

Flanagan's Running Club – Issue 57

Introduction

The first rule of Flanagan's Running Club is everyone should be telling everyone they know about Flanagan's Running Club! After all, sharing is caring. Details of how to sign up is in the epilogue.

There is no need to panic, there is no actual running involved, it is not a running club in that sense. The title is made up from extending the title of my favourite book – Flanagan's Run by Tom McNab.

So, sit back, grab a cup of coffee (or beer or wine or whatever), and enjoy the read.

On This Day – 23rd March

1540 – Waltham Abbey is surrendered to King Henry VIII of England; the last religious community to be closed during the Dissolution of the Monasteries.

1888 – In England, The Football League, the world's oldest professional association football league, meets for the first time.

2020 – Prime Minister Boris Johnson put the United Kingdom into its first national lockdown in response to COVID-19.

2021 – A container ship runs aground and obstructs the Suez Canal for six days.

Day of the Sea (Bolivia)

Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Day (Azerbaijan)

Promised Messiah Day (Ahmadiyya)

World Meteorological Day

A Grim Almanac of Sussex

1913 – On the wet and stormy evening of Easter Monday, only a handful of people, thirty or so, turned up to hear the McWhirter Quintet on Worthing pier. Part of the way through the programme they were forced to flee to the promenade for safety, for the storm had reached hurricane force. It continued through the night and by morning the whole centre structure had been washed away, leaving the South Pavilion stranded out at sea.

Births

1904 – Joan Crawford

1929 – Roger Bannister

1953 – Chaka Khan

1972 – Joe Calzaghe

1983 – Mo Farah

Deaths

2011 – Elizabeth Taylor

2015 – Lil' Chris

Number 1's

Number 1 single in 1998 - Run DMC vs Jason Nevins - It's Like That

Number 1 album in 1988 - Terence Trent D'arby - Introducing The Hardline According To Terence Trent D'arby

Number 1 compilation album in 2017 - Various - Sleepin Is Cheatin - Tom Zanetti

#vss365

A short story in 280 characters or less, based on a prompt word on Twitter

"Life's too #short for this."

"It'll be a lot shorter for us both if we don't do it. If we screw this up, then we aren't likely to see tomorrow."

"Why can't Chunky do this himself?"

"Because he told us to do it."

"How the hell are we supposed to know what to buy his wife?"

#vss365

Joke

A man went to the doctor suffering from severe headaches. After a thorough examination, the doctor turned to him and said: "Jerry, the good news is I can cure your headaches. The bad news is that it will require castration. "You have a very rare condition, which causes your testicles to press on your spine, and the pressure creates these serious headaches you've been experiencing. So, the only way to relieve the pressure is to remove the testicles." Jerry was shocked and depressed. He wondered if he had anything to live for. He couldn't concentrate long enough to answer, but decided he had no choice but to go under the knife. When he eventually left the hospital, Jerry was pleasantly surprised at how good it felt not to have a headache for the first time in 20 years, but he also knew that he was missing an important part of himself. As he walked down the street, he realised that he felt like a different person. He could make a fresh start and live a new life. He saw a men's clothing store and thought to himself a new suit would be the perfect thing to mark this new beginning. He entered the shop and told the salesman: "I'd like a new suit." The elderly tailor eyed him briefly and said: "Let's see... size 44 long?" "That's right, how did you know?" said Jerry, laughing. "I've been in the business 60 years!" replied the tailor. Jerry tried on the suit and it fitted like a glove. As Jerry admired himself in the mirror, the salesman asked: "How about a new shirt?" Jerry thought for a moment and then agreed. The salesman eyed Jerry again. "Let's see... 34 sleeve and 16-and-a-half neck?" Once again, Jerry was surprised. "That's right, how did you know?" "Like I said, I've been in the business 60 years!" So, Jerry tried on the shirt, and it was a perfect fit. As Jerry adjusted the collar in the mirror, the salesman asked: "How about new shoes?" Jerry was on a roll and so thought, why not? So, the salesman eyed Jerry's feet and said: "Let's see... you must be a size nine-and-a-half?" Jerry was astonished. "That's right, how did you know?" "Well, young fella, I've been in the business long enough to know these things!" Jerry tried on the shoes and they were also a remarkable fit. Jerry walked comfortably around the shop and the salesman asked: "So that only leaves the new underwear. How about it?" Jerry thought for a second and agreed. The salesman stepped back, eyed Joe's waist and said: "Let's see... size 36." Jerry laughed. "Ah ha! I got you! I've worn size 34 since I was 18 years old." The salesman shook his head. "There's no way. I'm never wrong. You can't wear a size 34." "Oh yes I can," replied Jerry and have been most of my life. "I don't understand," said the tailor. "By my reckoning a 34 underwear would press your testicles up against the base of your spine and give you one hell of a headache."

Drabble

A drabble is a complete story that is exactly one hundred words long.

Knob Polishing

She saw the old man raise his eyebrows, she knew what was coming.
"It says here, your previous job was a knob polisher, what did that entail?"
There was a lascivious look on his face, but he was going to be disappointed.
"Have you been to look around Arundel Castle?"
"Yes."
"Did you see how many doors there were?"
"Yes."
"Well, I had to polish each of the seven hundred and fourteen door knobs every day."
The gleam went out of his eyes.
"So, it's not a euphemism then?"
"No it isn't you dirty old man, I'm just a cleaner."

Random Items

Facts

In Denver, Colorado It is unlawful to lend your vacuum cleaner to your next-door neighbour.

The Pentagon, in Arlington, Virginia, has twice as many bathrooms as is necessary. When it was built in the 1940s, the state of Virginia still had segregation laws requiring separate toilet facilities for blacks and whites.

In California, it's against the law to use your dirty underwear as a dust rag.

Thoughts

What do you call male ballerinas?

If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything.

Some days you are the bug; some days you are the windscreen.

A Word A Day

Vitiate

Verb

The Latin noun vitium means 'vice' or 'fault' and so to vitiate is to make something defective or corrupted. The word differs from pervert, which has the sense of twisting something away from its natural form. Something is vitiated when faults or errors are allowed to disturb the purity or effectiveness of something.

The election was vitiated by lies, scaremongering and misinformation on both sides of the political divide.

Flash Fiction

Something between the 100-word shortness of a Drabble, and the short story, these are works of fiction somewhere between five hundred and seven hundred words.

Zoom Zoom

There was another Wednesday in hell about to start. I wasn't sure whether it was Zoom or Teams or some other Virtual meeting room bollocks, but there were six hours of this shite booked in all day. Another day wasted to people talking crap, and all the narcissists who loved the sound of their own voice would keep dragging the almost non-existent agenda down rabbit holes no one wanted to go down. Not even rabbits wanted to go down these rabbit holes.

An hour in and I felt like slitting my wrists. There were three major irritants who had opinions on everything, even if those opinions had nothing to do with the topic at hand. As long as they were pontificating about something, they were happy. No one else was.

They were also having a private competition, talking over the top of one another, as to who could waffle the most drivell out of their ever-open mouths. At the start of proceedings, I might have known their real names. Into hour two and I couldn't decide whether to refer to them as Mary, Mungo and Midge, or Larry, Curly and Moe. If anyone were looking at their screen full of little windows into people's homes, they would have seen me banging my head on the table.

Then there were the breakout sessions. A more concentrated version of hell where it was more difficult to avoid talking. Unless I ended up in a group with one of Mary, Mungo or Midge. In which case there would be no need to say anything. And still they continued. I'd had more than enough and wandered off to find the appropriate James Brown single to play on repeat in the background. "Talking Loud and Saying Nothing" the Godfather of Soul belted out, but still, they didn't take the fucking hint. Seriously people, just shut the fuck up.

