

# Flanagan's Running Club – Issue 62

## 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 – 23<sup>rd</sup> August

1990 – West and East Germany announce that they will reunite on October 3.

1991 – The World Wide Web is opened to the public.

International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition

National Day for Physicians (Iran)

Umhlanga Day (Swaziland)

### A Grim Almanac of Sussex

**1789** – ‘A much respected nobleman the other day, in speaking of the late burglary and robbery in the house of Mrs Shelley, remarked, that such is the police of this county, and the activity of its Magistrates, that offences of the above description are seldom if ever committed here with impunity.’ In view of the crime rate it is difficult to believe either the remarks of the ‘much respected nobleman’ or the reason for their inclusion in the Sussex Advertiser. The item, referring to the ‘county where Justice never sleeps’. Continues: ‘Indeed, a Sussex Gibbet hath taught many a London Rogue fatally the truth of this observation.’

### Births

1912 – Gene Kelly

1946 – Keith Moon

1962 – Shaun Ryder

### Deaths

1987 – Didier Pironi

### Number 1's

Number 1 single in 1979 - The Boomtown Rats - I Don't Like Mondays

Number 1 album in 1995 - Black Grape - It's Great When You're Straight...Yeah

Number 1 compilation album in 2006 - Various - Now 64

## #vss365

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

There he was, doing some writing every day, bashing out the words, trying to keep the #quantity going as much as possible.

The problem being the quality which seemed to be on a scale inversely proportional with the #quantity.

Perhaps he should stick to 50 words a day.

#vss365

## Joke

A new priest at his first mass was so nervous he could hardly speak. After mass he asked the monsignor how he had done. The monsignor replied, "When I am worried about getting nervous on the pulpit, I put a glass of vodka next to the water glass. If I start to get nervous, I take a sip." So next Sunday he took the monsignor's advice. At the beginning of the sermon, he got nervous and took a drink. He proceeded to talk up a storm. Upon his return to his office after mass,

he found the following note on the door: 1. Sip the Vodka, don't gulp. 2. There are 10 commandments, not 12. 3. There are 12 disciples, not 10. 4. Jesus was consecrated, not constipated. 5. Jacob wagered his donkey, he did not bet his ass. 6. We do not refer to Jesus Christ as the late J. C. 7. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are not referred to as Daddy, Junior and the Spook. 8. David slew Goliath, he did not kick the shit out of him. 9. When David was hit by a rock and was knocked off his donkey, don't say he was stoned off his ass. 10. We do not refer to the cross as the "Big T." 11. When Jesus broke the bread at the Last Supper he said, "Take this and eat it for it is my body." He did not say "Eat me" 12. The Virgin Mary is not called "Mary with the Cherry," 13. The recommended grace before a meal is not: Rub-A-Dub-Dub thanks for the grub, yeah God. 14. Next Sunday there will be a taffy pulling contest at St. Peter's, not a peter pulling contest at St. Taffy's.

## **Drabble**

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

### **Tattoo Time**

It seemed like such a good idea at the time, well, being honest, what doesn't after a few drinks?

The four of them had decided it was a plan to go and get matching tattoos from the Zebub tattoo parlour down that dark alley in Lowtown. I mean, what could go wrong?

They weren't expecting the ink from their tattoos to start to spread and draw its own complex patterns all over their bodies. The ink formed summoning spells, and when they were covered head to toe in the arcane patterns it brought forth the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

## **Random Items**

### **Facts**

Americans on average eat 18 acres of pizza every day.

In 1992, Frank Perkins of Los Angeles made an attempt on the world flagpole-sitting record. Suffering from the flu he came down eight hours short of the 400 day record, his sponsor had gone bust, his girlfriend had left him and his phone and electricity had been cut off.

The world's termites outweigh the world's humans 10 to 1.

### **Thoughts**

Why is it when a man talks dirty to a woman it's called Sexual Harassment, yet, when a woman talks dirty to a man it's £3.99 a minute.

If you get corn oil from corn, linseed oil from linseed and vegetable oil from vegetables, where the hell does Haemorrhoid cream come from then?

Minds are like parachutes, they only work when open.

