

The Lockdown Lighthouse

THE INTERIM NEWSLETTER FROM THE FRIENDS OF STANDEN ESTATE:

NUTS ABOUT STANDEN
and missing it loads



No 5 – 30th April 2020

In this edition of The Lockdown Lighthouse:

WITCH PUZZLE SOLUTION
SOCIAL DISTANCING
MORE BRAIN TEASERS
LIFE WITHOUT STANDEN
BEAUTIFUL PICTURES...
AND BEAUTIFUL SCULPTURES
MORE COMEDY MOMENTS
CURIOUS CHEMISTRY
DON'T BE FOOLED
SAGA OF THE DUCKLINGS
IT COULD BE WORSE
MASS OBSERVATION
AND FINALLY...

Did you get it right?

It took me three attempts, but I got there in the end. My old Maths teacher would be proud of me. As promised, here is the answer to the puzzle Susan set.

First Row:

A witch, carrying a wand and a spoon, is 45 divided by 3 = 15

Second Row:

A wand is 21 divided by 3 = 7

Third Row:

There are 4 brooms in this row, not 3. A broom is 12 divided by 4 = 3

Final Row:

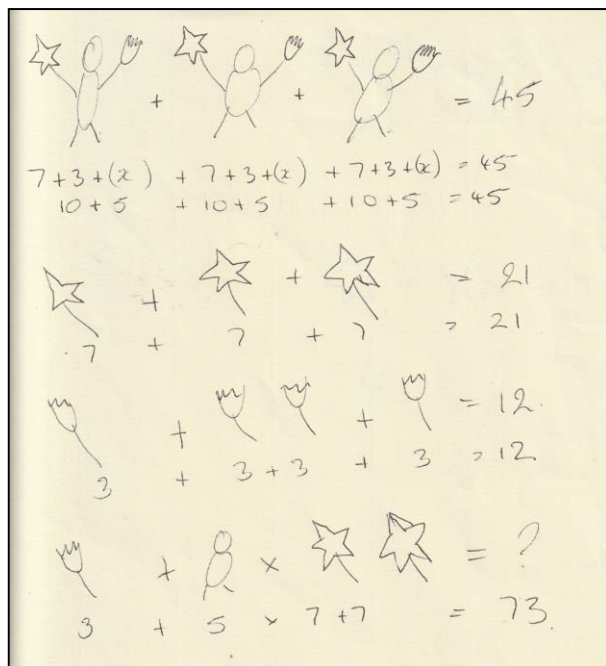
The witch is not carrying a wand or broom, therefore the witch is

$$15 - 7 - 3 = 5$$

Also, there are 2 wands, not 1. 2 wands are $2 \times 7 = 14$

Final equation:

$$\text{Broom} + (\text{Witch} \times 2 \text{ Wands}) = 3 + (5 \times 14) = 73$$



The first person to submit the right answer was Roger Ohison, whose workings were artistically set out as shown:

The next five to get the right answer were Mike Chapple, Marion Dennett, John and Judi De Lang and Christine and Roy Page. Susan commented:

Well done to all of them and even if you didn't get it correct, I hope it entertained you for a while. If you're interested there are lots of pictures of witches, brooms and stars and solutions

on the internet - it is a well-known puzzle.

The rules are not for everyone, it seems

We are now all used to the concept of social distancing. My money is on this being one of the Oxford English Dictionary's new words (or phrases) for inclusion in this year's edition.

