songstress was due to play last year! Only four days later, the season ends when Jantavious Willis arrives on **Thursday 18th May** (Ascension bank holiday). The 22-year-old from Georgia, USA, is described by blues hero Taj Mahal, no less, as 'wonderboy'. Come along and watch the young talent in action to see why!

Reduced prices and season tickets are available – details can be found at www.ourse.fr, or contact 06 59 15 18 32. A pair of tickets is up for grabs for each concert – details in this and subsequent CBJs. See you there!

Darren Milsom

Music: Win Tickets, page 4



A Brittany Alphabet

and you are given a free ticket to the municipal swimming pool just across the road from the campsite. You are also next to the tram line, making it easy to get around. The campsite reception also sells the transport system tickets, transport-system maps, plus all the information on everything you could want to visit.

Facing page: Jenny and husband Phil on ferry; Nanted Elephant letting off steam!; Château de Nantes. Right: Replica of Anne of Brittany's Gold Heart.

*Les Machines de l'Île Parc des Chantiers, Bd Léon Bureau, 44200 Nantes
Dobrée Museum, 18 Rue Voltaire, 44000 Nantes*



30 Your Best Shot

Giving It Your Best Shot

As the temperatures plummet and Storm Gerard screeched through our village last week, we awoke to a scattering of snow. My first thought was to grab my camera. An early morning darkness was followed by light snowfall with a soft blue grey sky. Later, white mist became trapped in the valley, and, in the bright sunshine, birds were feeding in the melting snow.

We returned from holiday early last summer to find a pair of song thrushes darting about on our terrace. It was during a pause at a café that we realised they had built a nest tucked into the depth of a potted bay tree at my eye level (I am quite short!) by our kitchen door. Mum rarely left her nest (the male was feeding her), and when the four chicks hatched in the bright June sunshine, Mum disappeared regularly to get food. This gave me the opportunity to peek in with my lens to photograph the chicks shortly after birth, with their pink skin and suggestion of downy fluff. Even at a few hours old they were very noisy and always hungry!

Shortly afterwards, I met Evelyn Whittington at the AIKB Art and Textiles exhibition, who told me about the AIKB Photography Club's International Competition, the theme 'A Fragile World'. I had a photograph in mind. My *give musicienne* chicks were so popular that they won First Prize!

I immediately joined the Club where I have been made very welcome.

We meet fortnightly in Gouarec and in the last few months we've had a trip to La Gacilly and enjoyed a festive lunch. I learn new skills at each session from all the members who share their vast knowledge and expertise, giving me the confidence to really enjoy my photography in a relaxed and fun atmosphere. I love setting up the photo, being creative and getting the right mood by looking at the conditions to choose the correct exposure, aperture, etc. The club's monthly challenge presents us with the opportunity to practise these techniques.

It's not all over when you have taken your perfect shot. One of the best things I am learning is how to develop my pictures (I have subscribed to Adobe Lightroom, which is an online editing suite).

We are so fortunate here in Brittany with fabulous landscapes, beaches, and architecture which has inspired artists over the centuries. There's nothing more exciting than setting off with your camera...no matter the weather!

Sheila Morris

To find out more about the AIKB Photography Club e-mail aikb.hopmg@gmail.com

From top; Dinner time, the winning entry in the International Photography Competition; COVID jenga, an entry in club competition; Scattering of snow



Everyday French You Don't Know, But Should

One of my favourite features in the CBJ has always been the 'Popular Phrases and Sayings' column, because it speaks to one of my favourite things: language. Add to that cultural exchange and communication, and I'm sold! I love people, talking with them, collaborating and making art with them. And I love understanding them. So, when I just can't get what they're saying, I feel frustrated that an opportunity has been lost. Also, I hate missing out.

So, having been in the privileged position of studying on a five-month, full-time, intensive French language course – which included work placements where colleagues kindly explained colloquialisms employed *en français quotidien* – I felt inspired to share some of my linguistic treasures. If I can benefit, why shouldn't other English-speakers? Perhaps my little 'machinations' will serve to aid in cultural exchange through effective communication. (Or, if nothing else, you can eavesdrop more effectively!)

Anikó Tóth

MACHIN

This, then, brings me to this month's term: *machin*. Yes, you read that right. No, it's not really a synonym of machine (though Google Translate does pop up 'gadget' and 'contraption' as definitions). Firstly, our term is masculine, (*un or le machin*), the former being feminine (*une or la machine*). Secondly, in a fakey Spanish accent, "I do not think that means what you think it means." (Ten points to whomever can spot that movie reference.)