### **A Word A Day**

#### **Polyptoton**

Noun

The author's daughter is name Polly – this was more by accident than design and ironic in a way, as ploy in Latin means 'many' and she is an only child. Polyptoton, an extremely hard word to say, is another rhetorical device involving repetition of a word in a different case, inflection or voice in the same sentence. It is much beloved by romantic poets such as Wordsworth and Alfred Lord Tennyson – at base a form of literary stutter; as best a clever little twist, as in the first line of the following example.

*My own heart's heart, my ownest own, farewell;*

*It is but for a little space I go:*

*And ye meanwhile far over moor and fell*

*Beat to the noiseless music of the night!*

*(Alfred Lord Tennyson, 'I Have led her Home, My Love, My Only Friend, Maud (1855))*

## 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.

### A Maze Daze

He woke with a start. Perhaps it was the cold that had woken him, or was it that distant low growling sound? Whatever it was he was awake now.

It took him a few seconds to realise he wasn't in his nice comfortable bed. There was no soft pillow under his head, no fifteen-tog duvet covering him. No roof above him. In fact, he could see the stars, little pinpricks of white against a dark violet background.

The ground beneath him was damp, yet firm, a mossy covering over a stony path. Walls towered over him on either side of where he lay. He got to his feet, and was surprised to find he was fully clothed; shoes, socks, jeans, t-shirt, jumper, jacket.

He didn't know where he was. Nothing was familiar. Had he stumbled into an unknown part of the town whilst drunk? Had he even been out drinking? He didn't think so, there was a clear recollection of going to bed in his dingy little flat at a very reasonable hour for him.

Yet, here he was. He walked, unsure of which direction to go in, choosing right without knowing why, a natural reaction of a right-handed person perhaps. But in this case, it was the wrong direction, and he found himself at a dead end. And he turned and went back the way he had come, the path between the walls turned sharply to the left. All the while the uniform stone walls towered above him.

He thought he was approaching another dead end, but it was a trick of the light and as he got to the end of the current passage, he could see passages going away to both his left and right. He made his choice and carried on.

And so, it continued. High walls with not a sign of a window or door in any of them. No respite from the rough-hewn grey slabs of stone that bordered the passageways little wider than himself. He could reach out and touch both sides at the same time easily. The gap never narrowed or widened, it was completely uniform.

He wandered through the passageways, randomly turning one way then the other, finding dead ends and false trails. It took an hour or so before it dawned on him that he was in some kind of labyrinth or maze. It could be the only explanation. But he couldn't explain how or why he was here. And as he racked his brains, he did remember something he had heard about how to solve a maze. Always turn left, keep your hand on the left side wall and don't break contact and you would find your way out.

So that is what he did, knowing he must be retracing some of his many previous steps, but that couldn't be helped, at least he would be able to find his way out doing this. Though as he followed the left-hand side, his mind began to try and poke holes in his logic. Was left the way out, or was it just the way to the centre of the maze? Surely it was too late to change direction now. Stick to the plan and continue on.

He wasn't sure how much more night there could be left. It must have been hours that he had been walking now. No change in the colour of the sky, or of the stone walls, and definitely no sign of a way out.

Only for him to make another left turn and find himself in a large open space. A big square, a courtyard possibly, although again no doors or windows and as far as he could tell no other way in or out apart from the gap he was stood in. In the middle was a short column, and it looked as if it had something rotating on the top, giving off a dim light, a dim red light. As he approached the column the rotating mass on top of it became a sight he was familiar to. He had seen this before.

It was a head.

It was his own head.

It was spinning around on top of the column, and as he reached out to touch it, the rotating head spoke in a low monotonous tone.

"Hello me. Nice of you, well me, to join me, well you."

He was confused and assumed that he was dreaming, that the trek around the maze was just a journey he had made in his mind. The rotating head put an end to that thought.

“This is no dream, you have finally found the real you inside your head, building the metaphorical maze was all your own doing, you could have come straight here at any time. But you never wanted to find yourself. Of course not many people do. They know if they do find themselves it is the end. It is the last thing they must do before they die. And now you are here it is time to depart, death is here to take you away.”

## Leicestershire

### Foxton Locks & Inclined Plane

#### Foxton Locks



Foxton Locks are ten canal locks consisting of two "staircases" each of five locks, located on the Leicester line of the Grand Union Canal about 5 km west of the Leicestershire town of Market Harborough. They are named after the nearby village of Foxton.