In the last breakout rooms of the day, I was with several likeminded people who'd had more than enough already. We joked about how great it would be if the virtual rooms could trap Mary, Mungo and Midge in them so we could get a final group session without their inane babblings. And we can't have been the only ones. When we left the breakout rooms, they didn't, all three of them were stuck in the virtual rooms.

There were messages from them about how they couldn't get out. They tried to dial out and back in, but the system wouldn't let them. We laughed. I might have cheered – not entirely sure whether I was on mute when I did so either, but not entirely sure I gave a shit either.

They never re-joined the main group, the call ended, and we all dialled off and carried on with our lives. But Mary, Mungo and Midge didn't. they hadn't been released from the breakout rooms, even when the main call ended. No one thought anything about it when they weren't heard from the next day, or even the Friday.

It was noticed the following week when they missed meetings. There was no response to calls, e-mails, Skype, Teams or even carrier pigeon messages. Then we found out they had all been reported missing. They had been in their homes in makeshift offices one moment, and then they weren't.

All that was left was the picture of them on their monitors, as they had been in their meetings. Talking away but unable to be heard. As if they had been sucked into the virtual rooms and were screaming to be let out.

And once their laptops had been turned off no one ever saw them again. But there were reports of hearing from them, or what might have been the faint sounds of their voices when on calls. The kind of sound as if they were shouting from the next room or from the other side of a wall. Trying to get someone's attention. Trying to get help, to get them out of whatever little rooms they were stuck in.

It continued for a couple of years but came to a halt as we stopped using that particular software. The ghosts in the machine became ghosts in a ghost of a system.

We did notice a difference in behaviour on calls though. There were no call hogs anymore. Jokey warnings to those who spoke too much. "Better give it a rest, or you might end up like Mary, Mungo and Midge."

Leicestershire

The Fosse Way

The Fosse Way was a Roman road in England that linked Exeter (Isca Dumnoniorum) in South West England to Lincoln (Lindum Colonia) in Lincolnshire, via Ilchester (Lindinis), Bath (Aquae Sulis), Cirencester (Corinium) and Leicester (Ratae Corieltauvorum).

It joined Akeman Street and Ermin Way at Cirencester, crossed Watling Street at Venonis (High Cross) south of Leicester, and joined Ermine Street at Lincoln.

The word Fosse is derived from the Latin fossa, meaning 'ditch'. For the first few decades after the Roman invasion of Britain in 43 CE, the Fosse Way marked the western frontier of Roman rule in Iron Age Britain. It is possible that the road began as a defensive ditch that was later filled in and converted into a road, or possibly a defensive ditch ran alongside the road for at least some of its length.

It is remarkable for its extremely direct route: from Lincoln to Ilchester in Somerset, a distance of 182 miles (293 km), it is never more than 6 miles (10 km) from a straight line.

Today's route

Many sections of the Fosse Way form parts of modern roads and lanes, and parish, district or county boundaries.

Several place names on the route have the suffix -cester or -chester, which is derived from Old English ceaster / cæster (ultimately from Latin castra meaning 'military camp'). Some settlements are named after the road itself, such as Fosse-, or -on-Fosse, while others have a more generic form, such as Street, Strete, -le-Street, Stratton, Stretton, Stratford, and Stretford, derived from Old English stræt / strēt (ultimately from Latin strata, meaning 'paved road'). The route runs from 50.73°N 3.48°W in Exeter to 53.23°N 0.54°W in Lincoln.

Lincoln to Leicester

Between Lincoln and Leicester, the A46 follows the route of the Fosse Way. The A46 deviates from Fosse Way at East Goscote, to follow the Leicester Western Bypass. The original alignment, which is still visible as an unclassified road called Fosse Way, passes through Syston, continuing as the minor road Melton Road through Thurmaston, before merging with the A607 (the old A46), continuing into the city centre on the old alignment, first as Melton Road then Belgrave Road and Belgrave Gate. The alignment terminates at the Clock Tower, and picks up again at Narborough Road (the A5460), on the other side of the River Soar. A 19 miles (31 km) stretch of the road between Widmerpool & Newark-on-Trent has been upgraded to a dual carriageway which was completed in 2012. The new route deviates in several sections off the historic road line.

Leicester to Cirencester

South of Leicester, apart from a short deviation near Narborough where the original course is no longer visible, the B4114 (originally the A46 but renumbered when the M69 was opened) follows the route. A short distance north of the A5, the B4114 diverges from the line of the Fosse Way to pass through the village of Sharnford, while for 2 miles (3.2 km) the route of the Fosse Way is followed by a minor road, named Roman Road which, although single track, runs along a much wider and slightly domed strip of land with deep ditches either side (the agger). The modern road ends at a picnic site car park, and a further 1.5 miles (2.4 km) southwards can be explored on foot.

The junction of Fosse Way with Watling Street, now the A5, is at High Cross (Roman name Venonis). Watling Street is the county boundary between Leicestershire and Warwickshire.

The Fosse Way follows the B4455 across Warwickshire, through Street Ashton, Stretton-under-Fosse, Brinklow, Bretford, Stretton-on-Dunsmore, Princethorpe and the site of a Roman town near Chesterton, until it joins the A429 near the boundary with Gloucestershire. The route then follows the A429 through Stretton-on-Fosse, Moreton-in-Marsh, Stow-on-the-Wold, Northleach and Fossebridge, to Cirencester, where it crosses Akeman Street and Ermin Way.

Cirencester to Bath

South of Cirencester the Fosse Way follows a short section of the A433, then goes cross country. The Fosse Way crosses the River Thames and under the first South Wales railway Golden Valley Line which was constructed via Gloucester. The road continues and later forming the county boundary between Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, across the old airfield at RAF Kemble, then becomes fragmented sections of country lanes; two sections on this stretch are byways rather than maintained roads, and at points on these routes it widens to as much as 60 feet (20 m).

It passes near the Iron Age hill fort of Bury Camp and becomes another section of the county boundary, crossing second the South Wales railway which is the South Wales Main Line, next the site of an old chapel and spring at Fosse Lodge in Dunley, and then the M4. Thereafter it passes through The Shoe and Nettleton Shrub where remains of a posting-station have been found, and arrives at Batheaston. Thereupon it turns due west to follow the river Avon into Bath.

Bath to Ilchester

Between Bath and Shepton Mallet the line of the Fosse Way follows parts of the A367, through Clandown, Radstock, Westfield and Stratton-on-the-Fosse. It runs across open country and farm tracks parallel to the A37 north of Shepton Mallet, near the Iron Age hill fort of Maesbury. At Beacon Hill south of Oakhill, it crossed the Roman road along the Mendip ridgeway from Old Sarum to the lead and silver mines at Charterhouse. The Fosse Way passes through the eastern suburbs of Shepton Mallet on a short stretch of the A361 to Cannard's Grave, where it picks up the A37.

The Fosse Way follows the A37 through Street-on-the-Fosse and Lydford-on-Fosse on a direct route to Ilchester. The route leaves the A37 north of the A303 junction just north of Ilchester, and follows a small track (previously part of the A37 from before the by-pass opened and broken by the present-day A372 and A303), before picking up the B3151 through the town. It leaves the B3151 onto Ilchester's High Street, then follows West Street and Roman Road, a minor road that was formerly part of the A303, towards the present-day A303 west of town.

