

## What to Do This Autumn

It is now September and we start think about indoor pursuits and visits to museums and galleries. There is so much to see and with painstakingly researched notes and information cwg has compiled a handy list for you of the top attractions in this country and beyond. You may therefore decide not to leave the comfort of your own home at all and just read the notes instead.

### The Great Bed of Ware Late C16th V&A London.

Early example of the Parker Knoll style. Eight feet wide.

Possible reference to the bed in Shakespeare. 'Antony and Cleopatra' Act 1 Scene 8.

'Egypt, my Egypt, To lie with thee in an outsized bed,  
I am bewitched, bothered and bewildered,  
And 'tis better than being in Rome.'

A number of famous people have slept in this bed including John and Yoyo Lennon when they staged their famous 2 week 'love-ins' in Montreal and Amsterdam in 1969 as a protest against the rising cost of their Council Tax bill. The Bed of Ware was also the inspiration for Tracy Emin when she constructed her iconic piece 'Everyone I have Ever Slept With 1963-1995', tragically lost in a fire in 2004. (Readers may recall the scandal when Emin's disorderly bed was vandalised. Apparently her Mother broke into the Gallery and, when no one was looking, tidied it up!) It has been variously claimed that there is room in the bed for four couple, five or even six couples. Can now be hired out for what a representative of the V&A has coyly described as 'mischief making.'

The bed presents problems in finding suitable bed linen. However we have tracked down a special offer in TK Maxx. 'Bedding set, comes with eight pillow cases (optional), in a variety of colours including Plantagenet pink and Tudor turquoise'. Suggestion: buy two sets and sew together. May just fit.

### The Sutton Hoo Helmet Early C7th (?) British Museum

The inspiration for police riot headgear but ultimately found not to be suitable for modern day policing as there are holes so that the wearer can see where s/he is going but affording no protection from passing missiles. Police forces up and down the country have therefore refused to wear them as not fit for purpose. One officer who wishes to remain anonymous told us, 'Modern policing is a dangerous and exacting job. They tried to provide us with sunglasses from SpecSavers to wear on top of the eye-holes but when we wore them the public just laughed at us.'

### *And Now All Things Cartographical*

### Nebra Sky Disc c1800-1600BC Halle State Museum of Prehistory in Germany

'One of the most important archaeological finds of the C20th' Earliest known calendar and interpretation of astronomy. Nice bit of kit but unfortunately not very accurate and a piece has fallen off so you would probably be best advised to get your 2025 calendar from WH Smith as usual. Or visit Stonehenge at the Summer/Winter Solstice. Jaw-droppingly precise.

### Babylonian Map of the World. C9th BC but possibly 8<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> BC British Museum

For this you will be required to read cuneiform. Map might be useful if you are planning a

trip up the Euphrates. With 'swamps' clearly marked. Less useful for travel in regions beyond Mesopotamia which are rather vaguely depicted but if you want a holiday in Babylon this map is a must. Don't forget to read the stuff on the back of the tablet about distant regions that are probably best avoided. 'Too far, too cold, poor facilities, over-priced.'

#### Mappa Mundi C1300. Hereford Cathedral

Primarily a religious interpretation of the world so you are advised to use Google maps whenever possible in planning your next big travel adventure. The mappa is anti-Semitic and misogynistic in some of its depictions so could provoke rioting and inappropriate postings online.

#### Grave of Richard III 1452-1485

Richard III is buried in Leicester Cathedral (2015) much to the annoyance of York Cathedral and sparking the Wars of the Roses between the Yorkists and the East Midlands. The most interesting part of any visit is to find the car park under which King Richard was originally interred. The area of the car park has been granted historic protection. Parking permits still required. When Richard was found he was lying rather spookily just beneath a painted letter R put there by the Council in the car park to denote CAR PARK. Oscar-winning actor Benedict Cumberbatch is a third cousin of the King sixteen times removed.

#### *Interesting add-on fact: Other stars who are related to royalty-*

Guy Richie, prolific British film maker and Madonna's ex -related to Edward I

Tilda Swinton of regal demeanour -related to Scotland's Robert the Bruce

Richard Gere, lauded American actor -Elizabeth II

Angelina Jolie, blockbuster actress -Elizabeth II

Brad Pitt, Hollywood celebrity and Angelina Jolie's ex -Elizabeth II

Beyonce, American entertainment royalty -Elizabeth II

Hugh Grant British acting royalty -Elizabeth II

#### *Two Examples of Ladies with Bits Missing.*

#### The Venus de Milo Louvre Paris C2nd BC? (Disputed)

Aphrodite? Nemesis? Sappho? Woman holding a piece of fruit? (See below). Disputed.

Sculptor- disputed. Leading authority-Adolf Furtwangler, (yes, his real name).

Unfortunately missing both arms.'The original position of these missing arms is uncertain'.

Wikipedia. Cwg would like to suggest that the arms were probably attached to the shoulders as most of ours are. Hand however found nearby holding an apple.

On sale for \$4.75 million or roughly £3,605,928.9. Now if Thames Water found something like this lying at the bottom of one of their lakes.....

#### Girl With a Pearl Earring c1665 Johannes Vermeer The Mauritshuis Museum The Hague

Another example of something missing although arguably there is an earring on her other ear and we just cannot see it. Alopecia sufferer? Hair, eyebrows, eyelashes non-existent. Just asking. Not to be confused with Rubens' 'Girl with an Eel Purring' or 'Girl with an Ear Peering').

.....And if you have time you could turn your attention to numerous other works of art. Don't get us started on the Bayeux Tapestry, The Book of Kells, the Dead Sea Scrolls and Banksy.