



INSPECTOR GENERALS' MISSIVE WEEK 30



IG Missive 15th October 2020

Another “milestone” as we are now at week 30 since the lockdown and the situation is as bad as it has ever been in most places north of Buckinghamshire. Down here we seem to be weathering the Covid storm a little better than most (though cases in Wycombe have risen from 22 per 100,000 to 87 per 100,000 in the last week) but whether that is because we are following the government advice better or is just some freak of the weather, population density or mental attitude would be a good subject for dinner party conversation – if only we were having such events. I rather like the new mantra of “Hands, Face, Space” because it seems snappier and easier to remember – perhaps those attending raves or other large gatherings could try to act on it!

Stephen Knight gets the accolade again this week and if Google didn't seem to assume we meant Union rather than League when asking for information about Rugby, he would have got the first perfect 10. Nick Wilson was also close. Here are the answers to last week:

1. Welshman Billy Boston scored the most rugby tries with 571 (in rugby League).
2. The first non-stop transatlantic flight was made by Alcock and Brown.
3. Alick Isaacs was brought up in the Gorbals and went on to discover interferon, one of the cytokines which promote immunity response to viruses.
4. The actual Anointing and Consecration of the Queen in 1953 followed historic custom in being carried out under a golden canopy and thereby concealed from “the common view”.
5. The Dutch East Indies was the 4th largest oil exporter in the world in 1942 and the Japanese government needed the oil to support its war effort.
6. Scottish composer James Barr set Robert Tannahill's poem “Thou Bonny Wood o' Craigielee” to music in 1805. Thomas Bulch re-arranged it in 1894 as a marching tune and Banjo Paterson wrote the words for it after hearing Christine Macpherson recall the tune after a race meeting.
7. The Edict of Milan in 313 AD was issued by Constantine and Licinius, Roman Emperors of the Western and Eastern Roman Empires respectively (the empire having been split by Diocletian). The edict recognised Christianity as a lawful religion and no longer subject to persecution, and the Christian Church's property was returned. It was the beginning of religious tolerance.
8. Heraldry colours are Azure(blue), Sable (black), Gules (red), Vert (green) and Purpure (Purple).

9. The Antarctic desert is the largest in the world and the McMurdo Dry Valleys there are the driest (so the answer to both largest and driest is “Antarctica”).
10. Antonio Meucci probably really invented the telephone and was granted a patent in 1871, 3 years before Alexander Graham Bell and Elisha Gray filed their patents. It is said that if Meucci had been able to pay the \$10 necessary to extend his patent, Bell and Gray would not have been permitted to file their applications (and a lot of lawyers would have been much poorer).

Now for this week’s research items:

1. Last week was about deserts – this week, which place has the highest average number of days with rain at a permanently inhabited location?
2. On what date was the lowest ever temperature on earth recorded?
3. There are many gases and fluids which can be burnt to produce energy – what is the only common molecule in the results of such burning?
4. Which is the oldest surviving masonic lodge room built specifically for freemasonic purposes?
5. On 1st January 1931, all speed limits for cars and motorcycles were abolished. What happened to the number of annual road fatalities over the next 5 years?
6. What is the fundamental principle which underpins the Davy Lamp?
7. Does the BCG vaccination that most of us received in childhood affect our susceptibility to Covid?
8. By what mechanism did the US abolish prohibition?
9. What is unusual about the Skinners and Merchant Taylors Livery companies?
10. Why do computers work in Hexadecimal?

Do keep in touch with friends and colleagues in our various Orders, especially those whom you know not to be active emailers. If you haven’t yet tried Zoom, do look into how to attend a Zoom meeting. Peter Moody and I will set up a rehearsal event before our 16th November “meeting” with Supreme Council. Do also keep sending Peter your potential questions to put to the Supreme Council member who will be addressing us and responding to questions. We need to repay the effort Duke Street is expending to set up the District visits by making the Supreme Council member’s appearance interesting and enjoyable for him as well as for us. Let us hope to make Buckinghamshire one of the more interesting and supportive Districts to visit.

Stay Safe

Peter Harborne 33°

Inspector General

Buckinghamshire