The Roman road from Ilchester to Dorchester, Dorset continues on the line of A37 through Yeovil to the south east. Other minor Roman roads lead from Ilchester and Lydford-on-Fosse towards Street and the A39 route along the Polden Hills, leading to Roman salt works on the Somerset Levels, and ports at Comwich, Crandon Bridge and Highbridge.

Ilchester to Exeter

After Ilchester the Fosse Way is followed by a section of the A303 under the ramparts of the Iron Age hill fort of Ham Hill, occupied by the Second Legion after the conquest of the Durotriges in Dorset.

The alignment leaves major roads after Petherton Bridge over the River Parrett, and follows country lanes to Over Stratton and Dinnington, where in 2002 members of the Channel 4 television programme Time Team uncovered a mosaic next to the road.

The route crosses a stream called Stretford Water, climbs the ridge, and follows a short section of the A30 at Windwhistle Hill. Then it turns on to the B3167 through the hamlets of Street and Perry Street, joins the A358, crosses the River Axe at what used to be called Stratford (now called Weycroft), and on to Axminster

The location of the end of the Fosse Way is uncertain. There are further alignments on the A358 at Ball's Farm and Musbury south of Axminster, which imply a Roman road did continue along the River Axe toward Axmouth and Seaton. These sections are labelled Fosse Way on Ordnance Survey maps.

The crossroads in Axminster was controlled by a Roman fort at Woodbury Farm, now on the southern edge of the town. The route to the west crosses the Rivers Axe and Yarty to Kilminster, continuing on segments of the A35 and minor local lanes to Honiton. From Honiton the route leads south-west along the old A30, to Strete Ralegh, where there is a short break, then a clear alignment along the former A30, now a minor road, towards Exeter.

St Andrew's Church – North Kilworth

St Andrew's Church in the South Leicestershire village of North Kilworth is a Grade II* listed building which dates from the 13th Century was constructed from local cobbles. The Church was altered by the Victorians in the 1860's when the south aisle, organ chamber and porch were added in angular Charnwood granite, a foreign material for North Kilworth.

It is believed that the Church was built around the time of Henry II (1154 to 1189) when it comprised the existing Chancel, central Nave, north aisle and the bell tower (without a spire). The period is Early English. The arches at the east and west ends of the Nave are dignified in their proportions and regarded as fine examples for their period. It is likely that Robert Rabaz was responsible for the construction and it is possible that his tomb lies under the Lady Chapel at the east end of the north aisle.

At the east end of the Chancel, adjacent to the altar, there is an ancient aumbry (a recess in the east wall) which would have been used to store the Communion vessels. This is now accessed by a small, hinged door in the carved wooden screen fixed to the east wall. A piscina (with drain) is adjacent to the east window in the north aisle and above it is

evidence of a now closed off access to a rood screen loft. A second larger piscina is to be found adjacent to it on the south wall.

The now empty niche to the left of the altar probably once held a statue of the Patron Saint and was possibly lost or destroyed when the Parliamentary army occupied the Village when en route to defeating the King at Naseby in 1645. Adjacent to the porch door is a wooden painted board confirming that in 1864 the Incorporated Society for Buildings and Churches had subscribed £60 for new pews to seat 63 persons of the total 230 provided at that time. The north porch was added as part of the 1856 improvements. The Victorians also removed the Jacobean rood loft on the north side of the nave and the original primitive Norman font was placed on new ornate, carved acanthus leaved pillars.

The arcade in the Nave has piers without capitals. The south aisle restoration was undertaken by Joseph Clarke in 1864–65. This is characterised by octagonal, polychrome piers and savage foliage capitals. The list of Rectors is to be found on a tablet to the east of the main entrance starting in 1220. The name of Archbishop Laud is to be found although he was almost certainly the holder of this and other benefices and would have appointed a full time Rector.

The coats of Arms on the tablet reflect the shifting allocation of the benefice over the centuries, from Leicester to Lincoln, to Peterborough and then, finally back to Leicester Diocese. Also in evidence is the long association of the Belgrave family with the Church who also, until the establishment of the shared benefices of Guthlaxton, assumed alternating responsibility with the Bishop (then, later, the Crown) with the appointment to the Living.

Fortunately, the Victorian “improvements” (which were commenced again in 1868 at a cost of £2,000) did not extend to replacement of the Pulpit which is of Jacobean origin and made from Spanish oak. Known locally as the “Armada Pulpit” “there is no proven record of its origin, or even whether it was retrieved intact or merely assembled from war booty. The pulpit is perpendicular in style with a wine glass design. Painted in the 1980’s the whole was restored to plain oak condition in 2006.

The larger south window in the Chancel has an unusual horizontal mullion in stone in the lower portion and is 14th Century. According to an account by Miss V. Belgrave in the early 1900’s this unusual pattern may reflect the use of the window to pass the sacrament to villagers outside when suffering infectious diseases. Once there would have been a corresponding east window comprising a mere 5 lights, but this was removed during the Victorian “modernisations” when the existing memorial window was installed. The windows in the north aisle still contain fragments of medieval glass in diamond shape as well as bearing evidence of inscriptions from craftsmen and visitors over the years.

The organ is generally thought to have been built by George Holdich (b 1816). His father was Rector of Maidwell. He was a pupil at Uppingham School and became apprenticed to the well-known firm of Bishop and set up on his own account at 12 Greek Street, Soho in 1837. His output was prolific, including a commission for Lichfield Cathedral in 1860.

The Church silver is of strong historic interest, most notably the small Elizabethan Communion cup which is a rare survivor. This has two bands of contemporary engraving and it was probably used by the Priest in pre-Reformation times when congregations did not partake of wine. Additionally, there is a paten and matching flagon, both inscribed “North Kilworth 1724. The gift of Hannah Willis, widow of William Willis Esq., daughter of Dr. Cotton who was formerly a loyal and suffering Rector of ye Church.” There is also a silver chalice and matching paten “Given in 1901 by the late Mrs. Belgrave in memory of her husband Charles W Belgrave, Rector of this Parish for 46 years.” These items are now in safe storage within the Diocese.

The Bell Tower (early 14th Century) contains a peal of 5 Bells and has additional space for a sixth Tenor. The recessed spire was rebuilt and heightened in 1862 with battlements at the base. The present bell frame was installed by Taylors of Loughborough in 1906 and was overhauled in 1934. The 5 bells ring in the Minor mode. The treble bears an impression of a coin from the reign of John V of Portugal a link to the Armada Pulpit perhaps? No. 2 is impressed with an early George III shilling dated 1764. No. 3 is dated 1647 “HIS Nazarevnu Rex: Ivdeorvm: Fili: Miserere 1647” No.4 is dated 1853. T. Whiteman C. Warden Taylors of Loughborough. The tenor has part of the alphabet inscribed but is not dated. “ABCDE FGHIK LMNO” which suggest unused blanks for an inscription.

In July 1962, the Church Commissioners joined the benefices of North and South Kilworth. A new Rectory was built adjacent to the Church in North Kilworth and the two old Rectories sold off. The two patrons were the Lord Chancellor and the Trustees of Colonel H.D. Belgrave. Latterly the Parish is now part of the Guthlaxton Deanery and operates under the auspices of a Team Ministry involving 11 Parishes in South Leicestershire.

