BACKING OVER CCTV PETITION

PERMANENT WREATH HONOURS FALLEN HEROES

John Crabtree OBE, Lord Lieutenant of the West Midlands and the Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Alan Taylor, lay the wreath

Alert to shoppers on theft of purses

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A public appeal was launched following reports of purses stolen from handbags.

The post read: “Be cautious of your belongings and to zip up/secure your purse/handbag while shopping.”

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**Zoo rewarded after visitor reviews**

**Prison slipping into state of crisis, claim**

THE Ministry of Justice has been accused of failing to stop the G4S-run HMP Birmingham ‘slipping into crisis’.

Chief Inspector of Prisons Peter Clarke said ‘somebody must have been asleep at the wheel’ after publishing a damning report on the prison.

He said conditions had deteriorated dramatically and the HM Prison and Probation Service had now taken control from G4S.

His report, from an inspection at the start of this month, uncovered an ‘appalling’ prisoner and high levels of violence.

He said since the last inspection 18 months ago standards had dropped and called-for improvements had not been made. ‘The inertia that seems to have gripped both those monitoring the contract and delivering on its on the ground has led to one of Britain’s leading jails slipping into a state of crisis,’ he said.

**Decency**

Mr Clarke added: “It cannot be the case that the only time urgent action is taken to restore decency in a prison is when an inspection report is published. Surely somebody must have been asleep at the wheel.”

Prison Minister Rory Stewart said: “What we have seen at Birmingham is unacceptable and it has become clear that drastic action is required to bring about the improvements we require.”

HM Prison and Probation Service has taken over its running for an initial six-month period, a move welcomed by G4S, which had run the jail since 2011.

A new report published last week and an initial 30 extra officers are to be deployed. The prison has been described as ‘bed-ridden’ with a ‘dangerously high’ population.

Owner Ray Andrews, aged 74, who started as a support for a company which he was involved with a decade ago, said: “It’s been hard work, especially since not long afterwards we started we had the three-day week and the miners’ strike.”

At one stage I was selling galvanised garden sheds to pay workers’ wages. “It’s just been so good to have so many employees here that have been here since we started and we’ve even had three generations of family here at one time.”

“My father was a metal worker and he worked in a factory. We started with nothing and we employed over 200 people at one stage.”

Managing director Richard Andrews and technical director Kate Birt celebrate Midtherm’s 50th anniversary.

A DUDLEY business has marked its 50th anniversary.

Midtherm Flue Systems Ltd, of New Road, first started up in the 60s, to support a heating business.

Owner Ray Andrews, aged 74, remembered back to 1968 and the problems of industrial action in the following decade.

He said: “It’s been hard work, especially since not long afterwards we started we had the three-day week and the miners’ strike.”

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Mr Andrews’ son Richard and daughter, Kate Birt, attended the celebration.

Mr Andrews’ flue business first started as a support for a company which he was involved with already.

**50 years just fly by, says boss**

**Boiler Man goodies are just ideal for Baggies fans**

ALBION’S new unlikely superstar Boiler Man has launched his own line of merchandise.

Baggies fans can now snap up a Boiler Man T-shirt, mug or even a car air freshener.

The sponsorship mascot, a combi-boiler, already has his own Twitter account, and tweeted: “The moment you’ve all been waiting for... Boiler Man merch is now online, visit boiler-man.co.uk to pre-order the hottest merch on the market.”

The all-white appliance posted a picture of himself pointing at the cover of the new £15 T-shirts, which read “I am Boiler Man”.

One fan tweeted: “One week out of the office and I miss this! Make sure you order them before they sell out!”

Another tweeted: “We are the envy of the entire footballing world!” Another said: “Not ‘Boiler Man Figure yet?’”

Boiler Man, a combi-boiler from Ideal Boilers which has a partnership with the club, has been an instant hit among fans and pundits.

Ideal Boilers originally named the mascot ‘Vunny the Vapour’ after its range of boilers, but this was soon dropped in favour of his current incarnation.

The Twitter account, @IdealBoilerMan, has attracted more than 3,000 followers since Boiler Man’s debut on August 4.

**Call for answers on gym proposal**

RESIDENTS have demanded answers from fitness company bosses behind plans to build dozens of homes and a gym on a busy Dudley road.

Applicant Fitness4Less has been called on to address concerns over proposals to redevelop the site in Thomas Road, Quarry Bank. Plans would see 14 apartments and 19 townhouses go up along the road near the Merry Hill shopping centre, which carries 24,000 vehicles a day.

Fitness4Less says its existing gym requires ‘significant redevelopment to harmonise the site’. Residents have raised concerns over further congestion, lack of parking and loss of privacy.

Councillor Mohammed Haneef said: “The gym is in their heart and they really now should be coming back to us.”

Fitness4Less was contacted for comment.

**Real ale festival**

THE annual summer beer festival at a popular pub has launched through the August Bank Holiday weekend.

The Swan Inn in Long Lane, Halesowen, is staging the event from August 23 to 27. It is part of the Black Country Ales chain and has 16 handpumps.
Rock Houses play is back by demand

A PLAY is set to return to the Kinver Rock House as a popular demand. Spirits of the Rock, written by New Kinver Players chairman Martin Ward, will be performed at the National Trust site over the first weekend in April, with dozens of tickets already sold.

It was commissioned last year by the National Trust to commemorate 100 years of ownership of Kinver Edge and the Rock Houses.

Performed inside the largest sandstone cave, known as the Ballroom, audience members will be able to learn of the real lives of the people who lived inside the cave while it was in use.

Tickets are available from www.nationaltrust.org.uk/events.

Fundraiser at pub

An Upper Gornal pub hosts a fundraiser for the Black Country Wellbeing Centre on a moon tomorrow (Friday). The Gornal Pub Day, at the Spils Meadows in Kent Street, will include a barbecue and entertainment.

School building makeover after £20k win

A PRIMARY school building is to undergo £20,000 revamp after winning a competition.

Bromley Pensonett Primary School has been awarded funding by the Black Country and West Midlands Community Foundation to turn a disused building into a new kitchen.

Documents submitted with the plans said: “The site is surrounded by a number of other residential and former industrial buildings and is set to be commandeered by the school to provide a new learning environment for the children.

“A team of 10 will install a new roof, repair and redecorate the interior and exterior, fit new steps, replace doors and flooring, and install a new kitchen.

The centre is in a state of disrepair

A SCHOOL building is to be transformed after winning a competition.

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The £20,000 revamp will see the building turned into a new Classroom, with a new roof, doors and windows, along with interior and exterior redecoration.

The project is due to start in the next academic year, with the school looking to move into the new space by September 2019.

The centre manager, Mrs Grimbley, said: “We are delighted to have been awarded this funding.

“Thanks to the support of the community, we are looking forward to welcoming our pupils into the new space in the coming months.

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Tickets are £12.50 for dancers and £3 for non-dancers, and are available from email: info@lupusuk.org.uk for more information.

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Nerves turn to delight for anxious A-level students

THE moment of truth came and went for thousands of nerv‐
ous youngsters across the Black Country and Staffordshire as they opened their A-level results.

Many schools and colleges saw their pass rates rise and happy teen‐ agegers were all smiles as they secured places at university. One head teacher at Dudley’s Ellowes Hall Sports College was delighted. Star pupil Olivia Saunders, from Lower Gornal, marked herself as the first pupil to ever achieve two A* grades.

Olivia, aged 18, said: “It feels amazing.” Charlotte Collins helped con‐ tinue the college’s success streak after achieving an A* in English literature, an A in sociology and a C in psychology. The 18-year-old had to learn to walk again after a battle with leukaemia whilst undergoing her GCSEs.

Meanwhile, almost half of all stu‐ dents at St Edmund’s Catholic Acad‐ emy in Wolverhampton achieved at least one A* or A grade.