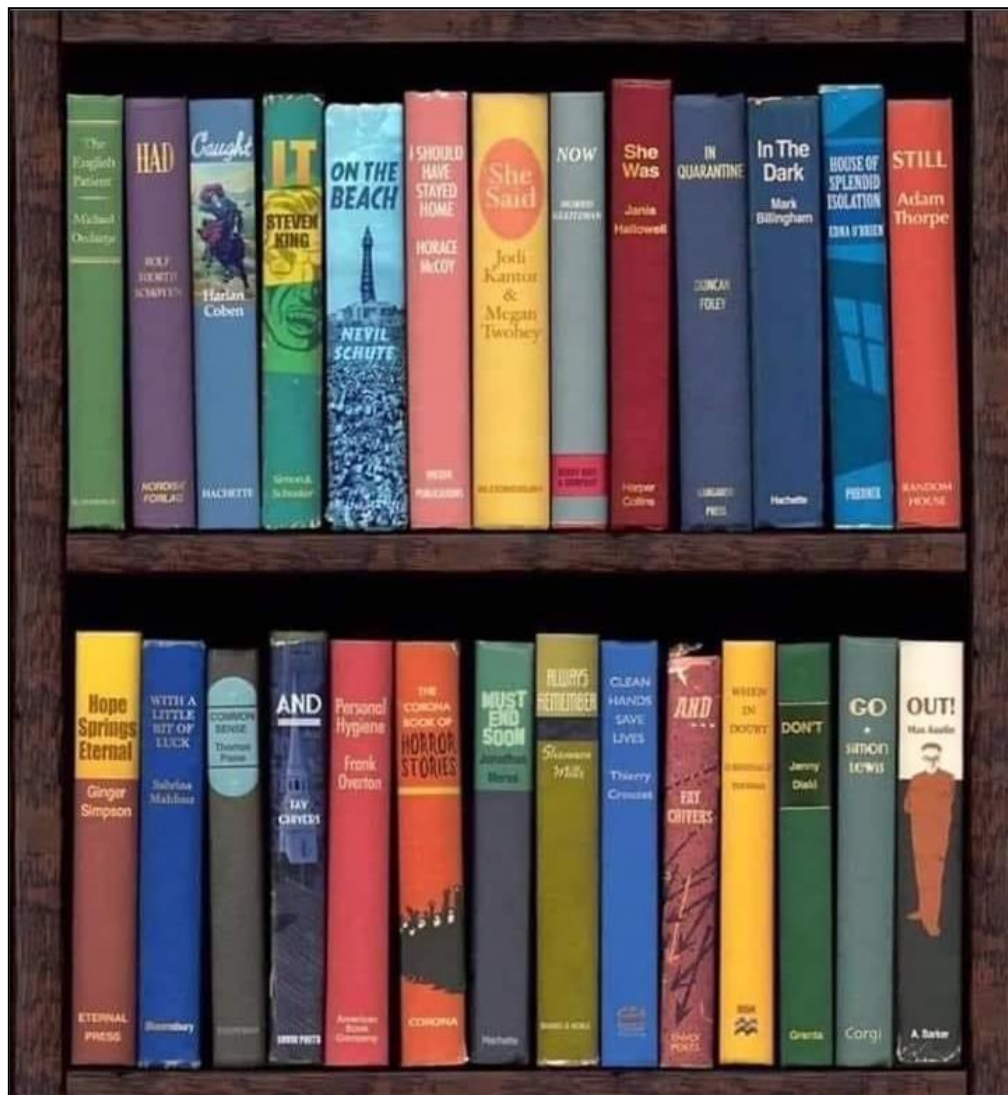


However, as these pictures, sent in by Martin Tasker show, not everyone is obeying the rules.



Martin has been an indefatigable contributor to this week's edition. He also sent me a clever arrangement of book titles which neatly sums up the predicament we currently

find ourselves in. Someone obviously combed a very extensive library to put this together.



Another puzzle and some solutions

Not to be outdone, here's a language-based puzzle for you, although I'm probably setting myself up for people to find other words than the one I'm thinking of. What one word in the English language has two, totally opposite meanings? The spelling is the same for both.

Here also are the answers to the Standen cryptic clues set last week.

As a result of the 3 week lockdown news "Say it quick as a reaction to the extra 3 weeks" - Rhodi Dell

"B H.... smoked but not Benson & Hedges" - Bee Hives

"He didn't build this to upstage the café" - Ben's Barn

"It's not for children" - The Nursery

"Duchess of Cornwall strides out?" - Camelia steps

Thanks again to Bob Fielden for these. Bob also send in some musings with a distinctly Wordsworthian (is that a word?) flavour.

*I wandered lonely as a cloud (social distancing)
That floats o'er vales and hills (are we allowed to go that far?)
When all at once I saw a crowd (inform the police!)
A host (pub lock in?) of golden daffodils (missed these last month, missing
this month's shimmering bluebells, next month will miss... at least by
October I can see the golden leaves fall from the trees in the garden!)*

He did query whether Covid 19 could alter our creative processes if we are confined for too long. That's a social experiment I don't really want to be part of.

We want to be back!

Graham Parkes is becoming another regular contributor, and one who believes in variety. This week he has penned a poem, with thoughts that we can all relate to.