The listing of the church is below, it dates from 11/01/55

Parish church. C13, early C14, mid C19 additions, restored 1864- 5 by Joseph Clarke. Rubblestone with limestone ashlar dressings. Lead and slate roofs. West tower with recessed spire, nave, north aisle, south aisle, north porch, chancel with organ chamber. Plinth. Buttresses with set-offs. 3-stage tower, lower stage early C14, with plinth, angle buttresses, embattled parapet and 3 string courses. West elevation: chamfered, pointed arch 2-light window with hoodmould with headstops. Above, in 2nd stage, a C20 clock face and above in 3rd stage a chamfered, four-centred

arch 2-light louvred bell-opening with transom and hoodmould. North elevation has similar clock face and bell-opening, south elevation has tall, thin lancet in 2nd stage, and bell-opening above. East elevation has similar bell-opening. Octagonal spire, rebuilt in 1862, has stone banding, and 2-light lucarne with a single light lucarne above, both with pointed hoods, on 4 sides. Weathercock. Nave has lead roof, coped parapets and gable. Clerestory has 3 quatrefoil lights in square frames on north and south sides, the north side is C14, south side C19. C19 south aisle of Charnwood granite, has lead, tall plinth, plain cornice and continuous band. West wall has chamfered, pointed arch 2-light window with hoodmould and stops. Polygonal chimney on north-west corner. North wall has 3, chamfered, pointed arch windows with hoodmoulds and stops. East wall has similar window, with headstops. C14 north aisle has lead roof, plain cornice and continuous string course. West wall has chamfered, pointed arch single-light window. North wall, from west to east: C19 north porch, lead roof, coped gable with kneelers and cross finial. Heavily moulded, pointed arch doorway with double gates. East and west walls each have a strip of 5 trefoiled lights in a chamfered rectangular frame. Stone benches inside. Double-chamfered, pointed arch south doorway with double plank doors. To east, 2, moulded, pointed arch 2-light windows with reticulated tracery and hoodmoulds with headstops. East wall has moulded, pointed arch, 3-light windows with intersecting tracery and hoodmould. C13 chancel has graded slate roof and coped east gable with kneelers and cross finial. North wall has tall plinth, and from west to east: a chamfered, pointed arch, 2-light window with plate tracery and hoodmould, then a C19, heavily moulded, pointed arch priest's doorway, with shafts with capitals and bases, hoodmould with stops, and plank door. Then another, similar, 2-light window, followed by a buttress. South wall has string course, and from west to east; a chamfered, pointed arch, 2-light window with transom and plate tracery, then C19 organ chamber with coped gable, followed by a similar window to those of north wall, then a buttress. East wall has low plinth, sill band, and 1856, chamfered, pointed arch 3-light window with headmould and stops, flanked by 2 buttresses.

INTERIOR: C14 triple-chamfered, pointed tower arch, with keel-moulded responds with capitals and bases. 3-bay nave arches, C14 north arcade has double-chamfered, pointed arches with continuous hoodmould, and polygonal piers and responds. C19 south arcade has moulded, pointed arches with continuous hoodmould and compound piers and responds with annulets, foliage capitals and bases. Plain, segmental arch doorway to former rood loft on north wall near chancel arch. North aisle has chamfered, trefoiled piscina in south east corner. Double-chamfered, pointed chancel arch with polygonal responds with capitals and bases. Chancel has south-west window with detached nook-shafts, with annulets and sill lowered to form seat. Then a mid C20 organ followed by a south-east window with nook-shafts and a moulded, pointed arch, piscina in south-east corner. North-west window and north-east window similarly treated, with nook-shafts. Double-moulded, four-centred arch, north doorway with shafts with capitals and bases. C19 east wall has tall, plain niche to north, and east window with polished marble shafts with capitals and bases and hoodmould with carved stops. C19 reredos, altar table, altar rails, chairs, pews, stalls, lectern, font with square bowl on 5 short marble shafts with foliage capitals and bases, C16 polygonal wineglass pulpit with traceried panels and stem with moulded capital and base.

MONUMENTS: north aisle: C20 stone wall memorial on north wall. C20 stone wall tablet carved with names of rectors of North Kilworth, near north doorway. South aisle: marble wall memorial to Lieut. Hyde Parker Dobson (d1836); marble memorial to Admiral Dobson (d1847) with shrouded cannons in relief; 2, early C20 brass memorial plaques: WWI memorial, all on south wall. Chancel: marble wall memorial to Mrs Jane Belgrave (d1800) with urn and shroud in relief, on south wall. 4, C20, brass memorial plaques to Belgrave family on north wall. Late C19 brass plaque to another Belgrave below north-west window. Marble wall memorial to Elizabeth Pochin (d1831) also on north wall. C19 roofs. Minton tiles in sanctuary. Red tiled floors. C19 stained glass, west window 1869, and south east window in south aisle 1878, both by Hardman. East window 1856, by Holland of Warwick.

East Goscote

East Goscote is a modern village and civil parish in the Borough of Charnwood district of Leicestershire, England, just north of the market town of Syston. It is a medium-sized village, with a population measured at 2,866 in the 2011 census. The village is twinned with Fleury-sur-Andelle, France.

The name is taken from the East Goscote Hundred, one of the old hundreds of Leicestershire. The Goscote Hundred (or Wapentake) is mentioned in the Domesday Book, this was later split into the West and East Goscote Hundreds. It was the first new village to be created in Leicestershire since Domesday.

The village is built on the site of a former British Army supply depot. According to Ministry of Defence files, the site was originally constructed in 1940 (finished September 1942) by Holloway Brothers, and was an Agency Filling Factory run by Lever Brothers/Unilever as No.10 Royal Ordnance Factory. At that time, it was known as the Queniborough Depot, since that was the closest village to it. It began production in March/April 1942.

The aerial photograph reveals its former road layout. According to English Heritage's reference work *Dangerous Energy*; it was operating Groups 8-10 of ROF filling types. By 1944, it was temporarily occupied by the War Office. A report of 1951 has it designated as 78 Command Ordnance Sub Depot. It was decommissioned in 1959, and subsequently bought for housing development by Jelson Homes. This development began in 1962.

There were two enormous shell storage bunkers that could not be demolished, and these were earthed over and landscaped. They became known locally as the 'Mound', and are now part of the adjacent playing fields. These were opened to the public as part of the Queen's Silver Jubilee celebrations in 1977, and there is a plaque near Long Furrow noting this fact.

The road called Long Furrow serves as a perimeter around the central part of the village; it also serves to mark the boundary of the former ordnance site. What is less well known is the huge network of large reinforced concrete tunnels that lay beneath the whole village; where the munitions were fitted with their warheads, and new top-secret weapons prototypes were put together. There are several entrances to these workshops and tunnels located throughout the village, but each has been carefully landscaped to conceal their identity. Council representatives did enter these chambers, and found that the tunnels were in excellent condition, and the electricity still worked. Until the mid-1970s, during which the village was still under construction, both entrances to the 'Mound' were open, and often visited by local children.

A map of the actual tunnel layout did exist in the Library of Wreake Valley Community College, Syston, but was misplaced to keep the tunnels hidden. The whole structure, and stories that lay beneath its present inhabitants is worthy of a serious study, survey, and television documentary.

The first family to move in did so in 1965, even though the village lacked many amenities at the time, including street lighting. The village is served by Broomfield County Primary School, which was opened in 1968. The school was expanded in 1977 to cope with the number of children on the village.

The original design made no mention of the village hall, and this was built by Jelson Homes free of charge. It was the home of religious services until the completion of St Hilda's Church in 1976. The first village vicar was the Reverend Dudley Gummer, who took services in his own house in Coopers Nook, until the village hall was built.

The village had its own magazine East Goscote Community News, which was first published in 1969. It ceased publication in the mid-1980s, after many issues. Now they have a magazine called Long Furrow. Adjacent to the village, north of the railway line, is Beedles Lake Golf Club.