Nursing

Kyras Martin Chambers, from Wol‐ verhampton, had battled with sick‐ le-cell anaemia. The 18-year-old even had to do coursework from New Cross Hospital whilst undergoing treatment. But now, thanks to achieving a distinc‐ tion in law, merit in health and social care and a D in sociology, the teenager will now be studying adult nursing. There were celebrations at Aldridge School too, where Alesha Peano is off to Oxford University to read classics and English literature.

Joseph Leckie Academy’s Sixth Form was celebrating a 100 per cent pass rate in 21 subjects with successes in both vocational as well as A Level courses.

A GRADE II-listed church in Tipton is set to close in a move which could see the building eventually sold off.

St Martin’s and St Paul Church was built in 1857. But under plans by Lich‐ field Diocese, the congregation would be moved to St Matthews Church, also in Tipton.

If the proposal to close the church is approved, the diocese could then apply to sell the site.

Ward councillor Ian Jones said: “It is a very sad day the church has to close, but unfortunately the number of people using it has been identified as not sufficient.

“I can understand why they [the church] are rationalising. It is a dif‐ ficult one when you do not have the people or money to continue to look after such a building. I hope that St Matthews can accommodate the num‐ bers which move across.”

He added: “If it is then sold off, I hope the building has a use which is sympathetic to its current state. Given the footprint I’m not sure how it could be used next, maybe a community group could take it on.”

The closure was first mooted in 2015 following the retirement of the incumbent.

Fears were then raised that the parish did not have the resources for necessary repairs of the red-brick building. A public meeting was held in April of the same year on the proposal to close the church which is an exam‐ ple of an early Gothic Revival style.

Listed church to close after 181 years

Closure move could eventually see the building sold off.
Hospital completion bill soars by another £300m

The Government is to spend more than £300 million of taxpayers’ money to finish work on the stalled Midland Metropolitan Hospital at Smethwick, with work getting under way this autumn.

It will take the final bill for the hospital to more than £500 million when it opens in 2022 – four years later than originally planned. In the meantime urgent repairs and maintenance work is needed at the site, which has stood idle since building company Carillion collapsed in January.

Up to £20 million will be spent over the coming months to secure the site from further weather damage before the winter, so construction work by a new contractor can start next spring.

Despite the best efforts of maintenance staff to protect the vast site from the worst of the wind and rain over the last seven months, some areas inside are suffering from mould where water has seeped in. A handful of former Carillion workers have been kept at the site by the Sandwell & West Birmingham NHS Trust.

Rob Maiden, the former safety manager on the construction site, said all plasterboarding in the building would need to be checked for damp to ensure there was no further risk of mould.

"Some of it will have to be replaced, along with some building materials that have run out of date, like the adhesives, and some metalwork that won’t be able to be salvaged," he said.

A 29-year Carillion veteran and member of the core team at the Midland Met site since before construction started three years ago, he admitted it had been "sad and really frustrating" to see work on the project stalled. But there was an enthusiastic reception for the Government’s decision to directly pay for work to complete the two-thirds built hospital.

The idea of a second private finance deal, similar to the one with Carillion, has been dropped and instead the money will come from the taxpayer.

When completed, Midland Metropolitan will be equipped with state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment, 15 operating theatres, and at least 669 beds. It will provide acute care for adults and children as well as maternity care and specialised surgery.

"Our priority through this process has been to keep public services running smoothly and safely. The plans we put in place have ensured this," hospital trust chief executive, Toby Lewis, said: "Following detailed negotiation, the Government is pleased to announce this package of support, in partnership with Birmingham and Sandwell NHS Trust, to ensure completion of this new hospital."

Making the funding announcement, Cabinet Office Minister David Lidington said: "We will continue to monitor the situation and review any advice issued by the HSE and the Government, and will act accordingly."

Sandwell councillor Bill Gavan said: "We only use very small amounts of products containing glyphosate in our parks and green spaces. No guidance has been issued in the UK regarding any change in how they are used."

Cancer fear weedkiller in council use

COUNCILS in the Black Country have said they will continue to use a weedkiller after an American court ruled that it ‘causes cancer’.

Dudley and Sandwell local authorities have both said they will still use glyphosate, despite fears it could be harmful.

Concerns over the chemical hit the headlines after a Californian man received £226 million in damages from Monsanto, who use it in their best-selling product, Round Up.

The company has denied it causes cancer and said it will appeal against the ruling. Both councils said they used the chemical in its parks and green spaces.

Dudley Council has said it also uses the product on highway verges and it relies on advice from government agencies when choosing chemicals.

Councillor Karen Shakespere, cabinet member for environmental services, said: "We will continue to monitor the situation and review any advice issued by the HSE and the Government, and will act accordingly."

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Brum in top 10 for cities to visit

Research has put Birmingham among the top 10 best cities to visit this summer, coming in at ninth.

Payday loan company Wonga has put together the Summer Friendly City Index for the UK that has ranked cities against the number of free activities they offer, such as landmarks, museums and parks.

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HEALTH bosses at Sandwell Council are urging young adults to check whether they have had their MMR vaccine following a recent outbreak of measles across the country.

They have drawn up a targeted marketing campaign in the wake of an outbreak which has included cases in the West Midlands.

Young adults may have missed their vaccine due to a controversy that occurred 20 years ago surrounding the combined measles, mumps and rubella vaccine, which falsely linked the jab to autism and resulted in a significant drop in its uptake.

The vaccine is recommended for children under 10 but adults may have to be given the jab following outbreaks.

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Ansaf Azhar, interim Director of Public Health, said: "Measles can be a very serious illness and lead to severe complications, especially in people who are particularly vulnerable or have other health conditions."

Vaccine alert after outbreak of measles

HEALTH bosses at Sandwell Council are urging young adults to check whether they have had their MMR vaccine following a recent outbreak of measles across the country.

They have drawn up a targeted marketing campaign in the wake of an outbreak which has included cases in the West Midlands.

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Ansaf Azhar, interim Director of Public Health, said: "Measles can be a very serious illness and lead to severe complications, especially in people who are particularly vulnerable or have other health conditions."
Elba statesman – or is 45-year-old actor a solid Bond?

45-year-old Idris Elba, too old for Bond? Whis- per it, but Roger Moore was older, aged 46!

Another troubling week for Jeremy Corbyn in the wake of more anti-Semitism rumblings

Striking similarities to Jezerz – another Jeremy C, Clarkson, eventually kicked out by the Beeb

Wreathgate may lock Corbyn out of No 10

The BEST OF PETER RHODES

OFF to the pub for a steak which, in the latest fashion for bizarre methods of serving chips (in buckets, etc), came on a waxed napkin on a breadboard. It was almost impossible to eat because each mouthful of steak contained a serving of napkin but the staff look horrified when I asked them to put it on a proper plate. A reader tells me he was once served a bread roll in a carpeted slipper. Any other weird dining experiences welcome.

THE perils of family trees. A reader revisited her home town and called at the local museum in the hope of discovering famous or dis- tinguished relatives. She found a display board used in an exhibition a couple of years ago featuring a Victorian photographer showing her great-great uncle. It should have been a proud moment but the text revealed that “unfortunately his nickname in the village was Farty because his initials were WC.” Never meet your heroes.

I SUGGESTED that Idris Elba, now 45, might be a tad old to be embarking on a career as James Bond. A reader points out that the pres- ent incumbent, Daniel Craig, is 50. Maybe. But when he took over the 007 mantle in 2005 Craig was a spry young 37. In Ian Fleming’s books, Bond’s age is not revealed, and he never ages. However there is a clue in one passage referring to the secret-service retirement age which suggests he is 37.

In a perfect world for Corbynism, this torrid week of the Labour leader would end with discovery of Jeremy’s Secret Photo Album and all the wicked smears would vanish. Comrade Jez’s stock response when challenged about meeting Irish or Middle Eastern terrorists is to put on his most pious expression and say he wants an end to all violence. He does not need to condemn IRA murders because he condemns all murders. He does not need to condemn Palestinian rock- et attacks on Israel because he condemns all attacks. He would have us believe he is reach- ing out to all in the quest for peace. As he said of the Tunisian affair: “I was there because I want- ed to see a fitting memorial to everyone who has died in every terrorist incident everywhere because we have to end it. You cannot pursue peace by a cycle of violence; the only way you can pursue peace is by a cycle of dialogue.”

