



### INSPECTOR GENERALS' MISSIVE WEEK 41



31<sup>st</sup> December - So, we are about to enter a new year and let us hope it is better than 2020 has been. With Tier 4 restrictions having now been imposed over most regions, the importance of the government and NHS entreaties on social distancing and fastidious personal hygiene should be obvious to everyone.

I hope all of us had a bearable Christmas, albeit scaled down from that which we usually enjoy, and are looking forward to vaccination as the obvious way out of the current enforced isolation and the suspension of masonic activity. Our motives for being members of the various Orders of the movement are as strong as ever they were, and I am sure we all yearn to resume proper meetings as soon as is permitted. However, I am equally sure we all realise that the safety of society as a whole is more important than our wish to associate masonically. As I said last time, I regard the current restrictions as an investment in the future; once society is safer, then the easier it will be for us again to contribute fully to its welfare. Hunker down as directed, hope for an early improvement in the Spring and have faith that redemption is on its way.

Rob Chaproniere was the best responder this week. Here are my answers to last week's questions:

1. Bruegels' painting has snow on the ground which is unlikely in Bethlehem.
2. Balthazar, Gaspar and Melchior are the names ascribed (in ~500AD) to the 3 wise men although they are not named in Matthew's gospel – the only place in the King James Bible that "wise men from the east" are mentioned at all.
3. Leonardo did not produce a painting called "The Epiphany" though his unfinished work "The Adoration of the Magi" portrays what the Western churches regard as the same event – other church disciplines describe Epiphany differently.
4. The only songs to have been Christmas number one singles twice are "Bohemian Rhapsody" (1975 and 1991) and "Mary's Boy Child" (1957 and 1978). "Do They Know It's Christmas?" has been number 1 three times (1984, 1989 and 2004) with different iterations of Band Aid.
5. Sir Isaac Newton, Lew Grade, Kenny Everett and Humphrey Bogart were all born on Dec 25<sup>th</sup>.
6. Darker later. Sunset starts to get later by mid-December so evenings start getting lighter before the solstice, but sunrise continues to get later till early January. Dec 21<sup>st</sup> is only the shortest day; the changed directions of sunrise and sunset times happen on different dates around the solstice.
7. Eastern Christian churches celebrate Christmas on December 25<sup>th</sup> in the old Julian calendar which is 7<sup>th</sup> January in our Gregorian calendar.
8. Every year, September and December start on the same day of the week and so do February, March and November, and April and July. In a leap year, January joins April and July and February joins with August. The only months which never start the month on the same day of the week as any other in the same year are May and June.
9. Charlemagne (Holy Roman Empire), William the Conqueror (England) and Boleslaw II (Poland) were all crowned on December 25<sup>th</sup> (in 800, 1066 and 1076 respectively).

10. Cassini released the Huygens probe lander on 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> December 2004 - it landed on Titan on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2005.

Here are this week's research subjects:

1. Why was John Harrison's clock "H4" so important?
2. When was the Greenwich time signal first transmitted and whose idea was it?
3. Which was the longest year in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century?
4. How many time zones are there in the United Kingdom and its dependent territories?
5. Which classic artist of the early 1600s was knighted by both Spain and England?
6. What, familiarly/hereditarily, links Purbeck, Buckingham, Anglesey and Denbigh?
7. What was the co-incidence in the title of the Abba hit song which knocked Queen from the number 1 singles list in January 1976?
8. What was distinctive about the film known as NOTDOT?
9. At what time in the UK does Nepal enter 2021?
10. Which country adopted the Gregorian calendar most recently?

Maintain the mantra - Hands, Face, Space. Take plenty of exercise and Keep Phoning Around.

Stay Safe

Peter Harborne 33°

Inspector General

Buckinghamshire