They form the northern terminus of a 20-mile summit level that passes Husbands Bosworth, Crick and ends with the Watford flight

Alongside the locks is the site of the Foxton Inclined Plane, built in 1900 to resolve the operational restrictions imposed by the lock flight. It was not a commercial success and only remained in full-time operation for ten years. It was dismantled in 1926, but a project to re-create it commenced in the 2000s, since the locks remain a bottleneck for boat traffic.

Staircase locks are used where a canal needs to climb a steep hill, and consist of a group of locks where each lock opens directly into the next, that is, where the bottom gates of one lock form the top gates of the next. Foxton Locks are the largest flight of such staircase locks on the English canal system.

Building work on the locks started in 1810 and took four years. Little changed until the building of the inclined plane resulted in the reduction in size of some of the side pounds. While the inclined plane was in operation the locks were allowed to fall into decline to an extent and in 1908 the committee released £1,000 to bring the locks back into full (nightly) operation.

In 2008, the locks became part of the European Route of Industrial Heritage, a network which seeks to recognize the most important industrial heritage sites in Europe.

The locks are usually manned during the cruising season from Easter to October and padlocked outside operating hours. This is done to prevent water shortages due to misuse and to ensure a balance between those wishing to ascend and descend. There can be lengthy delays at busy times but the actual transit should take approximately 45 minutes to one hour to complete; it is made quicker by the fact that the locks are narrow beam and the gates are light.

The Grade II\* listed locks are a popular tourist attraction and the county council has created a country park at the top. At the bottom, where the junction with the arm to Market Harborough is located, there are two public houses, a shop, trip boat and other facilities. The area is popular with ramblers, interested enthusiasts and similar.

The Foxton Canal Museum is located in the former boiler house for the plane's steam engine. The museum covers the history of the locks and the plane, the lives of the canal workers, and other aspects of the local canal. There is also a collection of Measham pottery. The museum opened in 1989 and is accredited by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council.

## Foxton Inclined Plane



The Foxton Inclined Plane is a canal inclined plane that is located on the Leicester line of the Grand Union Canal about 5 km (3.1 mi) west of the Leicestershire town of Market Harborough and are named after the nearby village of Foxton. The plane was built in 1900 as a solution to various operational restrictions imposed by the Foxton Lock flight. However, it was not a commercial success and only remained in full-time operation for ten years. The plane was dismantled in 1926. A project to re-create the plane commenced in the 2000s because the narrow beam locks remain a bottleneck for leisure boat traffic.

By 1897, the Grand Junction Canal Company had acquired several of the canals comprising the Leicester line, and was keen to meet demand from carriers seeking to use wider beam (14 ft.) craft, rather than the traditional narrow beam boats, which were the only type the locks could accommodate. Their solution was to build an inclined plane to the side of the locks. Initially, the company had planned for the plane to replace the locks, rather than having it act as a second, faster option. Construction began in 1898 and was finished by 10 July 1900.

The Plane was designed by Gordon Cale Thomas, after a large-scale prototype was built at the company's Bulbourne yard and he had assessed the 75 ft. (23 m) climb. It had two tanks, or caissons, each capable of holding two narrowboats or a barge. The caissons were full of water, and so balanced each other. The caissons' vertical guillotine gates created a watertight seal. The lift was powered by a 25-horsepower (19 kW) stationary steam engine. The land for the Plane was purchased for £1,595 and total expenses for the project came to £39,244 by 24 June 1900.

The inclined plane had a journey time of 12 minutes for two boats up and two down, compared with 1¼ hours through the old lock system, thereby improving the speed of passage up the hill tremendously. During a 12-hour day, 6,000 tons (6,100 tonnes) of cargo could pass through the upper and lower level. Unlike the locks, where water flowed downhill every time a boat passed through, on the inclined plane almost the same amount of water went up and down the hill. Only the displaced water is moved, thus saving a great deal of water and giving better control of this vital resource.

An initial problem with the plane was the stress on the tracks by the caissons. There was a plan to build a similar inclined plane at the Watford Locks at the southern end of the canal's summit level. However, this was never carried through (perhaps due to the low levels of traffic in the plane's first two years), and as the Watford Locks were never widened, the economic benefits of the plane could not be fully realised. The need to continually maintain a supply of steam for the plane's engine – in expectation of traffic – also proved to be a drain on finances. Thus, despite its obvious effectiveness, the Foxton Inclined Plane was mothballed in 1911 to save money. After that date it saw occasional use when the locks were undergoing maintenance.