What does it mean, then? Well, several things, in fact, in common parlance the simplest translation is: 'Thingy' (thingamajig, thingummy, thingamabob, whatchamacallit, whatsit, whatsitsname, and a personal, American favourite, doohickey... You get the picture).

You might know other words for this in French that are taught in school: *une chose*, being the most highfalutin: « *Passe-moi cette chose-là.* » – Pass me that thing there.

Then, there's *un truc* (also a 'thing'), a slang term that has become codified, thus also appearing in taught contexts: « *Donne-moi ce truc-là.* » – Give me that thing there. (Or "that-there thang," if you're a grizzled, old prospector. – spot that movie reference!)

But *machin*? I've not seen it written down, only spoken. Thus, « *Passe-moi ce machin-là.* » Pass me that thingy there. (It sounds like, "Pass mwass-ma SHEN lah.")

(Other synonyms of *un machin* in this usage include: *une bidule*, 'contraption' and (*un*) *fourbi*, 'stuff' or 'kit').

Pejorative Usage

Another interesting meaning with which my colleagues regaled me was the term's pejorative use in referring to a person:

« **Hier, je parlais avec machin...** » : Yesterday, I was talking to whatshername (whatshisname)... The speaker can't even be bothered recalling the name of the person to whom they are referring. How's that for disdain?

Et cetera

Finally, the context in which I mostly hear *machin* is... at the end of a list, to replace etcétera. So:

« *J'ai acheté du pain, des pommes, des haricots, machin...* » (I bought some bread, some apples, some green beans, etc.)

Or:

« *Quand tu fais beaucoup de choses, comme lire et écrire des méls, faire du classement, servir des clients, machin... c'est fatigant!* » (When you do lots of things, like read and write emails, do some filing, serve customers, et cetera... it's tiring!)

(Parenthetically, you might hear other 'et cetera' replacements, too: «da-da-da»; «na-na-na»). They're the equivalent of 'dot dot dot', for the ellipsis.)

So, listen out for the word '*machin*'. It literally means 'thingy/thingamajig', 'whatstheirname' or 'et cetera', if you hear it at the end of a list of things (*des choses, des trucs, où des machins*). (See what I did there?)

Happy eavesdropping! (And communicating!)

Anikó Tóth

Find her @kokovocals on most social networks.

Tim the Gardener

Continued

Oak Trees

The other tree (apart from hazels) that dominated Breton banks, was the oak. There is some evidence, in the form of old stumps, of there once having been oaks on the bank on which I am currently working. I assume that they were cut down, and sold for firewood around fifty or sixty years ago. Under the old, pre-industrial system of land management, the person working the land had the right (or the duty) to cut the small trees, such as the hazels, on the banks, and these trees supplied their everyday needs. The larger trees, such as the oaks, were protected by needing the permission of the local seigneur (or, in effect, the wider community) before they could be cut down. This enabled them to stand for up to one hundred years, by which time they would have formed a good amount of valuable heart wood, and could be used to make beams and roof timbers for new houses, or, when times were good, to construct elaborate buildings, such as churches, chapels, and manor houses.

These oak trees were also a source of faggots, however, and the person farming the land would have climbed them every few years, cutting off all the side growth, to ensure that the tree produced a single, unbranched trunk. In some ways, therefore, I do not regret the absence of oaks on my bank; if they had been left, by now they would have formed long, straggling branches, stretching out over my garden, presenting me with a difficult management decision. 'Should I cut them down for firewood, which seems something of a waste?' or 'Should I undertake the dangerous task of branch trimming, which would

still leave me with trees that had little value in terms of usable timber?'

As it is, I can think about restocking the bank with some new trees.

Tree Planting

Before I started work, it was difficult to clearly understand the state of the bank; hazel branches were intertwined with each other, and some of the older stems had been overwhelmed and dragged down by a rampant growth of ivy. Now that the bank has been cleared, it can be seen that it is understocked. I would like to see oaks growing on it again, and may plant one or two. I have found oaks to be quite difficult to transplant successfully, and young, transplanted saplings also seem to be particularly vulnerable to being eaten by deer – this does not generally kill them, but prevents them from forming a straight trunk. I have hopes for some small oak plants that were managing to grow in the dense shade provided by the hazels.