SOUNDS terrific, doesn’t it? But where, ex- actly, is the dialogue? How much time has Jer- emy Corbyn spent talking to the other sides? Where are the photos of this saintly allotment keeper meeting Israeli families bereaved by Pal- estinian killers? Where are the pictures of him shaking hands with Protestant paramilitaries in Ulster or comforting those maimed by IRA bombs? Maybe all those images are locked away in Jeremy’s Secret Photo Album. Or maybe not.

A TALE of two Jeremys. The potentially dis- astrous Wreathgate saga reminds me of Jeremy Clarkson who, having a certain charisma and lots of fans, got away with mistake after mis- take until one night he called his producer a “f*cking l**d*” and punched him. That was the tipping point, the end of Clarkson at the Beeb and I suspect we are nearing the end of the Corbyn. This prospect may scare his supporters but it terrifies the Tories.

WHY are we waiting? According to the latest reports, police have CCTV footage of suspects in the Salisbury nerve-agent incidents. So why have they not released it? CCTV captures only a moment in time. Figuring out where those people were, and what they did, before or after the filming is crucial and Joe Public may have the answers. So why can’t Joe Public see the footage?

AND here’s another Salisbury puzzle. Cops seem to have assumed that the bottle alleg- edly containing the Novichok agent and found in a local park was the only bottle used. For all we know, a second or third bottle may be lying undiscovered or, worse, sitting on somebody’s mantelpiece. Again, releasing an image of the discovered bottle might jog someone’s memory. But no images have been shown. It is all very odd.

OH, brave new world. My eye was caught by a feature about a new “switching glass” window which can be installed in your bathroom. Flick a switch and it turns from clear to opaque, so you cannot be seen, even if passers-by or your neighbours are just a few feet away. As long as the power is on, your privacy is guaranteed. What could possibly go wrong? You switch on the light, the window goes blank. You disrobe and relax in the bath. You fall asleep. There is a power cut . . .

This week’s hot news from the world of med- ical research is that salt is not as harmful as the experts thought last week but vaping is more harmful than the experts thought last week. An- yone care to guess what next week will bring?

Graeme Andew
Fed up of adverts on the Beeb
HAVING watched a fair bit of BBC television I cannot help but notice the adverts we get between every programme. It can be a break of anything from two to five minutes with no adverts for Gibba SR toothpaste, or the cleaner that beats as it sweeps as it cleans, it all adds up. 

For iPlayer, apps, ‘Get Express’ and radio.

Granny train not a passenger service
HAVING watched a fair bit of news programmes, two to five minutes with no adverts it sweeps as it cleans, it all adds up. 

It can be a break of anything from two to five minutes with no adverts for Gibba SR toothpaste, or the cleaner that beats as it sweeps as it cleans, it all adds up.

Cycling participation ended by potholes
I AGREE entirely with your correspondent on potholes. My brother’s keen and active participation in cycling was effectively ended by an injury caused by a pothole in Wombourne some years ago. The hole was suddenly and mysteriously repaired whilst he was arguing with the council. It is interesting that during the course of driving nearly 3,000 miles in France this summer I saw only one pothole – and that even the most remote rural roads are well surfaced and maintained. This in a country where road fund tax does not exist. I think if we burned a few hay bales and blocked a couple of ports, we might see some action.

I. WILLIAMS
Wordley

Hippodrome reopen call
WANT to make a protest about Dudley Council and what they are trying to do about The Hippodrome. They intend to knock it down. They told the committee if they can get 3,000 people to sign, they will think about it.

I. MEGLE
Kingswinford

Thanks from grateful wife
ON July 17 my husband suffered a heart attack and I just wanted to thank everyone involved in his care.

Not only did they look after him, they took the time to look after me too as I was in shock. You are all absolute angels.

IRENE PASKIN
Lower Gornal

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Halesowen Chronicle Thursday, August 23, 2018
Millionaire missionary in Uganda fall drama

I WILL grow as a person from this experience and I have tremendous faith in God – my knee might be broken in various places, but my spirit remains."

Self-made millionaire Samuel Leeds says he is determined to bounce back after shattering his kneecap during a freak white water rafting accident on the River Nile.

The 27-year-old is now back at home with his wife Amanda in Lichfield, but his leg is in full plaster cast and he has just been told by doctors he may not be able to walk properly again.

Mr Leeds, a devout Christian, says the setback will not stop his mission in Africa through his Good News All Round organisation.

"I have a strong faith, a loving family and a huge passion for my work," he said. "It’s like Rocky’s aid, it isn’t about who you hit, but how hard you get hit and keep moving forward."

Mr Leeds is no ordinary businessman, having left school at 16 and first setting out on a career as a magician.

But he soon discovered property and, at the age of 17, he went to a home-buying networking event. He bought a house under market value and rented it out, the first step toward setting out on a career as a magician.

The white water rafting on July 19 was part of the expedition and involved seven of his team, including his brother and sister-in-law Anna.

He says he has been inspired by successful people he has met. They include Alan Sugar, at a business networking event in London, and actors Arnold Schwarzenegger, and Sylvester Stallone at a ‘meet and greet’ events in the West Midlands.

But at the core of Mr Leeds’ life is religion. He donates 10 per cent of his profits – and his wages – to the Church and helping impoverished villagers in Africa through his Good News All Round organisation.

But disaster struck when they took part on the expedition called the Warrior Camp with students on his Property Investors Academy in Jinja, on the shore of Lake Victoria.

The white water rafting on July 19 was part of the expedition and involved seven of his team, including his brother and sister-in-law Anna.

Anna was also injured when she got taken away down the river and was not found for 45 minutes. Mr Leeds was treated in hospital and his mother, Sue Gray, flew from England to bring him home, paying £10,000 for the flight a week later. He continued treatment back in Birmingham.

He will now continue his rehabilitation from home with his wife and their daughter Ruby. The couple are expecting a second child next year.
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These are people who definitely know what they’re doing! And, if you’re scratching your head for ideas on how to fund your new project, they can give you some help. A company spokesman said: “A Barclays Home Improvement Account offers you the ideal way to fund your home improvement.”

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“Our approach ensures a consistently high level of quality control and also allows our customers to achieve considerable savings by buying direct,” added their company spokesman.

Their A rated windows, which reduce heat loss by more than 20 per cent, are fitted as standard and can save over £250 off your heating bill in the first year alone.

At Rydale Windows they take security very seriously. “All of our doors and windows are fitted with high security multi point locks.” For further information contact Rydale Windows (Manufacturing) Limited on 0800 917 6060 or visit www.rydalewindows.co.uk.
Jean exercises right to retire

FOR more than four decades she has been helping women across the Black Country keep fit – and has never missed a single class.

Now, 46 years after putting on her first session, 82-year-old Jean Hughes has decided to call it a day.

When she started out at Wordsley Community Centre in 1972 she had eight women taking part – and now she has said farewell to 90. Mother-of-one Jean said: “I’ve always wanted to keep fit. I was going to classes in 1957 in West Bromwich and when I came to live in Kingswinford I joined a class and that’s when I was asked to take it over.

“When I took over in Wordsley, there were only eight women but now there’s 90. The ladies became friends and it was a lovely friendly atmosphere. It was very difficult to walk out and think ‘that’s it, I’ve done it now’. My daughter visited that class for me, knowing that it would be difficult to walk out.

“I had some members with young daughters and then the daughters left to get married and have children of their own, quite a few mothers and daughters over the years.”

Jean, from Kingswinford, has shown so much dedication to the fitness cause that she has never missed a class – even when it snowed.

She has also helped to raise £129,000 for charity and has been awarded a British Empire Medal.

“I think we’ve covered most charities,” she said. “It was not just me, it was my group as well. I’ve got a good team.”