In 1926, dismantling of the incline's machinery began, and it was sold for scrap in 1928 for a mere £250. That year the chimney on the engine house was demolished and its bricks used for various canal repairs. The mooring bollards from the incline can be found alongside the locks.

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The site of the Foxton Inclined Plane Boat Lift has been recognised as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and was on the Monuments at Risk Register. This recognition, together with the steady increase in leisure boating on British canals, means its restoration is now considered a key project in the development of the national waterway network. The cost of full restoration has been estimated at £9 million (in 2006).

Stage 1 of the project – the clearing of the site and restoration of the canal arms above and below the plane – was completed in 2008. A grant for £1.7 million was received from the Heritage Lottery Fund towards the £2.8 million cost of this first stage, and its successful completion resulted in the site being removed from the Monuments at Risk register.

## St Edward King & Martyr, Castle Donington



St Edward King & Martyr church which is sited on high ground behind the main shopping street of the Borough. The church commands a large open space surrounded by pretty Georgian houses and most of the gravestones have been removed. From the Borough there is an ironwork gate leading up a short steep incline to the church. The church dates from the 13th and 14th centuries and as befitting this large village is quite a large structure. The church consists of a west tower and spire, nave, north and south aisle, north porch and chancel.

The arcades are Early English and date from the 13th century, there are some decoration on some of the piers and columns. The chancel also dates from the 13th century and there is a fine 'squint' dating a little later which is from the chancel to the north aisle. The east window is a 19th century restoration the stained glass is by Kempe & Co and was installed in 1902. The aisle windows date from the 14th century as does the west tower. The tall recessed needle spire is very fine and can be seen for many miles. The corbels in the nave area are supposed to represent the ages of women and of interest as is the inside of the pulpit where old tomb stones have been used on the inside walls. There are also a few monuments. There is the effigy of a priest (circa 1330) in an ogee arch, a tomb chest with good brasses to Robert de Staunton and his wife who died in 1458, and alabaster effigies to Robert Hazyrigg with his wife dated 1529. At Clifton Campville in Staffordshire there is almost a duplicate of this monument which is unusual.

The church does not seem to have suffered too much at the hands of the Victorians although the plaster was probably removed in this period leaving the rubble walls which show today. The removal of the plaster by 'hacking' it away can clearly still be seen on the stonework. The large organ is also of note and commands the west end of the north aisle.

The stained-glass dates to late 19th century, with the east window by Kempe. The six bells were recast by Taylors 1880. The church has benefitted from a grant to replace the previously lead covered roof with terne-coated steel following lead theft in April 2019.

The church is in the Benefice of Castle Donington with St Nicholas' at Lockington cum Hemington in the Diocese of Leicester. It is a Grade II\* listed building (listed on 07/12/1962), the listing details are below.

Parish church. Early C13, with aisles widened C14, tower raised and given spire late C14, and clerestory added C15. Very much restored 1876-77 by William Smith of the Adelphi, London. Chancel restored 1902. Dressed stone with lead roofs. West tower, aisled nave, south porch, chancel. Moulded plinths, battlemented parapets. West tower of 3 stages has tall octagonal spire, part rebuilt late C18, with 2 tiers of lucarnes. Angle buttresses slit windows to south west stairs, some carved head gargoyles. Bell-chamber has 2-light traceried openings; C13 lancets below. Nave has late C15 clerestory of 4 bays with paired cusped lights in rectangular surrounds. C14 north aisle has restored Decorated windows with reticulated tracery, 2-light to west, 2 2-light to north, 3-light to north and east of east bay. North door in moulded 2-centred arch. Off-set buttresses. South aisle is slightly earlier, with keeled sill string and carved heads to string below parapet. Off-set buttresses 2 with corbel stands in gabled arched niches. 5 bays of 2-light traceried windows with carved head hoodmold stops. Similar 3-light east window. West window and those to east bay have shafts. South door in richly moulded arch, much restored, with pair of shafts to each jamb.