Missing Standen

*Thursday's now are not much fun
as Standen closed its doors.
We don't know when we may return
as we all remain indoors.
I miss the work, the people too
that make it all worthwhile
and hope that we'll be back there soon
and working with a smile.*

*Specific things that come to mind
from remembered weekly trips,
James' leggings, Rachel's laughter,
Andy's gardening tips.
Bill's pearls of wisdom, Terry's trousers,
Ray's post-lunch 'musical' tones,
Tim's lovely cakes, Bleau's dulcet voice,
our jokes, our laughs, our moans.*

*Roy's golden tan, Pat's sense of fun,
Dinu's witty interjections,*

*Hoping materials have arrived
and are ready for inspection.
Digestives, drinking tea outdoors,
rain dripping down my neck.
Lifting stones that weigh too much
and putting out my back.*

*Digging trenches, shifting earth
and ground works in the heat,
building using brick and stone,
drive home with aching feet.
Wondering where I left my gloves
and what else will we fix?
and was it coarse, sharp or building sand
Ray said was in this mix?*

*The Cascade, with that annoying leak
we still have not discovered,
the Quarry Garden, all that stone
that needs to be recovered.
The Farm Track, although much has been done
is still work in progress,
much more to do - drainage, edging
not forgetting the top surface.*

*Discussions over aches and pains
to which we all relate.
Medical updates every week -
how is everyone's prostate?
I miss the laughs, the guys, the place,
that sense of a job well done
and hoping soon we'll all return
to Standen and having fun.*

What busy lives we all led. However, there are upsides, sometimes expressed from unlikely quarters. Alison Smith heard an interesting comment from a teenager recently:

"...the world just seems to have calmed down..."

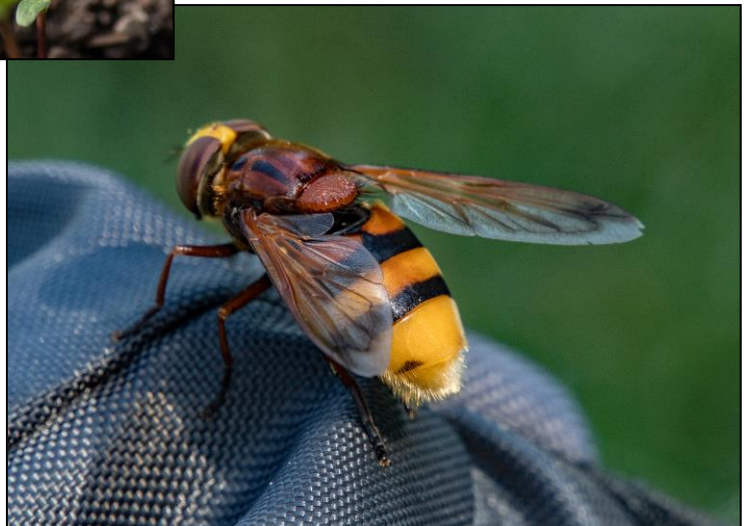
A profound comment from a fourteen-year-old, designed, maybe, to make us all think.

It's Spring...

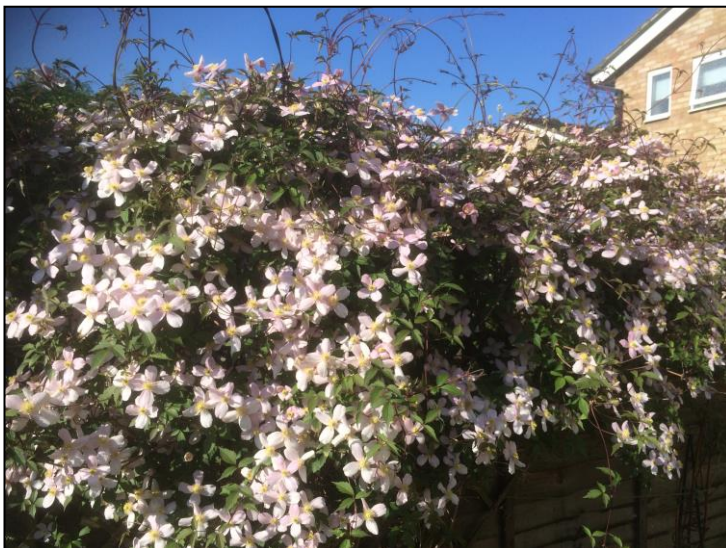
...and life in various forms is appearing all around us. Fewer photos have been sent in this week, but I'm pleased to say that Phil Marsden rose to the challenge of taking an artistic shot of his seedlings. These are French Marigolds. They look good, sturdy stock. Here's hoping they give Phil a good display later in the year.



He also managed to capture a Hornet Hover-fly, which apparently caused a minor panic when it landed on his wife. It then settled on his rucksack, giving him a couple of seconds to take a photo before it flew off.



Martin sent a photo of his Clematis montana when it was looking at its best in the morning sunshine. One of mine developed clematis wilt last year - which they are not supposed to be prone to - but has survived thanks to medical advice from James. It's nowhere near as good as Martin's though.



