



INSPECTOR GENERALS' MISSIVE WEEK 32

Week 32 IG Missive – 29th October 2020



This “Second Spike” seems to be rather more real than we had hoped as Slough is now under Tier 2 restrictions and the South Bucks and Windsor&Maidenhead nearby areas are showing signs of going that way. Tier 1 allows our limited meetings to continue but Tier 2 rules only allow the Rule of Six out of doors. The Slough masonic centre is now closed and while Aylesbury, Beaconsfield, Bletchley, Buckingham, Marlow and North Crawley might still remain viable for a while, it does seem possible that areas of Buckinghamshire may go to Tier 2. At that point, those of us of a sensible inclination will probably lock ourselves back down for a while and see what develops. Procedures are well in hand for our virtual visit from Supreme Council on 16th November and I trust as many of you as are available will join the Zoom meeting and help to welcome the Sovereign Grand Commander to Buckinghamshire. District Recorder Peter will be circulating the required information in due course and it should be a very interesting “meeting”. Not as enjoyable as a real one perhaps but a great honour to have Supreme Council speaking to us.

We are having a “rehearsal” for that meeting next Wednesday, 4 November as part of the virtual meeting of our Higher Degrees Chapter No 1176 and all members of the Province are encouraged to join us. Most Wise Sovereign Peter Corbett will

call us to order at 7.00 pm for some elements of admin followed by my Inspector General’s Forum. Those of you who have already experienced a Zoom meeting will be aware of the potential little traps which can affect such gatherings and DR Peter will be circulating some useful tips on attendance (remaining mute unless called upon to speak and so on); these tips will enable us to conduct ourselves more competently.

Stephen Knight was once again our star answerer and I thank him and all of you for your efforts. Here are my answers to week 31’s questions:

1. Oscar Wilde used the alias of Sebastian Melmoth in his later years, taking the surname Melmoth from his Great Uncle Charles Maturin’s 1820 book “Melmoth the Wanderer”.
2. Germany became a nation state in 1871 (known as Deutches Reich) under Prussian domination.
3. George II – Born in Hanover, prince-elector of the Holy Roman Empire and also the last British monarch to lead an army in battle in the Battle of Dettingen in 1743.
4. A tog is a measure of the warmth of an eiderdown or duvet and represents the thermal resistance of a material. One tog is equal to 10 times the temperature difference between 2 sides of a material when the flow of heat is one watt per square metre.
5. At the top of Mt Everest, water boils at around 68°C (154°F). This is because “boiling” is defined as the point at which the internal vapour pressure of the water is greater than the atmospheric pressure outside so that water vapour bubbles up from the interior of the water liquid. The Vapour Pressure of water increases as temperature increases but because the atmospheric pressure on Everest is around a third of that at sea level the temperature at which the water vapour starts to bubble is much lower.
6. Pencil leads are graphite, a form of carbon whose atomic weight is 12. Since I have 24 grams of an element of atomic weight 12, there must be 12.044×10^{23} atoms present (Avogadro’s number x 2).

7. Much modern petrol contains a proportion of ethanol to increase the octane of the fuel mix. Ethanol is strongly hygroscopic and when stored unused for extended periods it becomes de-graded with water and can corrode mower internals. The old “leaded” petrol contained tetra-ethyl lead to improve octane rating but was this highly poisonous in manufacture and not good for the environment (but was good for valve seats and other engine bits).
8. Booker T Jones was named after Booker Taliaferro Washington though Jones’ birth certificate just has Booker T on it so technically his initial doesn’t stand for anything. The MGs claimed their name came from seeing MG motor cars while forming the group, but the Stax record label’s PR empire claimed it stood for Memphis Group (and MG cars had refused to sponsor them).
9. The predominant gender difference in many hoverfly species is that the eyes of males are together towards the top of the head while females’ eyes are more separated to the side of the head.
10. Uprturned wing tips reduce the spanwise flow of air caused by the differing air pressures on the upper and lower surfaces of the wing. Increased span also reduces the effect of this flow, but wider aircraft need wider space in hangars, parking stands and ground manoeuvring areas so winglets are more useful.

Here are this week’s posers:

1. Why did Concorde need a droop-snoot?
2. How many keywords are there in the python programming language?
3. Why can you not type a credit card number into an Excel spreadsheet?
4. How many years elapsed between Augustus declaring himself the first Emperor of Rome in 31 BC and the Crucifixion in 33AD?
5. When was “the greatest epic poem in the English language” actually first transcribed into modern English?
6. For the invention of which word is Karel Capek responsible and what does it mean?
7. What are the 6 elements of the United States Armed Forces?
8. What is “standard gauge” in railway terms and how was it said to have been chosen?
9. What is the “Salisbury Convention”?
10. What is alleged to be the origin of the phrase “brass monkey weather”

Finally, this week, even if we do get raised a Tier in the coming days (or even weeks perhaps) let us never forget that we are all available on the phone, are all suffering the same way and, with our own care and God’s help, we will all come through to full meetings eventually.

Stay Safe

Peter Harborne 33°
Inspector General
Buckinghamshire