Jean Hughes, front, with members of her keep fit group in 1983

Jean Hughes pictured back in 1972

Jean and Ann Bedworth after donating £2,500 to Russells Hall Hospital

Christine Taylor, left, and Jean in 2001

Jean at a celebration garden party to honour her British Empire Medal
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On track to unearth mystery foundations

OVER four weekends the local archaeology group Archaeology in Mind (AIM) are excavating intriguing foundations discovered at Tettenhall Station.

Fifty metres beyond the end of the platforms on what is now the Smestow Valley Path, a badger uncovered the corner of a concrete foundation, and the Tettenhall Transport Heritage Centre called in the group to help reveal what they might be.

Without disturbing the badgers, AIM began and discovered the base of what is clearly quite a large building.

Photographic evidence shows that the Permanent Way gang who looked after the line, had several huts in the approximate area, including a large hut to house their trolleys, a large motorised trolley to carry sleepers and fencing and the like, and a smaller ganger’s trolley.

Different

The gang also had their own hut in which to take breaks, and there were two or three smaller ones.

Historically it is believed that, although there was never a signal box at Tettenhall Station like at Wombourne Station, the foundations for one were laid. Will the excavations of AIM reveal that what the badgers discovered, was the foundations of a signal box or the ganger’s huts, or something entirely different?

The line through Tettenhall only operated from 1925-65, and there was a passenger service for only the first seven years. The branch, which would have taken the line to Bridgnorth, was never built, and the line became one of the first of the Beeching cuts.

Within the Heritage Centre there is a 00 Gauge layout of the station, and curator, Alec Brew, says: “It would be nice to be able to make this corner of the layout exactly correct.”

MEMORY LANE
Report by Alec Brew

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A southbound freight in the area of the current excavations

A northbound freight passing the trolley hut

AIM excavating next to the Smestow Valley Path

A southbound freight in the area of the current excavations

A northbound freight passing the trolley hut

AIM excavating next to the Smestow Valley Path

Wombourne signal box

Dan Brew on his ganger’s trolley in Wombourne Station

AiM revealing the edge of the foundation

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Homes plan fears lead to calls for site visit

PLANNING chiefs will visit the site of a controversial homes development before deciding whether to rubber-stamp the scheme.

Dudley Council’s development control committee voted for a site visit at the land near to Dibdale Road and Salop Street, where 18 homes could be built.

Councillors were recommended to approve the proposals despite mounting opposition from concerned residents.

Patrick Timmins, representing opposing residents and business Blake’s Sheds, said: “This is simply the wrong development in the wrong place.

**Concern**

“If this development is given the go-ahead, it will turn a quiet backwater into a major thoroughfare.”

Mr Timmins said a major concern was vehicle access from Salop Street used by Blake’s Sheds’ articulated lorries to turn.

He said: “We are concerned that if this development gets the go-ahead, with increased numbers of residents living there, the proposed turning circle is totally inadequate given the size of the lorries. It’s an accident waiting to happen.”

He added Blake’s Sheds would suffer, with fears reduced access to the business will impact trade and put the company’s team of eight at risk of job losses.

A total of 14 one-bedroom and four two-bedroom apartments will be constructed on the vacant site, near Papa Johns takeaway.

Applicant Scott Brown said 26 per cent would be affordable housing, with 75 per cent available for those using Help to Buy schemes.

He said proposals were ‘in line’ with development policies, adding: “This land is not public open space. This is appropriate for residential development.”

**Nurse Liz Jones and patient Alizah Pervez, aged 19, who nominated her for the award**

A NURSE who helped a teenage girl through years of treatment for a skin disease has won a national award.

Liz Jones, a dermatology staff nurse with The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, was named Paediatric Nurse of the Year 2018 after being nominated by her patient Alizah Pervez.

Alizah, aged 19, from Stourbridge, put the nurse forward after she saw a poster from the British Dermatology Nursing Group asking for nominations.

The teenager had suffered with psoriasis over almost all of her body and used to have to attend Corbett Hospital three times a week. But she said nurse Liz was always a friendly face while she underwent treatment and ensured she understood everything.

On winning the award, Liz said: “It was a complete shock – I got an email from them one day saying I had won and I couldn’t believe it.”

A DUDLEY Zoo stalwart has been recognised for 35 years of service at the attraction.

Carl Stevens was just 17 when he took on the role of groundsman.

Now aged 52, he worked his way up to the position of head gardener in 1994 – and has held the role since.

He met his now wife of 15 years Pat, head of primates, at work, and in July 1994 met The Queen.

Mr Stevens was just 17 when he took on the role of groundsman.

Now aged 52, he worked his way up to the position of head gardener in 1994 – and has held the role since.

He met his now wife of 15 years Pat, head of primates, at work, and in July 1994 met The Queen.

Zoo bosses have commended the employee, who now leads a team of six, for his hard work and dedication to the grounds.

To commemorate the milestone, the head gardener was presented gift vouchers by the zoo’s director Derek Grove.

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A HEATED meeting over plans for a men’s hostel ended on a hostile note when it was cut short by 25 minutes.

Around 100 angry residents grilled the hospice by moving across the organisation at the start of the year. Work on the new state-of-the-art foundry began last month.

The investment in the moulding line will increase manufacturing capacity by 50 per cent. Additional work will include a new sand plant, with pouring/casting handling systems and a new extraction system. Next year work will start on providing dedicated finishing facilities including shot blast, core making, warehousing, a filtration plant, compressors and robotic fettling.

The Tipton foundry and the 84-year-old castings foundry at the main Thomas Dudley site in Birmingham New Road were brought together as the Thomas Dudley Foundry division at the start of the year. Work on the new state-of-the-art foundry began last month.

The investment in the moulding line will increase manufacturing capacity by 50 per cent. Additional work will include a new sand plant, with pouring/casting handling systems and a new extraction system. Next year work will start on providing dedicated finishing facilities including shot blast, core making, warehousing, a filtration plant, compressors and robotic fettling.
How to get fit in the sun while away from the gym

Cycling is a great alternative for those who struggle with high impact activity. Rollerblading is good for burning calories and it's pretty good fun too: there's no fear of getting outside and feeling anxious. Cycling as a sport is also great for your credit score.  

This is a great way to exercise, get fit, get outdoors with your friends or family, and burn a huge amount of calories while increasing stamina,” says Upton. It’s not a specialist skill, so anyone can give it a go, and it’s relatively cheap - there’s just a one-off payment on a bike to factor in. Upton says that cycling works all your upper body as well as burning off excess fat from your shoulders, legs, abs and even mental capacity. There are loads of places to give it a go – more and more indoor rock climbing centres are popping up in cities and towns all over the world,” says Upton.  

It’s definitely at the more intense end of the activity scale - but try it and you’ll love it.”

Report by Liz Connor

OVER the past few months, the UK has basked in what’s set to be its hottest summer on record, with spectacularly long spells of uninterrupted blue skies and warm temperatures.

It’s been fantastic news for your social life, but probably not so much for your waistline, the lure of the pub garden can easily mean that the gym (quite understandably) falls to the bottom of your priorities. After all, who wants to be cooped up in a hot and sweaty spinning studio when the good weather won’t be here forever?

The good news is that if you’re looking for a late summer fitness kick, it’s really easy to stay active while also getting your fix of sunshine. From coast to countryside, there are plenty of pursuits that can tone your arms, strengthen your abs and clear your mental clutter.

Here are just a few family-friendly, all-fresco activities to try...

1. Surfing
Surfing is one of the most physically challenging watersports out there, engaging your core and stabiliser muscles as you work to bend and balance on the board. “It’s great for your heart,” says Harris Rotschild, senior instructor at St Ives Surf School (stivessurfschool.co.uk). “Putting on your wet suit, running down the beach, paddling out into the surf and catching waves are all aerobic exercises that hugely benefit your cardiovascular system.” Because you’re standing on the waves for at least an hour, Harris says it tests your stamina and endurance, while sculpting your back, shoulders and leg muscles.

“Most notably for our students is that the fun of surfing and energy of the ocean combined give a tremendous sense of satisfaction and happiness,” says Harris. Make a play for Cornwall, Scotland and Devon where you can catch the best swells in the UK.