The mountain clematis originated, as its other common name - Himalayan clematis - suggests, in Asia. It climbs by twining its leaf stalks round any available supports. It is a vigorous grower, often reaching up to 12 metres if left unchecked. Its beautiful show of spring flowers, from pale to deepest pink, sometimes has a subtle scent.

Another talented volunteer

As well as solving Maths puzzles, Roger Ohison has been working on woodcraft for Standen. Many of you will remember that he had been creating a piece of sculpture using the fallen branch from the Kitchen Garden apple tree. That went home with him for lockdown, and he has now completed work on it, turning it into a stunningly beautiful and highly polished work of art.

As if that wasn't enough, he has also turned his hand to making a highly original, three-dimensional Noughts and Crosses game.



I have finished doing the apple sculpture ready to return to Standen at some time and also to keep myself occupied I have made a noughts and crosses set for the new playground. It also has leaves on the other two sides to keep with the nature theme and is made with oak scrounged from Standen.



If he can turn his hand to artefacts like this from wood 'scrounged' from Standen, then long may he continue to purloin materials. I can't wait to see these two pieces in situ.

Lockdown History

We may feel that life is tough at the moment, but Martin found a Facebook post entitled *History Lessons and Facts* which may help to remind us that this is a good time to be alive, in spite of everything. There is quite a lot of it, so half this week and half next.

- They used to tan animal skins, so families all used to pee in a pot and then once a day it was taken and sold to the tannery.... If you had to do this to survive you were P*** Poor. But worse than that there were the really poor

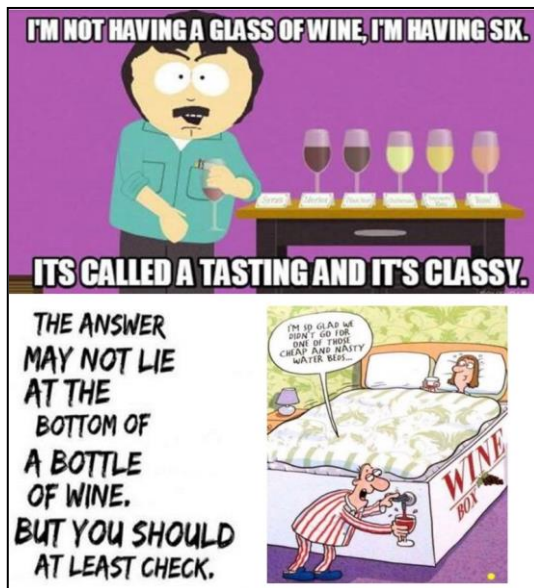
folk who couldn't even afford to buy a pot.... They 'didn't have a pot to pee in' and were considered the lowest of the low.

- The next time you are washing your hands and complain because the water temperature isn't just how you like it, think about how things used to be. Here are some facts about the 1500s: Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May, and so smelled pretty good by June. However, since they were starting to smell.... brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odour. Hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.
- Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice, clean water, then the other sons and men, then the women and finally the children. Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the saying, 'Don't throw the baby out with the bath water.'
- Houses had thatched roofs - thick straw piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes animals would slip and fall off the roof. Hence the saying, 'It's raining cats and dogs.'
- There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed. Hence a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence.
- The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying, 'Dirt poor.' The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on the floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they added more thresh until, when you opened the door, it would start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entrance-way. Hence: a thresh hold.

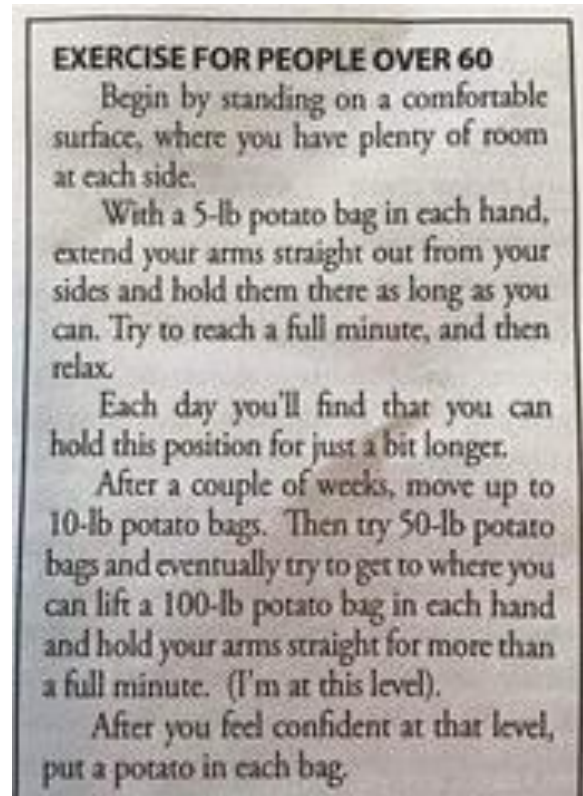
I have heard alternative explanations for some of these, but nevertheless, they make fascinating reading. More next time.