East Goscote ward is represented on Charnwood Borough Council by Green Party Councillor Laurie Needham. Before 2015, it was represented by Cathy Duffy, the only elected representative in the locality from the far-right British National Party (BNP).

Charnwood Borough Council has stated that there will be a new railway station to open at East Goscote, on the railway line towards Melton Mowbray.

Life's What You Make It

Excerpts from life writing.

Cakes

There were a lot of cakes when I was a child. Not just on special occasions. Or perhaps they were special occasions and we just didn't know it at the time.

There was the Christmas cake of course, one baked, covered and put out in the cold shed for the following year; last year's one being brought in, and when the tin was opened the smell of the fruit, and the almonds, and of course the brandy, would flow out and invade our mouths and noses. The alcohol in it along with the marzipan and icing made it different from the regular fruit cakes that appeared the rest of the year around.

My dad would quite happily eat fruit cake until it came out of his ears. When presented with the Christmas cake he would eat the fruit cake and leave the marzipan and icing; and us kids would fight over who was going to have that additional sweetness, the best part of the cake to us.

It wouldn't matter how much fruit there was in the fruit cakes, my dad would always complain there wasn't enough fruit in them. He would always say the same thing, "Did you throw the fruit in from the top of the Clock Tower Fay?" It was a long-standing joke.

We would have sponge cakes nearly every week as well. From when my grandma died when I was ten, until I left home at twenty-four, my granddad would turn up at 11:20 on a Saturday morning, and leave at 13:50 Sunday afternoon like clockwork. He loved sponge cake so there would be one of those alongside the fruitcake at tea on a Saturday evening at quarter past five on the dot.

There were cakes on other occasions, such as shop made ones for birthdays. I can't really remember much about most of them.

The only one I can remember properly is the one my mum had left my dad to order for my brother's birthday. My brother must have been seven or eight that year, as I was at senior school, and he'd just moved up to primary school. I got home to a house full of smaller kids, happily playing in the front room. The boxed birthday cake was on the kitchen worktop. I took one look at it, looked at mum and asked, "did dad sort the cake out." She didn't look happy in the slightest, "of course, only an idiot would order a cake with that on."

The coloured icing message on top of the cake read "Happy Birthday", as any normal cake would, but the name below it wasn't normal. Not "Larry", as any sane person would ask for, but "L Neylon."

It wasn't a good atmosphere at the time, but we look back now and laugh. The memory of that cake overriding all others.

Top Tens

Random Top Ten

The first ten Ottoman Empire Sultans.

No	Sultan	Reign
1	Osman I	1299-1326
2	Orhan I	1326-1359
3	Murad I (the God-like One)	1359-1389
4	Bayezid I (the Thunderbolt)	1389-1402
5	Mehmed I (the Gentleman)	1413-1421
6	Murad II	1421-1444 & 1446-1451
7	Mehmed II (the Conqueror)	1444-1446 & 1451-1481
8	Bayezid II	1481-1512
9	Selim I (the Grim, the Brave)	1512-1520
10	Suleiman I (the Magnificent, the Lawgiver)	1520-1566

Chart

The top ten in the UK singles chart on this day in 2021

Position	Last Week's Position	Title	Artist	Label	Peak Position	Weeks on Chart
1	2	WELLERMAN	NATHAN EVANS/220KID/BILLEN TED	POLYDOR	1	8
2	12	LATEST TRENDS	A1 & J1	EMI	2	6
3	New	PATIENCE	KSI FT YUNGBLUD & POLO G	BMG/INTERS COPE	3	1
4	3	THE BUSINESS	TIESTO	ATLANTIC	3	18
5	7	FRIDAY	RITON/NIGHTCRAWLERS/MUFASA	MINISTRY OF SOUND	5	9
6	5	CALLING MY PHONE	LIL TJAY & 6LACK	COLUMBIA	2	5
7	9	DON'T PLAY	ANNE-MARIE/KSI/DIGITAL FARM	ATLANTIC	2	9
8	17	BED	JOEL CORRY/RAYE/DAVID GUETTA	ASYLUM/PER FECT HAVOC	8	3
9	18	COMMITMENT ISSUES	CENTRAL CEE	CENTRAL CEE	9	5
10	11	GOOSEBUMPS	TRAVIS SCOTT & HVME	B1/MINISTRY OF SOUND	8	11

Poetry Corner

Panic Bye

Is it greed or are you a sheep following the crowd?
Despite not knowing the story you're shouting it out loud.
No thoughts for others, it's all about me me me.
Stockpiling items with a sense of inordinate glee.
You don't really need seven hundred toilet rolls.
Or enough pasta to fill three hundred bowls.
And why fill twenty-four jerry cans all at once.
What are you going to do with it? Drink it for lunch?
A rumour has turned your brain to mush.
Making you think that you have to rush.
To the shop or the garage and fill up your car.
So you can show the world how selfish you are.
People like you on this world are a bane.
Just being twats and stockpiling again.

Thirty-Three And One Third Revolutions Per Minute

Was (Not Was) – What Up Dog?

What Up, Dog? is a 1988 album by Was (Not Was). It became the US group's breakthrough album worldwide and was ranked number 99 on Rolling Stone magazine's list of the 100 Best Albums of the 1980s. The cover illustration was credited to Christoph Simon and Karen Kelly.

This is another album I came back to at the end of last year and again found I'd got rid of the vinyl without having the tracks from it on mp3. So, it led me to get the CD of this and most of their other albums.

Success of What Up, Dog? was propelled by the group's two biggest hits: "Walk the Dinosaur" and "Spy in the House of Love" and four other singles. The former was promoted by a popular music video in which the band performed while a group of girls in campy cave girl costumes danced. The video received heavy rotation on MTV and MuchMusic and led the single into the top ten of the US singles charts in 1989. Artist/ animator Christoph Simon created videos to accompany the tracks "What Up, Dog?", "Dad I'm in Jail" and the Tom Waits-style "Earth to Doris". These appeared on MTV's Liquid Television and in various film festivals, including the Spike & Mike festival.

The album had fewer guest vocalists than their previous album and instead was focused around the group's two lead singers, Sweet Pea Atkinson and Sir Harry Bowens. However, a typically long list of collaborators and guest musicians worked on the album including Elvis Costello (co-writer of "Shadow & Jimmy"), Marshall Crenshaw (co-writer of "Love Can Be Bad Luck"), and Frank Sinatra, Jr. on "Wedding Vows in Vegas". It also included the second re-recording of the group's signature song: "Out Come the Freaks".

What Up, Dog? became the group's breakthrough album in the US and worldwide. It reached number 43 on the Billboard 200 album chart, number 41 in New Zealand, and number 47 in the UK - where it spent six weeks on the chart. The album also spawned six singles. The biggest hit was "Walk the Dinosaur" which charted worldwide and hit the top 10 in the US and UK. "Spy in the House of Love" was very popular too, hitting the top 20 in the US, number 21 in the UK and peaking at number 1 on the Billboard Hot Dance Club Play chart. "Anything Can Happen" was the third and final single to chart on the Billboard Hot 100 chart reaching number 75. In the UK, "Robot Girl", "Boy's Gone Crazy" and "Out Come the Freaks" (alternately re-titled "Out Come the Freaks (Again)" and "(Stuck Inside Of Detroit With The) Out Come The Freaks (Again)") reached modest positions on the charts. In 1992, "Somewhere in America There's a Street Named After My Dad" was released as a single to promote the group's compilation Hello Dad...I'm in Jail.