Another option would have been ash trees, which were once also present on the bank, but the ash die-back disease is currently ravaging the local ash population, so it is probably best to wait and see how that develops before doing anything that might exacerbate the problem. One theory about the ash disease is that it has been made worse by plant-propagation techniques that reduce genetic diversity. Any remaining gaps in the bank, I will, therefore, fill with self-seeded hazels growing elsewhere in the garden. Poor tree management seems to have been one of the defining features of the past hundred years: but, hopefully, lessons have been learnt, and the work that we do to restore our banks to health will be respected and built upon by future generations of gardeners.

Answers CBJ Quiz *page 14*

I: General Knowledge & Current Affairs

- 1) Hansard
- 2) Daphne du Maurier
- 3) Manchester
- 4) Poet Laureate
- 5) Brighton & Hove
- 6) It is 'absolute zero': the lowest possible temperature
- 7) Jacinda Adern
- 8) Basque
- 9) Bolivia
- 10) Leviticus

II: French Language & Culture

- 1) The Naked Lunch
- 2) Cider
- 3) Kir Celtique
- 4) Louvre
- 5) De Gaulle
- 6) Elysée Palace
- 7) Coq
- 8) Peugeot
- 9) Bretagne
- 10) Andorra

III: History & Geography

- 1) Florida
- 2) Luxembourg
- 3) Prussian
- 4) Gibraltar
- 5) George I
- 6) Trotsky
- 7) Zagreb
- 8) Menai
- 9) 4
- 10) Amundsen

IV: Connections

- 1) Black Swan
 - 2) Fourth Estate
 - 3) Puffin
 - 4) Bloomsbury
 - 5) Virago
 - 6) Macmillan
 - 7) Pan
 - 8) Picador
 - 9) Ladybird
 - 10) Thames and Hudson.
- Publishers

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Animals

See **ANIMAL WELFARE** p.37

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B & B / Gîtes

See **BED & BREAKFAST** p.41

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See **BUILDING & PROPERTY SERVICES** pp. 41-45, & 51

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Courses - French

See **HELP & ADVICE** p. 10

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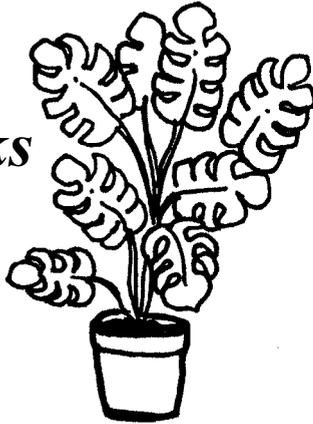
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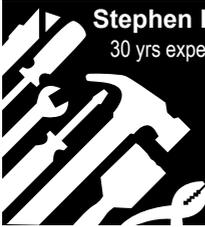
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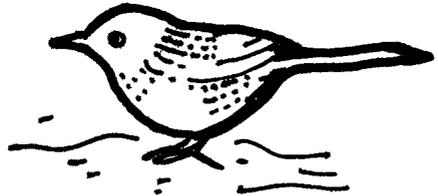
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Solution Jan. Little Toughie
see page 17

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Solution Bridge Puzzle 49 page 6 Squeeze

The bidding showed that East is 5/5 in the majors. Note that in the 4-card ending you have all the tricks but one, a necessary requirement for a squeeze to work. When South plays the 8♦, and throws the 2♥ from dummy, East has a predicament. He is squeezed. If he plays a heart, South can enjoy his three heart tricks in hand. If he drops the 10♠, dummy's 7♠ becomes a master card.

The four-card ending

♠ 7
♥ K 8 (2)
♦
♣

♠ 9 5
♥
♦ 9 8
♣

	N		♠ 10
W		E	♥ Q J 7
	S		♦
			♣

♠
♥ A 10 3
♦ (8)
♣

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Solution: Chess Puzzle

page 16

- 1) Nh6+, gxh6;
- 2) Qg4+, Kh8;
- 3) Rxf8 mate

Help & Advice page 10

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If you are able donate to an animal welfare cause, do it directly through the various websites and Facebook pages of the individual rescues, they (and the dogs in their care) will be very grateful; in addition to the material help, kind words, thanks and encouragement are also important to the spirit and wellbeing of everyone working to care for and rehome animals. Thankyou.

Brian Swift, Liberté Pour Les Chiens

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