



INSPECTOR GENERALS' MISSIVE WEEK 42



7th January - Happy New Year to all. We have just been put into Lockdown 3, Tier 4 or Threat Level 5 or whatever the correct term is. Little difference for most of us I suspect - we must just hunker down and wait for our GP surgery to phone us with a vaccination appointment in due course. What effect, if any, being vaccinated may have on our permitted behaviour thereafter remains to be seen but even if we do become immune for some time afterwards, caution may still be the best course until a high proportion of the community are similarly protected.

As a new year begins, we would normally be making sure our diaries are completed with all our various Orders' meetings for the next 12 months. However, 2021 appears to have no more potential for the resumption of proper meetings than was evident during the last few months of 2020. There would normally be 4 Rose Croix meetings this month, but the Supreme Council's current suspension of meetings continues for the present – and government legislation seems to forbid it until the end of February anyway so we must hold our breath on that for a while. No-one spotted the unusual date associated with Nepal's New Year in Q.9, but I suppose I was only asking for the time and not the date. Nick Wilson just squeezed ahead of Stephen Knight and Rob Chaproniere for accuracy. I hear

that Stephen won the pre-Christmas Royal Arch quiz and got a bottle as well as doing his Provincial Almoner work so well done him.

Here are my answers to last week's research subjects:

1. John Harrison designed a clock which remained accurate whilst at sea, no matter how rough the weather. It was used by mariners to calculate their longitude which, until Harrison's timekeeper was produced, was very complex to derive accurately.
2. The BBC broadcast the first set of time signal "pips" on 5th February 1924 and they were invented by John Reith, then head of the BBC, and Frank Watson Dyson, the Astronomer Royal. They were originally 6 equal-length pips of 1/10 sec duration but in 1972, the final pip was extended to ½ a second with the beginning of the last pip defining the start of the hour. However, they are delayed if received on DAB radios or the internet so are no longer accurate.
3. The earth's rotation had been reducing by about 3 thousandths of a second per year and in 1972 "leap seconds" were introduced to align the official "atomic time" more closely with "earth time." In 1972, there were 2 leap seconds added as well as a leap day, so the year was longer than any other 20th century year. However, in the last few years the Earth has very slightly sped up again so a negative leap second is under consideration.
4. The United Kingdom has 14 overseas and dependent territories with 8 different time zones in winter and 9 in summer (when Gibraltar moves to GMT+2).
5. Sir Peter Paul Rubens was knighted by both Philip IV of Spain and Charles I of England.
6. The 4 children of Sir George Villiers and Mary Villiers, Countess of Buckingham, were granted or acquired the titles of Viscount Purbeck, 1st Duke of Buckingham, Earl of Anglesey and Countess of Denbigh in the early 17th century.

7. Abba's song which displaced Queen from the number one single spot in January 1976 was "Mamma Mia", words coincidentally included in the lyrics of Queen's Bohemian Rhapsody.
8. NOTDOT is the shortened version of a film with allegedly the longest (English) title in film history. It was made by James Riffel as a spoof horror film by removing the script/soundtrack of "Night of the Living Dead" and substituting his own comedic script to the original film images.
9. Nepal will enter their New Year at 1815GMT time on Tuesday 13th April 2021. There are 9 different religious New Year celebrations days in Nepal, but the official "national" New Year is Nepal Sambat, on the first day of the lunar month Navavarsha in 2021; this is 14th April.
10. As an austerity measure, Saudi Arabia adopted the Gregorian calendar for paying civil servants in October 2016 (from its Islamic Umm al-Qura calendar which is still used for other purposes).

Here are this week's posers:

1. What mathematical formula can be used to calculate a car's minimum stopping distance?
2. Between what times is it forbidden to sound one's horn when driving/riding in a built-up area?
3. Is one allowed to stop one's vehicle on an "Urban Clearway?"
4. Which law makes it illegal to drive on the pavement or footpath?
5. If speed is reduced in level flight, what happens to a conventional aircraft at the point of stall?
6. Which Punch staff member is credited with being the first artist to be known as a "cartoonist?"
7. What were Ed McBain's real names?
8. Which company devised the slogan "never knowingly undersold?"
9. Which character in which TV series had a "Major Mass Spec"?
10. Who was the first Lord Mayor of London?

Maintain the mantra - Hands, Face, Space. Take Exercise where you can and Keep Phoning Around.
Stay Safe

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