Track listing

All tracks are written by David Was and Don Was; except where indicated.

Side one

No. - Title - Writer(s) - Length

1. - "Spy in the House of Love" - 4:18. Second single released from the album, it reached number 21 on the UK singles chart, spending thirteen weeks on the chart. The B-side was "Dad I'm In Jail". Sampled Cymande's "Bra", Maceo & the Macks's "Cross the Track (We Better Go Back)", First Choice's "Let No Man Put Asunder", Steve "Silk" Hurley's "Jack Your Body", Beastie Boys's "Hold It Now, Hit It", The B-Boys's "Rock the House", and Salt-N-Pepa's "My Mike Sounds Nice".

2. - "Boy's Gone Crazy" - 3:44. First single released from the album, it reached number 84 on the UK singles chart for a week on a re-release after the success of "Spy In The House Of Love" and "Walk The Dinosaur". The B-side was "What Up, Dog?".
3. - "Anything Can Happen" - David Was, Don Was, Aaron Zigman - 3:57. Fifth single released from the album, it reached number 67 on the UK singles chart, spending three weeks on the chart. The B-side was an R&B mix. Sampled once.
4. - "Somewhere in America There's a Street Named After My Dad" - 3:42. Sixth single released (in 1992) from the album, it didn't chart on the UK singles chart. The B-side was the hit "Shake Your Head".
5. - "Out Come the Freaks" - 4:36. "Out Come the Freaks" is the name of a trilogy of songs by art-funk ensemble Was (Not Was). The trilogy consists of three songs that feature the same basic title, tune and chorus lyric: "Out Come the Freaks" (1981), "(Return to the Valley of) Out Come the Freaks" (1983), and "Out Come The Freaks" (1987) (later issued as "Out Come the Freaks (Again)" / "(Stuck Inside Of Detroit With The) Out Come The Freaks (Again)".) Despite the three songs' abundant similarities, each song is distinctive, as differing lyrics in the verses of each song tell stories about different societal outcasts. As well, each recording had a different contemporary sound, a thoroughly different arrangement, and reworked the melody while still retaining the chorus vocal: Woodwork squeaks, and out comes the freaks. Fourth single released from the album, it reached number 44 on the UK singles chart, spending three weeks on the chart. The B-side was "Earth To Doris", a track on the US version of the album. Firmly my favourite song of theirs, and has been played hundreds of times over the years. Sampled The Whispers' "Rock Steady".
6. - "What Up, Dog?" - David Was, Don Was, Harry Bowens, Sweet Pea Atkinson - 1:48. was the B-side of the single release of "Boy's Gone Crazy".

Side two

No. - Title - Writer(s) - Length

1. - "Love Can Be Bad Luck" - David Was, Marshall Crenshaw, Don Was - 3:52
2. - "11 Miles An Hour" (Final mix: John Potoker) - 4:05. Was the B-side to "Walk the Dinosaur".
3. - "Anytime Lisa" - 4:15
4. - "Shadow and Jimmy" - David Was, Elvis Costello - 4:18
5. - "Walk the Dinosaur" - David Was, Don Was, Randy Jacobs - 4:22. Third single released from the album, it reached number 10 on the UK singles chart, spending ten weeks on the chart. The B-side was "11 Miles An Hour". The original recording of "Walk the Dinosaur" appeared on the soundtrack of the 1994 film *The Flintstones*. It was also featured in a scene in 1989 film *The Dream Team* starring Michael Keaton, Christopher Lloyd and Peter Boyle. A version performed by George Clinton appeared on the *Super Mario Bros.* soundtrack in 1993. Appeared on a CD Single Promo called "En Concert" released in France in 1992 along with; "Papa Was A Rolling Stone", "Are You Okay?", and "Out Come The Freaks". has been sampled twenty-two times and covered seven times.
6. - "Dad I'm in Jail" - 1:25. Was the B-side to "Spy In The House Of Love".

Personnel

David "Michigan-Boy Snake" Was — flute, keyboards, harmonica, vocals

Don "Rope Drink" Was — bass, keyboards, guitar, mandolin

Sweet Pea Atkinson — vocals

Sir Harry Bowens — vocals

Bruce Nazarian, Dann Huff, Paul Jackson, Jr., Randy Jacobs, Steve "No Wonder" Salas — guitar

John Patitucci, Marcus Miller, Neil Stubenhaus — bass

Ron Pangborn, Russ Kunkel, Winston Watson, Yogi Horton — drums

Aaron Zigman, Al Kooper, Amp Fiddler, Daniel Schroeger, John Van Tongeren, Luis "Louie Restaurant" Resto, Paul Wickens, Robin Smith, Vic Emerson, Martyn Phillips — keyboards

Alex Acuña, Carl "Butch" Small, David Friendly, Debra Dobkin, Frank Ricotti, Kevin "Guido" Tschirhart, Larry Fratangel, Michael Fisher — percussion

Bill Reichenbach Jr., Dan Higgins, Kim Hutchcroft, Jerry Hey, Gary Grant, John Thirkell, John Barclay, Guy Barker, Pete Beachill, Phil Todd, Chris "Snake" Davies, Stuart Brooks — brass

David McMurray, John "Birch" Weiss, Larry Williams — saxophone

Buddy Childers, Marcus Belgrave, Mark Isham, Oscar Brashear, Rayse Biggs — trumpet

Arnold McCuller, Arthur "Buster" Marbury, Carol Hall, Coral Gordon, Dee Lewis, Desi Campbell, Donald Ray Mitchell, Geoff Fieger, Sir Harry Bowens, Helen Terry, Juliet Roberts, Kathy Kosins, Pete Steinfeld, Richard Feldstein, Rick Shoemaker, Ruby Turner, Sweet Pea Atkinson — background vocals

Paul Riser, Richard Niles - string and horn arrangements

David Bates, Michael Zilkha — Executive Producers

Calli Bucci, Garzelle McDonald, Margaret Mittleman - production co-ordination

Allen Sides, Chris Irwin, Croyden, Dave Dachinger, Don Was, John Potoker, Keven Smith, Lincoln Clapp, Micajah Ryan, Michael H. Brauer, Mike Bosley, Mike Pela, Paul Staveley O'Duffy, Paul Wright, Peter Barker, Phil Da Costa, Roland Herrington, Steve "Barney" Chase, Steve "Dr. Ching" King, Tom O'Leary, Troy Krueger, Martyn Phillips - engineering
David Passick and Ken Kushnick - management

Story Time

The Machine

Kalvin had found the thing by accident. He had tripped over it as he had been wandering through the long grass of the wastelands on his way home from school. He had cursed at whatever it was that was hidden in the grass and aimed a kick at the unseen item. It was solid and gave off a metallic sound and he hurt his toes on it. He leaned down to try and uncover what was in the grass, and he stepped back in shock and amazement as he saw what was there.

He turned in a circle twice, scanning the area around him for any sign of anyone else. Checking if anyone could see him and what he was about to do. He stopped moving and listened, checking if there were any voices on the wind, and satisfied he could hear nothing he looked around one last time before taking his canvas bag from his back and shoved the item in it. He hooked the bag back over his shoulders and headed for home with his contraband. Knowing full well of the trouble he would find himself in if he was caught with the item. Any metal mechanical items, such as the one now in his bag had been banned for decades. They should have all been destroyed after the Tech Ward, to prevent such atrocities ever happening again.

