

VOICES FROM THE WORLD OF QUIZ

The Quiz as a Community Service

This is the time of year when your Vicar should wish everyone in the Parish a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. But this year: I. Can. Not.

The December Issue of the Parish Magazine should never ever be the Place where your Vicar vents his feelings. But I have no choice.

In my time I have been a Scout Master, an organiser of Jumble Sales, a Prison Visitor, and a Chaplain at Eton College.. I thought I had seen the darkest side of human nature. But I was wrong. *That* is what I witnessed at last Saturday's Christmas Charity Quiz.

I witnessed the Quiz Master – Dame Alison Beaulieu Hesketh, who had so graciously donated her precious time – heckled and barracked by a number of Teams for misreading questions. Perhaps she did? But who among us hasn't mislaid their tri-focals and done the best they can?

Worse followed. Certain Teams used one tiny and forgivable error as a pretext to abuse their mobile phones – *despite all the laminated notices forbidding it* - to challenge Dame Alison's rulings. This led to acrimonious disputes between adjacent tables over the relative merit of local Football Teams. Some hotheads decided honour could only be satisfied by taking the dispute out into the car park. And did.

In their absence I politely reminded all Teams of the Rule that the Quiz Master's decision is always final. To which some wag called out “Even if he's an Idiot?”

It wasn't the time to inform him that it is a rude, ungrateful and inaccurate way to address Dame Alison, our Local Police and Crime Commissioner. But sadly this set the tone for the rest of the evening.

During the break a number of young ladies wearing golden tiaras and dressed in pink teddy bear suits with black undergarments, invaded our Church Hall. One kept screaming that her fiance was *a cheating so-and-so* and if he really was *doing our quiz with that cheating so-and-so Nirvana*, tomorrow's wedding was off since by then he would be one or two short of a bridegroom's most precious possessions. When a young man heard this he jumped to his feet and fled from the building, chased by the screaming teddy bears.

The violence having re-commenced outside I had no option but to ring the police. I waited ages for a reply before I could report the fracas. “Fracking is a serious offence, if not on authorised premises,” said the Officer. “I'll get a car down right away. Where is this occurring, sir ” I told the fellow I meant fisticuffs, not drilling, and that it was happening in the grounds of the Parish church of St George of the Cross.

“St George of the Very Very Cross, sir, by the sound of it,” laughed the man and he put the phone down. But eventually the police did arrive, alerted by our neighbours, and proceeded to arrest everyone in sight. I looked to Dame Alison for support but she must have slipped out the back way.

I must break off now since my 'brief' has arrived. I will rely on my assistant to complete the report for the current, and probably my last, Parish Magazine.

CORRECTIONS

The Vicar has asked me to confirm some of the answers from last Saturday's Quiz. He also wishes to convey his thanks for the message of sympathy he received.

Delia Devonshire, Curate

Frida Kahloo **was** a Mexican artist, but she did **not** have 6 sisters called Saturda, Sunda, Monda, Tuesda, Wednesda or Thursda.

“The 39 Steps” is novel by John Buchan, **not** a kind of Tango, or a programme for treating alcoholism.

“Hancock's Half Hour” was a BBC Radio and TV comedy, **not** the amount of time the previous Health Secretary set aside to get on with the job.

The Sperm Whale is classified by Biologists as an 'even-toed ungulate' even though it has no toes. Fans of Lacrosse, Netball, Football and Rugby Union, will know better than I do where to check statistics for their favourite sport.

(Also see Mr Jenkins' obs below.)

Sadly we will have to spend some of the charity money to remove the graffiti of the tap-dancing Sperm Whale spray-painted on the side chapel. (But do try to see it before it goes. It's Brilliant!)

Mr Jenkins (Church Warden and Question Setter) writes:

“Despite the lengthy protestations of Mr Bounder, supported disloyally by Mrs Jenkins I am sorry to say, the Merchant of Venice in Shakespeare's play is Antonio, not Shylock, who is a money lender, and not a merchant.

Again, despite the pair's assertions, Shakespeare was not *stupidly stating the obvious* when he wrote, “Uneasy lies the head that wears a Crown.” The Bard was **not** reminding Kings and Queens to remove their headwear before retiring to bed. He was using synecdoche. A metaphor where a part – the Crown – stands for the whole - the institution of Monarchy. I would like the Parish Newsletter to set the record straight on this point. And I apologise for my own part in the prolonged and noisy dispute that helped to lower the tone of the event.

In conclusion I would add that, ironically, I did in fact experience a troubled night myself after the Quiz. On waking I found that a cardboard crown made from a cornflake packet had been super-glued to my head. My wife being away, I would appreciate any advice from parishioners on how to remove the thing painlessly. Thank you.