2. Inline skating
There’s something seriously addictive about rollerblading. It’s pretty good news for your figure too - all that lower-body power does wonders for your hamstrings, quadriceps and glutes, and it’s easier on your joints compared with running. It’s estimated that a 10-stone person will burn about 580 calories per hour of vigorous skating, meaning you won’t be munching out on the weight loss benefits while putting your gym pass on ice.

3. Stand-up paddleboarding (SUP)
“SUP is a great low impact muscular endurance workout if the ocean is your thing,” says Matt Haras, regional group exercise manager at Virgin Active (virginactive.co.uk). “Developed when surfers in Hawaii began to use paddles to propel their surfboards, SUP is a relatively new sport that does exactly what it says on the tin: you stand on a board and paddle yourself forward with a single paddle. During a SUP session you’ll be upping most of the muscles, with the lower body and core contracting as you anchor to the board and paddle,” says Haras. It’s pretty good fun too: there’s no fear of getting outside and feeling anxious. Surfing is a great sport for people who are looking for a more serene way to enjoy the beach. It can also be done somewhere like the River Severn as well as in the sea.

4. Trail running
When the sun’s shining, why not take yourself off the treadmill and on to a nature trail? “Natural landscapes offer a mosaic of horizons to stimulate your mind,” says Ceri Rees, founder of Wild Running (wildrunning.co.uk). “It’s impossible to run in mud and not have at least a grin on your face!” Rees says a good trail run will force your body to recruit different muscles that you’ll need to stabilise your core.

5. Cycling
Cycling is a great alternative for those who struggle with high impact activity spending your weekends cycling over mountains, this is a great way to exercise, get fit, get outdoors with your friends or family, and burn a huge amount of calories while increasing stamina,” says Upton. It’s not a specialist skill, so anyone can give it a go, and it’s relatively cheap - there’s just a one-off payment on a bike to factor in. Upton says that cycling works all your upper body as well as burning off excess fat from your shoulders, legs, abs and even mental capacity. There are loads of places to give it a go – more and more indoor rock climbing centres are popping up in cities and towns all over the world,” says Upton. “It’s definitely at the more intense end of the activity scale - but try it and you’ll love it.”

IN just weeks from now, many young adults will be getting their first taste of freedom as they leave home and step foot off to university.

For many, it will be the first time they have lived away from the family home - meaning they’ll have the new experience of bills to juggle and budgets to keep on track.

While this may seem daunting it’s also an opportunity to develop good money habits which can help you way beyond student life.

Here are some tips from Rachel Springall, a finance expert at Moneyfacts.co.uk, to get students started.

1. Pick a suitable student account
Starting off with a good bank account can help students over their years of study. Applying for a generous interest-free overdraft can be a lifeline, but you must be able to pay it back once you finish your examination. As with any bank account, it’s worth noting that the biggest overdraft limits are not a guarantee as applicants with a bad credit history may not be able to get those with a bad credit history (such as mature students who may have had issues in the past) may want to improve their credit score first.

2. Budget carefully
By budgeting your way through their course and keeping a tight rein on spending, students will hopefully still be left with some money in their pockets at the end of the week to go shopping or socialising. Little changes such as making a coffee at home, or even lunch, can make a huge difference after just a few weeks.

3. Save the change
Each time students buy something they could save the change and watch their savings grow. For example, with Lloyds Bank, when customers are in credit, purchases may be rounded up to the nearest pound with the difference put into a separate account.

4. Make the most of apps to save
One of the free apps around that could help students save money without even thinking about it is Chip. The app works out how much money users could save and it will go on to do the heavy lifting for them when searching for a place to eat.

5. Check your bank balance regularly while you’re on the go
Living away from home means overseeing daily expenses, so checking payments on the go using mobiles or tablets will be very practical. Students don’t have to choose a bank that’s nearby or on campus if they only

6. Stay up to date with your credit score
At some point, students may look to take out a student credit card, or get a mobile phone contract. There are many free credit score services that can mean to check a credit score first, such as Experian, Equifax and Callcredit. Providers can ask one or more of these agencies for data to assess applicants, so it’s important to check your credit score regularly with multiple brands.

7. Review utility bills
It’s easy to be left back when it comes to bills, but you should always be on the lookout for ways to save money by switching provider and not take their current offer at face value. It’s also important for students to make sure their fellow housemates understand the monthly costs and the importance of paying bills on time.

8. Keep an NUS card handy
As NUS gives its students access to many places that offer discounts, so they should remember to keep it with them. When eating out, there may be even greater discounts, so students should consider using it with them.

9. Get a part-time job
Getting a reference and starting a job will not only help prepare students for their first taste of financial freedom as they head through to university, but also start settling in. New people - helping to build up a social circle and get that all-important reference.

10. Protect possessions with insurance
Consider taking out cover for gadgets and other contents just in case. It’s quick and simple to get a quote online, and students can pick a plan that suits their needs so that it covers their valuable items.
Mother’s sorrow over losing ‘beautiful’ Ellie

THE mother of a ‘sassy, loving’ young woman has spoken of the profound effect on the family of her death after being thrown from the bonnet of a moving car.

Dawn Underhill’s moving personal statement was read to the court before 19-year-old Luke Hickman, who had been at the wheel of the Corsa, was locked up for causing her death.

Three others were sentenced for their part in what Judge Paul Glenn called ‘a cover-up’ following the ‘prank’ that ended in tragedy on the Tesco Extra car park in Dudley.

Eleanor Underhill, aged 20, died from catastrophic head injuries in January last year, eight days after she fell. Her mother said: “Ellie grew up into a beautiful young woman who was not only our daughter but our best friend.

Zest

“Her sense of fun, her laughter and her zest for life were infectious. She had a knack for making you smile.

“Whilst Ellie was very straight-talking, stubborn and sassy, she was also kind, loving and caring.”

Mrs Underhill described how 2017 had been going to be a special year for the family. She and husband Shaun were marking their 30th wedding anniversary and Ellie should have been celebrating her 21st birthday.

The pharmacy assistant’s health suffered and she had to take time off. Her husband endured sleepless nights and Ellie’s brothers Luke and Ryan had also suffered badly.

The defendants were rebuked by the judge for not taking Ellie to hospital for over an hour and then not informing her family for several more hours after they concocted lies about the circumstances surrounding her injuries.

Hickman, of Wassell Road, Wollescote, Stourbridge, admitted causing death by dangerous driving and dangerous driving. He was sentenced to seven years and 10 months in a young offender’s institution.

Elly Phillips, 19, of Seymour Road, Wollescote; Ross Bingham, 21, of Hagley Road, Edgbaston, admitted conspiracy to pervert the course of justice.

Phillips was sentenced to six months in a young offender’s institution and Bingham to four months. Hana Edwards, 19, of Grove Road, Wollescote, was given an 18-month community order and 150 hours of unpaid work after admitting perverting the course of justice.

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“There are no aspects of the fish-keeping hobby we do not cater for and we make sure that all our staff are kept up-to-date with the most recent developments in our industry.

“Our exceptional standards have been carried across to our reptile department which has grown tremendously over the last 10 years to become one of the region’s most reputable reptile departments.

“We ensure that our suppliers are the best in the business and we receive unique support from them in honour of our commitment to quality and service.

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We have trusted them with our goods for many years and they repay our trust with exceptional delivery standards. They service some of the UK’s largest companies and offer the most comprehensive service of all the couriers around at the moment.

“The name of Shirley Aquatics has for many years been synonymous with extremely high standards in all aspects of our hobby. Our commitment to you is to ensure these standards are upheld and surpass them where ever we can.

“We will always offer the highest level of assistance, the healthiest animals and the finest products ensuring your hobby is as rewarding as it can be.”

Shirley Aquatics aims to offer unrivalled levels of customer service and knowledge, covering every aspect of the aquarium, pond and reptile hobbies.