When he got home, he went straight to his room, quietly making his way through the house, avoiding coming into contact with the rest of his family. He wanted to get the bag and the item hidden as soon as possible. His mother would make him get rid of it, to put it back where it was found and forget about it. His father would take it off him and hand it over to the authorities. His position as a district councillor wouldn't allow him to do anything else. Calvin often thought his father would disown any of his family if he thought it would advance his career prospects.

And of course, he couldn't let Amily see it, she was still too young to understand. She hadn't had those history lessons yet, and she wouldn't be able to leave it alone. Plus, she would never be able to keep it a secret. Calvin knew he shouldn't have the item but couldn't help himself. He was sure the item had found him. He had walked across that wasteland thousands of times over the years, and never encountered any items before, yet this had tripped him today, one of the few times he had walked through the wasteland by himself.

It was two days later that Calvin woke with a start. He wasn't sure what had woken him, but there was a sense something wasn't quite right in his room. He listened, straining to hear if there was any sound in the room loud enough to compete with the beat of his heart and the sound of blood rushing through his veins. He wasn't sure, but there might be something there, something barely perceptible. He wasn't quite sure if he was hearing it, or merely feeling a sensation, a very slight, low vibration. He looked around the room, trying to see through the gloom, making out the shapes of furniture, and the glass on his bedside cabinet with the cloudy water in it. There was no sign of motion from the vibration he was feeling, but nothing appeared to be moving. He took a deep breath in through his nose and was puzzled by the smell of the air around him. It was a smell he hadn't smelt before, and he struggled to even guess what it was made up from or what it contained.

Kalvin laid there in a state of unease for a few minutes until he remembered the item he had found. He leant over the side of his bed and reached under it for the bag, eventually grasping one of its straps and pulling the bag out.

The slow humming sound, the vibration and the smell all increased as he hauled the bag up onto the bed beside him. He opened the bag and took the item out.

He had been right, the item was a machine, and somehow it had turned itself on. Two little green lights slowly flashed on and off on one of its surfaces. He had no idea what the machine on his bed did, but if the history they had been taught at school was correct, he had the only working machine on the planet sat next to him in bed. A thrill ran through him, equal measures of excitement and terror vied for his attention. He wanted to shout out, yet at the same time didn't want anyone else to know about it.

He opened the shutter on his room's window only to find that it wasn't light yet. There was a faint hint of white along the bottom edge of the clear dark grey sky. Morning was coming, and it wouldn't be long before the day's early light made the stars, he could see clearly in the night sky go out.

Unsure of what to do, but knowing he'd be unable to go back to sleep, Calvin put some clothes on, put the machine back in his bag and tiptoed from the house and made his way to the wasteland. Without the enclosed proximity of houses around him he was able to sit amongst the slightly damp long uneven grass and watch the sun slowly appear between its blades and over the top of the distant houses.

A large ball of red gradually crept from its night time hiding place, lighting up the dark grey sky until it became a pale shade of blue, erasing the stars from sight as it did so. As the sun rose higher in the sky, so its colour changed from red, through orange and yellow, until it became white; and all the while it did so, it shrank in size in the sky.

And all the time the sun rose, the machine in the bag on Calvin's back vibrated and hummed. He took it out of his bag and put it on a piece of ground he'd cleared in front of him. He took time to have a proper look at it. It was almost a

perfect cube shape, but one of its dimensions was slightly less than the other two. He couldn't say which, as he didn't know which way up it was supposed to go. It was silver and black, but in an asymmetrical pattern that didn't help with orientation. The two flashing green lights had been joined by a white, two red, two blue and half a dozen yellow ones on all surfaces. Nothing was written on the machine and he still had no clue what its purpose was.

Such was Calvin's concentration on the machine in front of him, that he didn't hear the voices until they were almost on top of him, and they caused him to look up and around in a panic. There were more than a dozen or so militia on the wasteland, all of them walking towards where he sat, all coming from different directions, as if they were being drawn to him by the machine. They stopped short of him, forming a circle around him, and they all drew their swords at the same time and one of them spoke.

"You have something you shouldn't have. Something that doesn't belong on this planet. You need to give it to us now and walk away."

Kalvin knew they were right, but he didn't want to give them the machine. As far as he was concerned it was his now, and they weren't going to take it from him, and so he said a single word.

"No."

He saw the eyes of some of the militia in front of him widen in response to his word. They weren't used to being refused, and yet here was this mere youngster doing just that. The man who had spoken before did so again.

"So speaks the voice of youth and inexperience. You don't know what you have, but don't want to give it up either. Yet you don't have a choice. You can either give it to us and be allowed to go home; or we can kill you where you sit and take it from you. And with your death for illegal possession and use of a machine, your father loses his place on the council and so access to the provided house. How long do you think your sister Amily could survive with no shelter or food?"

Tears came to Calvin's eyes. He understood now why people hated and were afraid of the militia. The spiteful threats were enough to make any citizen crumble. And yet through his tears he still found the strength to say

"NO!"

It wasn't only widening eyes as a reaction from the militia, Calvin could hear the sharp intake of breath from some of their number.

"On your head be it" came the voice, and Calvin saw swords being raised and the militia tighten their circle by taking a step towards him.

And then, suddenly, nothing.

The militia disappeared. Their swords hung in the air for what seemed like a lifetime to Calvin, before dropping down and sticking themselves in the ground point first to stand like a series of poles around him.

All the lights on the machine had now turned red and had stopped flashing. Calvin felt more than saw the descending spaceship, not that he would recognise it as such. It looked nothing like those drawn on the boards in his history lessons. Instead it looked like a much larger version of the machine in front of him. It had the same colours and a similar pattern. One of the black panels of the spaceship opened. The air shimmered between Calvin and the spaceship, and he saw the machine he had found lift from the ground into the shimmering air and head for the opening. As it moved towards the spaceship the swords worked loose from the ground they had fallen into and followed the machine through the air and into the opening, like a parade day following its flag bearer.

The moment the machine and all the swords had gone through the opening, it closed, and a soft voice came from the spaceship. Calvin was unsure whether it was just inside his head, or if the words were out loud in the air around him.

"Thank you for finding our daughter."

The spaceship rushed into the sky and was gone.

Kalvin sat there, unable to move, unable to process what he had just experienced. He was still there hours later when his mother found him and led him home.

Life carried on as normal, leaving Calvin to look to the skies at irregular intervals, wondering if the machines would ever come back.

World's Greatest Cathedrals Top Trumps

St Patrick's Cathedral	
City / Country	New York, USA
Height	100.4 meters
Commenced Building	1858
Character	12
Global Fame	77
Top Trumps Rating	78
Details	St Patrick's Cathedral, location on Fifth Avenue in New York City, is the largest decorated Neo-Gothic-style Roman Catholic cathedral church in the United States. Work commenced in 1858, but was halted by the American Civil War. Once the spires were added in 1880, the cathedral was the tallest structure in New York City.

Chapter and Verse

A chapter from one of my completed books, works in progress, or novella length short stories.

The Repsuli Deception – Chapter 1

My name is Brodie Rich, which is a pretty ironic name for my current financial predicament.

I'm a private detective, a profession that is pretty much extinct in these days of intergalactic trade and interstellar travel that is available to anyone who can fly a spaceship and read a space chart properly. The latter part is important and is the main blocker to warp drive travel and wormhole jumps; as if they can't map their route and entry spots correctly, they have a tendency to go splat! Not that that would be a bad thing in some cases.

My heroes when growing up were the legendary private detectives. Mikal Kayn, the smart and lucky private detective of the twenty sixth century, had been immortalised in the Starblazer hall of fame. Elvis Cole was the wise cracking Los Angeles private detective from twenty-first century Los Angeles. I had read all of their histories numerous times as a child. I'd like to say I'm as good as they were, but I'd be lying. At least I can say I'm doing my best.

