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Welcome to the April update from Warfield Parish Council

Warfield Community Hub



Work is continuing on the design of a new community hub building for Warfield. This is an exciting joint project between Warfield Parish Council and Bracknell Forest Council to deliver new community facilities in Warfield. These facilities include a large sports hall, function spaces, meeting rooms, a dance studio, a cafe, and office space for the parish council. The plans will also deliver new outdoor spaces and improvements to the sports pitches at Priory Field.

The design is currently being refined and costed. We hope to have this design stage completed in the coming months and then begin showing initial designs from the time of the Village Fete in June. Stay tuned for more updates.

Vacancies for Parish Councillors

It is an exciting time to join Warfield Parish Council. The council is seeking enthusiastic individuals to join our team of councillors for the next four years. Together we will be working on projects and initiatives that will benefit the residents of Warfield and to protect and enhance the environment.

If you would like an informal chat on being a councillor and what is involved you can speak with our chairman, Gareth Barnard on 01344 487581. For an information pack and to apply contact Jason Mawer, the Parish Clerk on 01344 457777 or visit our website and search for councillor vacancies.

Contact the Parish Council

The Parish Office is located at the Brownlow Hall and is open Monday-Friday 9.30am - 12.30pm.

If you need to contact us out of opening hours, please call us on **01344 457777** and leave a message or e-mail **info@warfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk**. You can also use these contact details if you wish to reach your local councillor. Join us for our next event



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They're good for you...honest!

Chocolate Easter eggs. Surely one of the finest German inventions ever. No-one can be quite sure who first came up with the idea of combining chocolate and eggs but whoever did was a marketing genius.



In these health-conscious times though can we still justify this tradition, or should we ban such an indulgent confectionary?

I once read an article, in the Guardian I think, that claimed you can find evidence to support any argument you like if you look hard enough. So, on behalf of chocoholics everywhere I decided to take up the challenge and here are my results.

CHOCOLATE IS GOOD FOR YOU!

Chocolate is good for your brain.

Cocoa-rich drinks are rich in chemicals called flavanols. These enhance brain function, fight sleep deprivation, fatigue, and aging!

They are the same chemicals present in Green Tea, which is touted as a preventative for stroke, heart failure, cancer, and diabetes. Gwyneth Paltrow drinks gallons of it and she looks fab. Sadly, I couldn't find any mention of her imbibing Thornton's continental choccies, but I'll keep looking.

Chocolate helps prevent cancer.

Ok, we've met flavanols...now meet flavonoids. These are antioxidants: you know, those things beloved of cosmetics companies, 'We slapped this on our model, and she looked twenty years younger after we'd photographed her in soft-focus and air-brushed her so even her own mother wouldn't recognise her.'

We do know that they help prevent cancer. We also

know they don't do this directly. In fact, our bodies view flavonoids as highly undesirable and work hard to get rid of them. By-products of this effort are phase II enzymes, which help eliminate mutagens and carcinogens, which sound like the aliens from an episode of Captain Scarlett and are equally nasty. Only small amounts of flavonoids are required for this beneficial effect but hey...have another egg just to make sure.

Chocolate is a mood-booster.

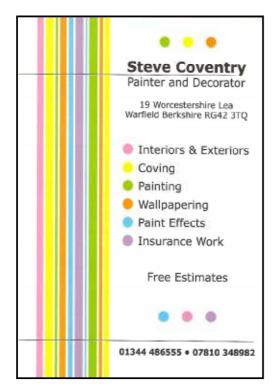
It contains small amounts of phenylethylamine, anandamide, tryptophan and caffeine. These are natural mood boosters, so this explains why women crave the stuff when they're premenstrual, pregnant, at work, awake...

I guess chocolate is both naughty and nice and annoyingly, as with anything life, moderation is the key.

Dark chocolate is definitely better for you overall. 60% cocoa solids is great but 70 or 75% is better. Milk chocolate contains fewer cocoa solids and has a higher sugar and fat content, and I couldn't find any research saying either of these have hidden health benefits...and believe me I looked really hard.

So, enjoy your eggs this Easter. Chocolate is delicious, fun and a perfect pick-me-up. Just don't overdo it.