They aim to provide extensive product availability and help you through each aspect of your new or existing hobby. The spokesperson added: “With decades of experience in aquatics and reptiles, keeping our pledge is to provide you with a professional and thorough service tailored to your needs.”

To find out more visit Shirley Aquatics at Heath Farm, Alcester Road, Wythall, Bromsgrove, call 0121 744 1300 or see the website at www.shirleyaquatics.co.uk.

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Jail after dogs filmed attacking caged fox

A MAN who filmed two dogs attacking a caged fox in his back garden has been jailed for 22 weeks.

John Gough, from Brierley Hill, was banned from keeping animals for life after the ‘horrible’ footage was discovered on his phone.

At Birmingham Magistrates Court, Gough pleaded guilty to causing an animal to fight between two dogs and a fox, causing unnecessary suffering to a captive fox, and causing unnecessary suffering to a black terrier type dog. He denied a further charge of wilfully killing, injuring or taking a badger back in February 2017, which was later dropped. He had been caught by the police and the RSPCA.

Distressed

The court heard how Gough used his mobile phone to film two dogs attacking a fox which had been trapped in a cage. He could be heard on the video encouraging the dogs to attack.

In a video clip the distressed animal is out of the cage and the dogs are seen to carry on the attack. Both incidents are said to have taken place at Gough’s home address in Byron Street on or about May 16. It is not known what happened to the fox.

Officers searched Gough’s home and seized his phone, finding the video showing the fox attack along with still images. A fox trap was also found along with equipment used when putting terriers down holes in the ground.

In his vehicle officers discovered two fox tails, a terrier fox and shovels.

An officer from the RSPCA’s Special Operations Unit, who investigated the case, said: “This was premeditated animal cruelty and both the fox and dog clearly suffered.”

Ready for business festival

PREPARATIONS for the 2019 Black Country Business Festival are in full swing, with a number of sponsorship deals already signed.

The festival, taking place from May 13-24, has been established by the Black Country Chamber of Commerce, needs sponsors and partners to make it happen.

Already, Black Country solicitors Talbots Law; accident repair centre BodyKraft; and DYS – Dudley’s Business and Innovation Enterprise Zone – have signed up to be partners. Casino 36 is a sponsor and official supporters include Wolverhampton Racecourse, accountancy firm Crowe UK and Wolverhampton Grand Theatre.

For more information, visit www.blackcountrybusinessfestival.com, email hello@blackcountrybusinessfestival.com or call 01902 912304.

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Modfather set for date
In the City

A year on from the 40th anniversary of The Jam’s debut album, modfather Paul Weller is in the City – Birmingham that is – as he shows no signs of slowing down.

Weller, aged 60, released his 13th studio album A Kind of Revolution this year and announced a UK arena tour. He performs at The Genting Arena tomorrow (Friday) with support from Stone Foundation, whose latest album Street Rituals was produced by . . . Paul Weller.

The concert kicks off a month of big name acts to perform in the second city.

This weekend sees successful R&B vocal group Boyz II Men in action, famed for the massive line-up of hip hop, grime and bass all under one roof at the Genting Arena.

Here Comes the Summer Son as Scottish alternative rock band Texas, led by Sharlene Spiteri, perform at the Symphony Hall on September 1 alongside special guests Imelda May and Ward Thomas as part of The MJR Group’s Skyline Series.

The iconic Barry Manilow performs on September 4 at Arena Birmingham and will be holding its first Mini Food Festival on September 26.

Chase & Status, Giggs, Andy C, Stefflon Don and more take centre stage at MADE For The Weekend in Birmingham.

Following the successful move to Perry Park and a sold-out MADE Festival, the two-day indoor event, on October 12 and 13, will see a massive line-up of hip hop, grime and bass all under one roof at the Genting Arena.

Other confirmed acts include Gorgon City, Pusha T, Maleek Berry, Preditah, Nasty C, My Nu Leng, Dread MC and SaSaSaS.

Proceedings kick off on October 12 with rapper Pusha T, president of Kanye West’s GOOD Music label, who recently released new album Daytona. Grime artist Giggs, female star Stefflon Don and homegrown Birmingham talent, the DJ and producer Preditah also take the stage, along with the British-Nigerian act Maleek Berry.

Chase & Status, best remembered for their 2009 top 10 hit End Credits, are among the illustrious line-up for the Saturday, alongside Andy C, who recently sold out Wembly Arena in three days.

Gorgon City bring their bass-infused Kingdom brand to the Genting Arena in a special extended DJ set. Bristol duo My Nu Leng featuring Dread MC also join the line-up, while SaSaSaS appear hot on the heels of a stellar performance at MADE Festival 2018.

There will be a back set from Bushbaby and Sammy Virji and Resonance Records head honcho Max Chapman will fly the flag for UK talent. House producer Eli Brown completes the existing set. More top names are likely to be announced.

MADE Festival director Pete Jordan said: “After the fifth year of MADE Festival summer edition and a 12,000 sell-out at Perry Park in July, we felt it was time to take the brand to the next level.

“We wanted to bring the extravaganza of the festival into an indoor setting, and in autumn when the UK festival season is well and truly over.”

There are also long-awaited shows from fellow former Disney Club star Britney Spears – joined by Pitbull – performs her Vegas residency show at the Genting Arena tomorrow (Friday).

Monday, August 27.

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Monday, August 27.
If it feels like Paradise you know it’s George heading your way

Singer-songwriter George Ezra will be riding Shotgun into Birmingham’s Genting Arena next year.

Fans of the Hertfordshire-born 25-year-old will be in Paradise as he performs on March 17 as part of a 10-date series of performances. The announcement comes after Ezra, who topped the charts with Shotgun this summer – his first number one – headlined Boardmasters Festival in Newquay, and ahead of a sold-out UK tour that begins in November.

Ezra followed up his debut album Wanted On Voyage – the third best-selling album of the year in the UK in 2014 – with this year’s offering Staying At Tamara’s, which is officially the biggest-selling album so far this year. It remains in the top five of the Official Albums Chart 20 weeks after release. This year Ezra appeared the Forest Live concerts on Cannock Chase, one of three headline acts alongside Paul Heaton & Jacqui Abbott and Paloma Faith.

Ezra first rose to prominence four years ago with the release of the hit single Budapest. He is best known for other hit singles such as Blame it on Me, Listen to the Man, Barcelona, Cassie O and Don’t Matter Now.

Mysterious play Meek to take centre stage

Penelope Skinner’s mysterious new play, Meek, is being staged at Birmingham Repertory Theatre from September 4-8, following its premiere at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe this month.

Described as a haunting vision of ruthless state control, tense friendships and one woman’s determination not to be broken, Meek is a tale which reflects on fraught times. In a society where private lives become political and freedom of expression is not an option, Irene finds herself imprisoned but as tales of her incarceration spread she is forced to make a brutal decision.

Award-winning writer Skinner is recognised as one of the UK’s leading voices in contemporary theatre. She says: “On a small scale, it is a story about friendship, faith, shame and betrayal. On a wider scale, it is about the ways in which spirituality can be co-opted for political gain, and the impact of that on our personal freedoms. It is also a play about love.”

Directed by Amy Hodge, the cast includes Scarlet Brookes, Shvorne Marks and Amanda Wright.

No ordinary Joe! Comic marks 30th anniversary

Joe Pasquale burst on to our television screens 30 years ago on ITV’s New Faces – and doesn’t seem to have been away ever since.

A winner of I’m a Celebrity… Get Me Out of Here, the squaky-voiced comic is on his 30th anniversary tour A Few Of His Favourite Things; billed as ‘a celebration of his best cack, plus some surprises on the way’.

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Katie Derham

Proms Extra (BBC Radio 3)

The programme moves into the Royal Albert Hall for one night only, as an expectant audience gathers to hear Bernstein’s On the Town. Katie Derham and and reads extracts from Mozart’s Clarinet Concerto, Liszt’s Hungarian Rhapsodies and a world premiere by singer-songwriter Laura Mulvihill. David Norman offers another closer of two of his heroes. There is a performance of La Clandestine by Chilean composer Agnès Varda. The opening night of Proms Extra.