Clients are few and far between, nobody seems to care for evidence of spousal infidelity anymore, they just plant a bug and record it all themselves. The find and return trade has been hovered up by the plethora of bounty hunters that are a plague on every planet, moon and space station anywhere in the cosmos. Actual crimes are solved by the police on the civilised planets, and nobody lives long enough to complain about crimes on the uncivilised ones. So, I'm left with scraps, and let me tell you, scraps don't pay well.

I own my office, it's a run-down grime stained single story building on a back street that is literally a smudge on the official map of the city I work out of – Brockbank, on Tomazin. A small planet that slowly weaves its way around a dwarf sun called Hameri. Some idiot smudged the maps for this part of the city on the original plans centuries before, and it's never been updated. I would complain but the city's board of governors and I don't exactly get along.

In fact, I really don't get along with many people. I seem to make enemies without really trying. I put this down to the fact that I like telling the truth and my sparkling sense of humour. Others put it down to the fact that they don't find me funny, and I'm an insufferable tell-tale. I'll let you decide which.

It's probably down to my affinity with people that led to my partner in the detective agency being a robot, and when I say partner, I mean the only sentient being willing to work with me. And that's only because I bought him and therefore technically own his ass.

In the dark and dim ancient past, I used to be in the space corps. I was officially given a medical discharge. It came after an accident that meant I lost most of my left arm below the elbow and had to be given a replacement cybernetic one. However, the not for public consumption version of what happened is that some other members of my space corps unit cut my arm off when I ratted them all out for a mineral heist whilst on patrol on Betenguese VI twelve years ago. My commander and the rest of the unit not involved in the heist then refused to work with me as I couldn't be trusted to keep my mouth shut or lie to protect their backs. To be fair I was quite happy to leave, I wasn't cut out to be in the space corps, I could never get the hang of lying.

The compensation for the loss of my natural arm meant that I could buy this building my office is in outright. A good job, as I can live here as well now that Creds are tight. Not only that my cybernetic arm is pretty useful, a hell of a lot more use than my original one was. It definitely comes in handy when there's any rough stuff. Or when the bill collectors show up.

I also bought a space ship with the money I got. It's not the grandest craft in the fleet for certain, it only holds four, and it looks like its being held together by rust and mould, but it is quick. I doubt I've flown anything quicker, not even when I was in the space corps. On the downside, it's not the most reliable bucket out there. The engine does have an unfortunate habit of going pop, normally at the most inopportune moments. The repair fees on it have wiped out my case fees on more occasions that I care to remember. Not only that but the warp plotter / worm hole jump drive is on the fritz, there is always a five percent chance that I don't end up where I've aimed for. On the plus side I've not arrived in the core of a star or planet yet.

The last of the compensation money was spent on Vipond. Vipond is my partner in the agency, a much-needed sidekick for me, one that can actually get useful information from computers, a knack I never got the hang of, and it seems he can do it without leaving the normal tell-tale trace. I don't tend to ask how he manages to do it, mainly because I don't want to know. If I don't know how he gets information, then there is no way I can incriminate myself when I find myself compelled to tell the truth.

One of my only friends, Wynne Walker, an actual proper detective with the Brockbank LEOs, tells me that I'm far too honest for my own good, and that if I took some of the occasional bribes thrown my way instead of reporting them all then I wouldn't be so down on my luck all the time. I'd get more clients as they wouldn't have to keep worrying about the possibility of me turning them in.

I have to agree with him in that it would be better for me financially, but I doubt I could live with myself if I did take the money. Not a place I want to be seeing as I'm the only person that wants to live with me anyway.

Anyway, I've digressed for far too long already. It was a booze fuelled night last night. I have been woken up by an irritating repetitive sound, someone is trying to get me to answer my commlink, and I'm wondering where the nebula Vipond is? Seriously, what's the point of owning a robot partner if the damn thing won't answer your commlink when you're hungover?

I throw some clothes on, finding some that don't smell like a brewery, and stumble in to my office. The buzzing of my commlink had stopped. That was a blessing, but whoever it had been was now in the building, I could hear footsteps, and the outside door had slammed close. Perhaps Vipond had let whoever it was in after all, though there was still no sign of him. I flop down into the chair behind my desk, open a drawer and blast a mint bath into my mouth. I lose a layer of skin in there, but my breath is more human now.

Dilbert



Medium

Some of my blog posts were also get published on my Medium account, especially ones that are picture heavy, as there are no hosting costs to store all the photos there, the link is <https://medium.com/@onetruekey>. A lot has gone onto this site recently, and it would be good if you are on there looking at my work if you could register and become a standard member – it's free for the basic member level, but it allows you to follow me on that site and allows for claps and comments to be made on pieces. Anything to help with profile raising is much appreciated.

UPDATE, I've now become eligible to earn on Medium as I have over 100 followers, and so recent posts are on what they call the metered site, so full members of Medium who read or like my posts generate me money, which is good. It

also means I become part of their referral scheme. So, if you are not a member, and are considering [subscribing to Medium](#) if you do so through that link then you will be supporting my writing and you may also discover lots of other great writers, posts, and articles, including those I have already published [here](#).

Epilogue – Where To Find More Of My Writing

To get people to sign up, point them in the direction of my website's homepage of <http://www.onetruekev.co.uk/> scroll down past the menu and then enter their e-mail address and select whether they want Flanagan's Running Club or blog post updates or both and then hit submit.

If you want to catch up on old issues, go to the website at <http://www.onetruekev.co.uk/frc.php> where all the issues are available.

For blog posts go to <https://onetruekev.co.uk/Mutterings/> which will have the most current post and the ability to scroll back in time.

There are various short story competition entries on my Reedsy prompts page at <https://blog.reedsy.com/creative-writing-prompts/author/kev-neylon/>

For all previous works including the old Surerandomality pieces go to <https://onetruekev.co.uk/Mutterings/else/> where pretty much everything I've written before is linked through to.

Then there are my books. Nothing published yet, but I have one full book available online, it's called "Where The Lights Shine Brightest." Can I ask you all a favour, please can you review my book on Inkitt, and the link is below? Even if you don't take time to read it properly, please flick through a few chapters, give it ratings and a review and vote for it please. It may help me get it published.

<https://www.inkitt.com/stories/thriller/201530>

In addition, the first chapter of "Where The Lights Shine Brightest", and my other completed book, "The Talisman", are available on my Goodreads page <https://www.goodreads.com/story/list/77442053-kev-neylon> and the first chapters of two of the four books I have in progress at the moment are on there now and the others will go on there in time. The follow up to "The Talisman" – "The Magicusians" is at <https://www.goodreads.com/story/show/1253978-the-magicusians> and "The Repsuli Deception" is at <https://www.goodreads.com/story/show/1253979-the-repsuli-deception>

I have had a number (seventy-three) of Drabbles published on the BookHippo web site, and they can all be found at <https://bookhippo.uk/profiles/kevin.neylon/drabbles>

You can also follow me on Twitter, where I will occasionally put up some micro fiction or micro poems, my Twitter handle is @Onetruekev – <https://twitter.com/onetruekev>

You can also follow all my writing on the Facebook page Onetruekev which is at <https://www.facebook.com/Onetruekev-102649357993650/>

And also, now on LinkedIn at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/onetruekev/>

Speak to me about getting a pen, there are a few colours left (not many at the moment).

E-mail any ideas or suggestions to kev@onetruekev.co.uk

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