By Cally Grant





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Sudoku

| | | | 6 | 5 | | | 7 | 2 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | | | | | 9 | 5 | 1 | |
| | | | | | | 4 | | |
| | | 1 | | | | | 3 | 7 |
| | | 7 | | 3 | | 9 | | |
| 8 | 2 | | | | | 1 | | |
| | | 2 | | | | | | |
| | 5 | 8 | 7 | | | | | 6 |
| 1 | 3 | | | 9 | 2 | | | |

How to Play

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9, *with no repetition*!

That's all there is to it.

You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic - there's no maths involved and no adding up.

It's fun. It's challenging. It's addictive!

(solution on page 18)





Preparation time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 60-70 minutes

Ingredients

225g plain flour 2 level tsp baking powder 80g softened or spreadable butter 1 large egg (beaten) 110g caster sugar 4 medium bananas (peeled) 50g walnuts (chopped) Zest 1 lemon Demerara sugar for sprinkling

Method

Preheat oven to 180C / gas 4. Grease and line a 2lb loaf tin.

Mash three bananas to a pulp and chop the fourth.

Sift the flour and baking powder together into a separate bowl. Add the butter, egg and caster sugar. Using a mixer mix everything together for a minute or two. Add the mashed and chopped bananas and briefly whisk them into the mixture. Fold in the chopped walnuts and lemon zest.

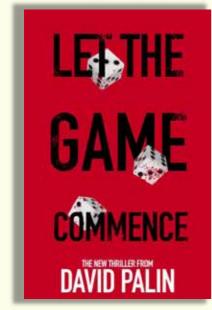
Spoon the cake mixture into the prepared tin. Sprinkle with Demerara sugar.

Place in the pre-heated oven so that the top of the tin is in the centre. Bake for 60-70 minutes until a skewer inserted into the cake comes out clean.

Let the cake cool for 10-15 minutes then turn out on to a cooling rack.

This cake is good served warm with crème fraiche, cold, or even toasted.

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Garden View

This month - An annual pleasure



Every year since I began to garden, come spring, I grabbed my spade and in a fit of enthusiasm I dug over the soil. Then I filled any empty spaces with annuals. These might be carefully nurtured in my greenhouse, sprinkled direct from the packet, or purchased in packs at my local garden centre.

Several years ago, due to an injury, I was unable to get out and begin this frenzy of activity. I resigned myself to the fact than my garden simply wouldn't be as colourful that year. Nature however had other plans.

As I waited for my perennials to surface something wonderful happened. Hundreds of self-sown annuals from the previous year also began to surface. They'd been there all along, just waiting for the warm spring sun to bring them to life.

It occurred to me that my habit of stopping deadheading towards the end of the season (to leave some interesting seed heads which feed the birds and look so pretty covered in frost) had benefitted me in more ways than the one I'd intended.

Calendula, Candytuft, Cosmos, Larkspur,

Nicotiana, Poppies, Sweet Alyssum and Love-in-a-Mist were popping up everywhere I looked. I've never been so delighted.

I waited until they were a couple of inches tall then on a slightly drizzly day I eased some out and transferred them to barer soil.

My reward was a display of annuals every bit as lovely as if I'd spent hours with my spade and trowel.

So last year I experimented. Throughout the flowering season I noted where I might need an extra

patch or two of colour and then, when I stopped deadheading, I simply grabbed a few seed heads and dropped them in the appropriate spot.

That spring and summer I had another beautiful display of annuals. Why hadn't I discovered this lazy way to garden before?

Of course, there are some teeny disadvantages. The main one is that annuals grown from seed flower later than those bought as plugs or plants from garden centres. Don't let this put you off though. If you have a good range of perennials the annuals can take their time, taking over when the others begin to fade. Also, no-one says it has to be all or nothing. I have a passion for cosmos, so I bring in a few plants early on every year. That way I can savour their pretty blooms right through the season.

So, if you're planting annuals this spring, plan ahead a little. Look at your garden as an evolving piece of work and let at least some of them self-seed. Then next year don't be so quick to brandish a spade... you'll gain two commodities gardeners always need more of...time and money.

Happy gardening,

By Rachael Leverton



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History is littered with wars, revolutions, and the rise and fall of civilizations. Yet, amidst the chaos and drama, a less chronicled but equally important thread weaves through the fabric of our past: the history of practical jokes. This noble tradition has been the unsung hero of human interaction, providing levity in the face of adversity and reminding rulers and peasants alike that nobody is above a good pie in the face.