Do any of these strike a chord?

Once again, several comic items have been sent into *Lockdown Lighthouse*. I'm very pleased to be able to pass on anything which might raise a smile. Phil found a Youtube clip featuring one of the all-time greats, Dave Allen. You can watch it at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPINQxVjacc> . Anne sent a video clip, which will come as an attachment, as I couldn't find it on Youtube. At the outset, many of you will be thinking to yourselves, 'Oh yes, I've seen my grandchildren do that - but not, I sincerely hope, like this!



I rather liked Sally Roberson's cartoon offering, especially the idea of a wine bed. Presumably it was to counteract the excesses outlined here that Tim sent in some instructions for exercising.



Martin sent in the lifeguard cartoon. Interesting concept.

Don't try this at home

I suspect a number of us are spending some time surfing at the moment. It's amazing what you can find on the internet. Pat Jilks came across this curious piece of Youtube footage showing the effects of a little-known - at least to me - substance called gallium on an inoffensive Coke can:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FaMWxLcGYOU>

Dangerous Petition

Apparently there is a petition going round to persuade doctors to put Covid 19 as the primary cause on death certificates if a patient who dies is known to be infected with the virus. At first glance, this seems entirely logical, but someone sent me a Facebook post showing why this would in fact be the wrong thing to do. It was a long post, so I'm only passing on the nub of the article, which points out

that the virus is an underlying cause, not what finally induces death - which may be heart failure, pneumonia, etc. The codes referred to are used worldwide.

Every single possible way to die is given a number-letter code, and the reason THAT matters is because without it, we can't compare. We need to know whether public health spending is going to the right places. We need to know whether death rates are dropping over time. We need to be able to compare between different regions, between the different countries of the UK and between different countries.

And those codes are used in every single country, capitalist, communist, military regimes... they all use ICD-11, and the WHO and all the rest of the people involved in trying to get everyone to die a natural death of old age after a long and active life, they all rely on being able to trust those codes to be accurate.

So if Covid-19 is going in as 1a, you lose information.

The full article gives the analogy of an elderly lady knocked down by a parking car. The bump isn't serious, but because she has osteoporosis, her hip breaks. Bed-bound in hospital, she develops bronchitis from which she dies. Putting car accident as the primary cause of death would clearly be inaccurate. If two Covid patients died, one from heart attack and the other from pneumonia, if this petition succeeded both would be listed with Covid as the primary cause. One patient might have needed a ventilator and the other not. As the article then goes on to say:

If someone has died from Covid-19 in a way that didn't involve a ventilator, how do you separate those deaths out from the deaths that did require a ventilator? How do you plan for ordering in equipment?

It seems, therefore, that this petition, while well-meaning, is actually quite misleading.

A happy family

Last week Roy Page delighted us with a photo of his local mallard family. He has obviously been keeping in touch and this week has videoed the family outing. You can see it at https://youtu.be/OwuAU_CQLAs

Roy has reported that:

Mother and the 14 ducklings are fine. She is keeping a good eye on them as a friend of mine has told me that there is a heron about. Dad is around and also keeping guard.

Life Goes On.

He also sent me a rather beautiful video based on the poem, *We fell asleep in one World*, by Indian poet Haroon Rashid. It can be seen on the attachment with this newsletter.

Are you keeping a journal?

The Mass Observation project began in 1937, but running through the war years as it did, it provided great insights to life on the Home Front during that time. Some of you may remember Victoria Wood in *Housewife 49*, which was based on diaries which went into the project. The original archive is housed at Sussex University, which revived the project in 1981. They are now actively encouraging anyone who is writing a diary of their experiences of the pandemic to help record this historic event for posterity. If you are interested in taking part, go to <http://www.massobs.org.uk/about/what-s-on/205-covid19> and read more about how to get involved.

...the problem with Britain

My son shared this with me, and I take it as a comment on those who don't think social distancing and other sensible safety measures are for them. Although I don't have the exact Twitter text, it went something like this. Someone posted the statement that:

'The biggest obstacles to defeating coronavirus in this country are:

- 1) The density of the population
- 2) The density of the population'

A response immediately came, saying:

'Number 2 is the same as number 1.'

Quick as a flash, the first person tweeted:

'Yes, and you're part of the second obstacle.'