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SATURDAY’S TV AUGUST 25

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5.00 The Great British Bake Off (R)

5.30 Film: The Italian Job

6.00 Smashed! (R)

7.00 Documentary: The History of Chocolate

8.00 The Young Ones. (R)

9.00 Mr. Bean.

10.00 Film: A Beautiful Mind

11.00 The Time Machine.

12.00 Film: The Man Who Fell to Earth (1976)
BRAIN GYM

No.494

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues – both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across
1. Garden ornaments
2. Medical expert
3. Medical containers
4. Kind of stone for clifftop find (4, 5)
5. They make rings around ships equipment (9)
6. There is no part for the benefactor (6)
7. See 24 Down
8. Dress up for a start to the day, we hear (5)
9. Collapse – minor operation after the doctor is seen (3)
10. Negotiate for something that gives particular pleasure (5)
11. Bird put in the crate alone (4)
12. Eastern potentate elected rapidly (5)
13. Bluff! (12)
14. Morals at the neighbouring hostelry? (5, 9)
15. Shrubby plant needed before the Spanish produce a quant of grain (6)
16. Warships to check credentials in escort arrangement (9)
17. See 24 Down
18. An assortment of roofs here on the edge of the sea (9)

Down
1. Help set an arrangement for trumpeters (9)
2. Mix me a lotion likely to excite sensitivity (9)
3. Club used for evening out (4)
4. Part of a flap elongated on a coat (8)
5. Used to being deposed? (8)
6. Late afternoon function unfinished (4)
7. Noblemen to be of some importance (5)
8. Missile associated with the sea (5)
9. See 21 Across
10. Weak, lacking prickles (6)
11. A goal will disturb the river (5)
12. Art Gallery window (6)
13. Wait cheerfully to find a letter within (5)
14. & 16A, What to do after retiring (2, 2, 5)
15. 26A, Carry weapons with sleeves rolled up, one hears (4, 4)

Quick Clues:

Across
1. Dress up for a start to the day, we hear (5)
2. Cold? (4)
3. Medical containers
4. They make rings around ships equipment (9)
5. There is no part for the benefactor (6)
6. See 24 Down
7. Dress up for a start to the day, we hear (5)
8. Collapse – minor operation after the doctor is seen (3)
9. Negotiate for something that gives particular pleasure (5)
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Quiz

1. Whose novel Madame Bovary was published in 1857?
2. Which anaesthetic was discovered by Justus, Baron Von Liebig?
3. In which country was the Great Trek of 1836-37 made?
4. Of what is the Ivy League an eight-member group?
5. Which shrub has common and hedge varieties?
6. What do we call the mammal Orctylagus curricularis?
7. Which composer’s most famous piece is Carnival of the Animals?
8. Who made up the Marx Brothers cinematic comedy team along with Groucho, Chico and Zeppo?
9. Of which tree is the ironbark a species?
10. Which best-selling British author and naturalist died in January 1999?

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

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**By Carmel Stewart**

There’s plenty of head and leg room.

Engine choices range from a 2.0litre, four-cylinder 163bhp, turbocharged diesel linked to a six-speed manual gearbox to a 3.0litre, V6, supercharged 380bhp petrol married to an eight-speed automatic transmission. The immense power of this latter unit manages to stay on the comfort side of the fine line between four-wheel drive and true off-road capability. The immense power of the 3.0litre, V6, supercharged petrol engine but, with a price tag of £53,365, deep pockets are needed for this version.

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Nexo makes us wish future was here

By Tom Wiltshire

There’s a certain deadlock between car manufacturers and governments at the moment regarding the supposed fuel of the future, hydrogen.

While plenty of manufacturers are poised to release fuel-cell vehicles, they’re reluctant to do so with no real refuelling infrastructure in place – and governments are unlikely to invest in hydrogen stations with so few cars around to use them. It’s fallen to Hyundai to plough forward with the Nexo – the successor to its ix35 Fuel Cell and soon to be the Toyota Mirai’s only hydrogen-powered rival in the UK.

The Nexo is all new, from its futuristic powertrain to the concept car-esque styling. While the ix35 Fuel Cell was based on the existing ix35 SUV, the Nexo is its own model. Hyundai aims to sell a few thousand Nexos a year in markets across the world, hopefully spurred on by the development of a hydrogen infrastructure and providing a long-distance, quick-refuelling alternative to pure-electric vehicles.

It debuts some key new tech for Hyundai, including a new 13.3-inch infotainment display, driver-assistance features such as a blind-spot view monitor and lane-follow assist. Under the hood sits a hydrogen fuel cell stack, which takes its juice from three hydrogen tanks mounted fore and aft of the rear axle. There’s an electric motor and small battery pack too, but for most of the time the car is driven by the fuel cell. There are a number of benefits to this. First of all there’s the car is driven by the fuel cell. There are a number of benefits to this. First of all there’s the environmental benefit, but it’s also a tech-fest, with Hyundai’s semi-autonomous systems making life just a little bit easier. Lane-follow assist – a combination of radar-guided cruise control and lane-keeping functions – works brilliantly, keeping the car steadier than most rival systems. There’s also an innovative blind spot monitoring system, which displays a camera feed of the car’s blind spot in the instrument cluster when you indicate. It will also park itself while you’re outside it.

The Hyundai Nexo looks very much the futuristic SUV and remains remarkably true to its concept. The glamorous touches don’t seem contrived or compromised, though, and the result is a slick-looking crossover with some really interesting design details. The full-width LED light bar across the front gives an eye-catching signature, especially in dark, while glittery tail lights give a similar effect at the rear. The streamlined alloy wheels are less successful and look a little cheap, but the sides of the car are brought back up to par with sleek hidden door handles.

The Nexo’s peak output is 161bhp, delivered to its rear axle. There’s an electric motor and small battery pack too, but for most of the time the car is driven by the fuel cell. There are a number of benefits to this. First of all there’s the car is driven by the fuel cell. There are a number of benefits to this. First of all there’s the environmental benefit, but it’s also a tech-fest, with Hyundai’s semi-autonomous systems making life just a little bit easier. Lane-follow assist – a combination of radar-guided cruise control and lane-keeping functions – works brilliantly, keeping the car steadier than most rival systems. There’s also an innovative blind spot monitoring system, which displays a camera feed of the car’s blind spot in the instrument cluster when you indicate. It will also park itself while you’re outside it.

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Overall, the effect is close enough to a high-set centre console. However, it’s dotted with a rash of cheap-feeling buttons and decked out in the sort of silver plastic you’d find on an early 2000s Mercedes SLK. Very appealing to the North American market; less so to Europeans.

There’s plenty of room on offer, though, with a 461-litre boot, decent rear legroom and good storage for oddments in and around the cabin. What can’t be argued with is the tech on offer in the Nexo. There is a digital instrument display and widescreen infotainment unit that works rather well, the aforementioned safety and driver aids, climate control, heated and cooled seats, LED lights front and rear and a powered tailgate.

However, you’d expect all this from such an expensive car. Hydrogen tech is in its infancy and as such can’t be offered at the same price as electric rivals. We’d expect to see the Hyundai to be priced near £60,000, dipping to around £35,000 when the government’s electric car grant is taken into account.

Refuelling takes just a few minutes too – more than any EV currently available. The only emission from the Nexo is water, and particulate filters mean the car purifies the air around it as it drives.

The Nexo’s quick-refuelling alternative to pure-electric infrastructure and providing a long-distance, quick-refuelling alternative to pure-electric vehicles.

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NICK ARCHER celebrated countless half-centuries during his playing days – but it’s doubtful any gave him as much pride as his latest one.

The bat, pads and gloves may have been discarded a few years ago but that hasn’t stopped the former Walsall and Staffordshire batsman batting and continuing to chase another milestone.

Archer, 62, is currently enjoying his 50th season of Birmingham League cricket as player and administrator.

On the field, he enjoyed a stunning period of success with the all-conquering Walsall side of the 80s and 90s. He won the Birmingham League title nine times, and has been a key figure in the team's continued dominance.