Let's rewind to Ancient Rome, where one of the earliest recorded practical jokes came to light. Emperor Augustus, known for his powerful leadership, apparently also had a knack for humour. He was fond of sending guests to his banquets home with absurd gifts, such as a giant squid disguised as a delicacy, or a bunch of carrots artistically arranged to look like a rare bouquet. Imagine the confusion and laughter when a dignified senator discovered his 'precious' parting gift was essentially a well-dressed octopus.

Fast forward to the Renaissance, an era of enlightenment and, evidently, elite pranking. Leonardo da Vinci, aside from his contributions to art and science, reportedly designed a mechanical dragon to scare unwary visitors in his court. This early animatronic beast wasn't just a feat of engineering but a testament to da Vinci's love for a good prank, blending innovation with a dash of terror.

The 18th century brought us the infamous Joseph Pujol, better known by his stage name Le Pétomane. This French entertainer turned flatulence into an art form, astonishing audiences by playing musical instruments and performing various feats through the power of his own gas. Pujol's performances at the Moulin Rouge were nothing short of a sensational prank on high society, making him a legend in the annals (half pun totally intended) of practical joke history.

In the more recent past, the 20th century

gave us Alan Abel, a professional prankster who founded the Society for Indecency to Naked Animals (SINA), advocating for the clothing of all animals for the sake of decency. This long-running hoax fooled many, including some media outlets, into believing there was a genuine movement to put pants on horses and dresses on chickens!

Even esteemed institutions haven't been immune to the allure of pranking. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has a storied tradition of elaborate "hacks," as they call them. One of the most memorable involved placing a police car on top of the Institute's Great Dome, complete with a dummy officer and a box of donuts inside. This feat of engineering and humour required meticulous planning and execution, embodying the spirit of creativity and mischief that defines the best practical jokes.

These historical hijinks remind us that, despite our differences, humour is a universal language. From the halls of ancient empires to the ivory towers of academia, the tradition of practical joking has endured, bringing joy, surprise, and sometimes befuddlement to the unsuspecting.

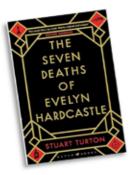
As we approach April 1st this year, let's

remember the lessons taught by history's greatest pranksters: to approach life with a sense of humour, a dash of creativity, and, when necessary, a well-timed whoopee cushion.



By Tom Hancock





The Seven Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle by Stuart Turton

Our hero awakens in a mysterious, damp forest, clad in an unfamiliar tuxedo and inhabiting a body that isn't his own. With no recollection of his

identity or how he came to be in this situation, he makes his way to Blackheath House, and soon discovers he is Aiden Bishop, trapped there for a purpose. A masked figure reveals to him that a disguised murder is set to occur that day. Bishop has eight attempts to unravel it, reliving the same day in different bodies, each termed a "host." He retains memories from each host, but failure to identify the killer by the eighth cycle means a reset to day one, with all memories wiped, a cycle he has already undergone numerous times.

As Bishop gradually begins to make sense of his predicament, he learns of competitors: two others at the country house party are also inhabiting foreign souls, each racing to solve the murder to escape the time loop. As if this was not enough peril, a relentless psychopath is also pursuing him, threatening each of his hosts.

Author Turton masterfully orchestrates a narrative replete with diverse, enigmatic characters, while scattering random clues throughout. The 'rules' of the story rules evolve as Bishop navigates his way through each day. I'm doubting that many readers will solve the mystery before the final plot twist.

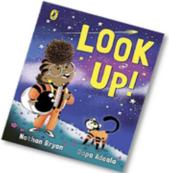
It's Agatha Christie, Cluedo, and Groundhog Day, with a twist of time loop chaos. It takes a while to orientate yourself within the story but it's well worth the effort. Turton's debut novel is inventive, chaotic, and brilliantly bonkers. Buckle up and hold on tight.

Look Up! by Nathan Bryon and illustrated by Dapo Adeola

Rocket dreams of becoming the most brilliant star-catcher, and space explorer in the world, like her idol Mae Jemison, the first African-American woman in space. Fizzing with excitement about an imminent meteor shower, Rocket makes an announcement about it over the supermarket loudspeaker while the cashier is distracted. She makes and distributes flyers to all the shoppers. despite her older brother Jamal's disapproval and embarrassment. Jamal is usually engrossed in his phone and video games and finds Rocket annoying. When he's too absorbed in gaming to take Rocket to the park to see the meteor shower, Rocket faces a dilemma. But an unexpected visitor at their door turns out to be a delightful could save the day in the most delightful manner.