Archer, 62, is currently enjoying his 50th season of Birmingham League cricket as player and administrator.

The all-conquering Walsall side with Archer, centre, front row, as captain

A Walsall team picture from 1976. Archer is on the far right end of the front row

The competition takes place on September 22 and 23. Tickets are on sale now via www.theticketfactory.com or by calling 0844 33 88 222.

Trampolinists spring into action for contest

The 2018 Trampoline, Tumbling & DMT British Championships sprung into action at Arena Birmingham next month.

Spectators can witness the return of history-making Olympic silver medal trampolinist Bryony Page on home soil, as she takes on stiff competition from world team bronze medallists Laura Gallagher and Kat Driscoll.

The competition takes place on September 22 and 23. Tickets are on sale now via www.theticketfactory.com or by calling 0844 33 88 222.

Soap stars line up for charity match

CELEBRITIES from some of the nation’s most popular soap operas will lace up their boots for a charity football match in Walsall.

Stars from Emmerdale, Hollyoaks and Coronation Street will line up on Sunday at Rushall Olympic against The Midlands Co-operative, which has organised the event.

Soap stars taking part include Ashley Taylor-Dawson and Jacob Roberts, better known as Darren Osborne and Damon Kinsella from Hollyoaks, Alan Goodall who plays Tyrone Dobbs in Coronation Street, and Anthony Quinlan, aka Pete Barton in Emmerdale. Fans can meet and greet the stars at the end.

Money raised will go towards local charities including sexual exploitation prevention charity Street Teams, Alzheimer’s support groups Alz Cafe and Monthly Alzheimer’s Support Evenings as well as blind and sight loss support centre, Beacon Vision. Kick off is at 2pm and entry is £8 adults, £5 children with family discounts available. Details and tickets on 07509 309092.

Trio net their place in national tournament

THREE Wolverhampton athletes have netted a call-up to the Severn Stars squad at the School Games at netball.

The School Games are a national multi-sport event for the UK's most talented school-age athletes and take place at Loughborough University from August 30 to September 2.

All three girls are 15 and Wolverhampton Girls High. They are twins sisters Hale and Rudeen Robinson, who play for Walsall Netball Club and team-mate Lucy Toor, who also represents Walsall Netball Club.

More than 1,400 athletes will compete across 11 sports, five of which disability disciplines. The Wolverhampton trio will follow in the footsteps of some of Britain’s biggest sporting stars who have competed at the event before going on to win Commonwealth Games gold.

Previous competitors include Paralympic champions Hannah Cockroft, Ellie Simmonds and Donna Peachock, Olympic champion Adam Peaty, heptathlete Katarina Johnson-Thompson and sprinter Adam Gemili.
Valiant effort by young pair in regatta

YOUNGSTERS Ben Nolan and Sophie Glazzard made history by becoming the first Dudley Rowing Club members to win a regatta. In fact the club itself is new to the regatta scene.

The pair entered the junior 15 single sculls at Warwick Regatta on Saturday. Nolan was very unlucky in the draw as he was up against a youngster from Derby Rowing Club who had already won a silver medal at the junior rowing championships. Nolan fought very hard in his heat but lost by four lengths, but it was a very valiant effort. Glazzard, a young lady with a lot of determination was drawn against a sculler from the West Midlands Division. In fact the club itself is new to the regatta scene.

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After a very fast start she found herself in the lead for the first 200m of the 500m course, but ‘caught a crab’ – her ear got stuck in the water. Having lost the lead, she fought back to lose by just three lengths

The racing commentator explained to the crowd how small Dudley Rowing Club is and the tiny stretch of water they have on the Reservoir in Netherton to train on. Bridgnorth Rowing Club are helping the local club by to transporting their own boats to regattas for the youngsters to use, as Dudley Rowing Club have no trailer facilities.

Both youngsters are now eagerly looking forward to entering Worcester Autumn Regatta on September 9. Coach Neil Colvin is also teaming up with Stan Butler the Bridgnorth Rowing Club secretary in the double sculls event.

Faye jumps for joy with title

A MISFIRING Halesowen went down by 97 runs to Leamington in the Birmingham League. Visiting batsmen William Masinghe and veteran Rob Williams put on 106 for the fourth wicket at Seth Somers Park. Masinghe hit 107 and Williams 61 to take their side to 264-5. Mashings held the innings together while Williams’ contribution was far more explosive, striking seven fours and three sixes in 46 balls.

After Ed Kilbee (55) was dismissed at 123-5, Halesowen crumbled to 167 all out, in 40 overs, off-spinners Nabeel Aghar (4-22) and Perry Derrick (3-48) doing the damage. Skipper Alexei Kervezee said: “We had two moments in the game where we have not clicked, the first when Rob Williams came in and blasted away what had been agettable total to one which was above par and then when we batted we failed to capitalise on a sound opening stand.

Critical

“We are still well in the race and the bank holiday will be critical to our end of season destiny.”

After eight easy-wicket victories against Oswestry for Kidderminster, three wins from their last five games, will guarantee promotion to the Premier Division, at the first attempt, while Shifnal boosted their chances of joining them with a seven-wicket victory at Brockhampton. In other matches the second, third and fourth teams all lost in what was a miserable weekend for the club but with four weekends of cricket remaining there is still plenty for the teams to play. The first XI visit Shifnal on Saturday, noon start and travel to Brockhampton on Monday. The seconds are at Seth Somers Park on Monday to play Walsall seconds and on Monday to play Artwood Bank, both start at 12.30pm. The thirds take on West Malvern on Saturday at Earls High, 1pm start, while the fourths have the return journey to take on West Malvern Sunday.

Faye Adam on her way to victory on Demograaf

HALLEWSOEN’S Faye Adams flew to victory with her horse Demograf at the British Showjumping National Championships. A day after winning the National Speed Horse Final, the 20-year-old took the National 1.30m Open Championship title.

As one of 20 riders in the jump-off, Adams produced one of only six double clear rounds in a time of 38.84 seconds, beating the time set by second-placed rider Causing Norel with 39.66 seconds. Adams said 10-year-old bay gelding Demograf, whom she has had for about a year: “He’s just been incredibly welcoming here; he has answered every question and I couldn’t have asked for anything better.”

Faye is handed her prize

Poppies’ day

as win takes hosts to top

Kettering Town 2 Halesowen Town 0

KETTERING got the better of the top of the Divison Central table with a goal in each half at Latimer Park.

Yeltz made a decent start in their first competitive game against Kettering for almost 20 years. James Roberts fired over from a 10th minute corner after Alan Charleston headed back from the far post and Lee Hughes went close. Roberts then won the ball to fire wide just outside the edge of the penalty area after 23 minutes. Kettering’s Latham Row Turner fired just wide and Michael Richens hit over bar. But the hosts settled and took the lead six minutes before half-time through Marcus Kelly from the left after a neat pass from Linden Meikle on a counter-attack from Halesowen’s free-kick at the other end.

Chances on goal remained few in the second period although Halesowen came near to equalising after 45 minutes when a long clearance from goalkeeper Dan Platt was helped on by Hughes to Roberts, but his effort was tipped onto the bar by home goalkeeper Paul White. But Kettering generally had the better of the second period and hit a couple of half chances off target. Substitute Brett Solkhorn doubled the Poppies lead to confirm their 100 per cent record in the third minute of injury time.

Yeltz are at home to Biggleswade on Saturday, the third round is at home to Forest Town on Tuesday night as the No9 Derby at Amblecote.

Neal struggles in race at Rockingham

BLACK Country racer Matt Neal suffered a tough weekend but came away with vital British Touring Car Championshp Points from Rockingham. The Steurbidge racer found himself on the back foot against Fred Munsell after the team was forced to change the engine on his car ahead of qualifying.

Delayed by an incident at the start, Neal found himself in racce two and three had to settle for 14th and 15th place finishes.

Neal now sits in fifth place in the driv- er’s championship, 12 points off the top three.

Faye is handed her prize

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