Bryon and Adeola's captivating picture book introduces us to chatty, Rocket, a character whose passion for space is allconsuming. Adeola's characterful illustrations capture Jamal's angsty teenage moodiness and Rocket's

excitement about stargazing. Packed with space facts and insights into meteors. this book also beautifully depicts family dynamics. sibling bonds. and a young airl's contagious zeal for the cosmos.



By Tash Donovan

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| 1 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 9 | 2 | 7 | 8 | 5 |



Shakespeare Day celebrates the iconic playwright and we thought we'd join in by sharing some intriguing facts.

He wanted to be an

actor - William moved to London, closely followed

by his brother Edmund who pursued the same dream of treading the boards. However, Shakespeare found his true calling in writing, quickly becoming adept at crafting tragedies and comedies that captivated audiences.

He was prolific - Shakespeare's literary output was remarkable; he authored at least 37 plays that we are aware of, which works out to an impressive rate of about two plays per year. Additionally, he crafted many poems, particularly sonnets, publishing 154 of them in 1609 alone.

He survived a pandemic – Like us, Shakespeare experienced the devastation of a pandemic, surviving several outbreaks of the bubonic plague. Tragically, his son Hamnet succumbed to the disease at the age of 11, a loss that deeply influenced Shakespeare's work, infusing his plays



with themes of illness, death, and mourning. It's speculated that the character Hamlet was named in homage to his late son.

He invented words and phrases - Shakespeare also contributed numerous phrases

to the English language, including "vanished into thin air," "wild goose chase," "not a wink of sleep," and "break the ice." Known for his wit, he crafted memorable insults such as "Thy face is not worth sunburning," "Thou art as fat as butter," and the magnificent "You scullion! You rampallian! You fustilarian! I'll tickle your catastrophe!"

He was a savvy businessman - Beyond his literary genius, Shakespeare understood how to get ahead in business. He was a co-owner of the Lord Chamberlain's Men and the Globe Theatre, an open-air venue established in London in 1599. He also ventured into the more luxurious Blackfriars Theatre, underscoring his dual talent as both a visionary playwright and a shrewd entrepreneur.

By Kate McCarthy



Gut Feeling

Why IBS is a pain...literally



foods we eat. It knows which ones require the release of bile for instance and which ones don't. The enteric nervous system, which governs all this, functions like a second brain and is very finely attuned. It has to be bombarded with food, drink, and air, it's a constant challenge for the gut to maintain constancy.

Unglamorous they may be, but our guts are complex and clever. The gut is an hydraulic engineering system with its own brain and nervous system; its own immune system and its own hormoneproducing system. It deals with digestion and absorption and defends us against infection.

Gut contents are squeezed along by muscular action. The various parts are separated by sphincters, little muscular trapdoors, which regulate speed and direction of travel. Food takes about 24 hours to travel through a healthy gut.

Because the gut is so complex perhaps it's unsurprising that it malfunctions quite easily.

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is the most common problem experienced and up to 1 in 5 of us may suffer it at some point. Sufferers can experience constipation, diarrhoea, bloating, nausea, and colic. But why?

Gut muscles mix and move the contents, but the gut has to know what it's dealing with, so it knows which digestive hormones to release, when to release them and in what quantities (it doesn't want to digest itself!)

Amazingly, it can detect different molecular structures which make up the Our brain pays close attention to the 'gut brain' and researchers have found that if the enteric nervous system is stimulated it can help depression, epilepsy and even memory. In fact, 90% of gut nerves take information to the brain and only 10% receive information from it.

IBS has historically been thought of as a psychological or neurotic problem but in fact scientists are now discovering that the close communication between brain and gut means that stress can cause very real problems, impairing the nerve function and causing marked sensory pain. If we know that a sufferer experiences more pain when they are stressed we can use neurochemicals to block the response. Tricyclics are particularly helpful agents.

There is also a relationship with serotonin (often connected with depression). In fact, 95% of the body's serotonin is found in the gut. Detector cells in the lining of the gut squirt serotonin which excites the nerve fibres. Some people cannot turn this process off again though which can either cause diarrhoea, or, if the nerves are stimulated to the point of exhaustion, constipation.

People with IBS often give up hope of relieving their discomfort, but there is now good quality medical help available, so consult your GP. You don't have to suffer.

By Louise Addison

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