C15 south porch, much restored, with moulded 2-centred arch and C16-C17 2-light side windows with ovule mullions. Chancel has chamfered sill string and drip mould. 2 bays of lancets, with 2-light Y- traceried windows to east bay. South side also has partly blocked rectangular low side window with transom, and later door in chamfered surround. North side has blocked door with 4-centred head. 5-light east window of 1902, in Perpendicular style. Interior: Triple chamfered tower arch, the inner order on semi- octagonal piers with moulded caps. 4-bay nave arcades, that to south with double chamfered arches on cylindrical piers with moulded and carved capitals; 2 with dog-tooth ornament.

North arcade is chamfered and hollow-chamfered, on octagonal piers with moulded capitals. Above arcades are stone carved head corbels of former roof. Present roof is C16-C17, part restored, with moulded cambered tie beams and carved bosses. Similar aisle roofs. North aisle has remains of stairs to rood. South aisle has shafted window jambs, cusped arched piscina, and pair of arched niches, much restored, with shafts, carved capitals and carved head stops to label. Squints to chancel and nave. Chancel arch is triple-chamfered on corbels. Chancel has blocked door with roll moulding in north wall, and fine C14 tomb recess with moulded and cusped arch.

Inside is the carved stone effigy of a priest, c1330, with ogee canopy. South wall has C13 triple arched sedilia with shafts, and chamfered arched piscina. Fittings: include a C15 octagonal stone font with heraldic panels, a C17 chest with carved panels, and a pulpit assembled 1870s from re-used alabaster slabs with inscriptions and incised figures on inner faces. Other fittings are late C19 and C20. Monuments: in south aisle is a stone tomb chest with corner shafts and brasses depicting Robert Staunton and wife Agnes, d1458, in crocketed ogee canopies. In north aisle is a very fine alabaster tomb chest with carved effigies of Robert Hazylyrygg, d1529, and wife. Sides of chest have cusped semi-circular arcades with relief figures of shield-bearing angels and seated bedesmen.

### **Orton on the Hill**

Orton on the Hill is a small village forming part of the Twycross civil parish in the Hinckley and Bosworth district of Leicestershire, England. It is furthermore located in the Sparkenhoe Hundred. The name is derived from its high situation on a hill overlooking four counties, (also formerly called Wortone or Overtone). Orton adjoins Morebarne, Sheepy and Newhouse Grange on the south, Appleby and Austrey to the east. The population of the village is included in the civil parish of Sheepy.

Domesday Book (1086) records it in the possession of Henry the Earl Ferrers with six ploughs. This was one of the 35 lordships bestowed upon Henry de Ferrers by William the Conqueror who later ceded Orton (Overton) and Morebarne to the Cistercian abbey of Merevale.

In the Tudor period, according to John Nichols' survey, the manor belonged to the Bradshaw family, a citation of Robert Bradshaw being made in 1579. The diocesan census of 1564 records 31 families in the parish. In 1588 Robert Bradshaw owned the manor and the grange at Morebarne. The Knights Templar and the manor of Warton also held lands in the parish.

During the English Civil War Reverend Porter, the Vicar of Orton, appears to have harboured royalist sympathies and faced ejection. According to John Walker's chronicle of the Sufferings of the Clergy during the grand Rebellion, Porter was cited by the Committee for Compounding and faced sequestration. Mathew Mathews the new incumbent was appointed to administer the church, but when two sequestrators went to the vicarage house to take possession in July, 1647, Porter's mother denied them access. The key had also been taken from the church. Roger was imprisoned three times and plundered, later leaving him destitute with a wife and eleven children.

Orton was also visited by parliamentary troops from the local parliamentary garrisons who made off with horses. Captain Ottaway's soldiers from Coventry garrison took horses from Mr Robinson and John Orton. Soldiers from Tamworth took a gelding and two mares from Mr Porter, the vicar, in November, 1643.

About 1,000 acres (4.0 km<sup>2</sup>) in Orton were enclosed in 1782. Not long after, in 1786, most of the old Orton Hall was taken down and rebuilt. According to the parliamentary census of 1792 there were 330 inhabitants and 58 dwellings, as compared to only three houses in Orton Parva. According to the parliamentary census returns the population had decreased to 303 inhabitants by 1801, and 279 inhabitants by 1811.

Description in 1871:

"ORTON-ON-THE HILL, a village and a parish in Market-Bosworth district, Leicester. The village stands near the boundary with Warwickshire, 3 miles E of Polesworth r. station, and 4 N of Atherstone. The parish comprises 2, 290 acres. Post-town, Atherstone. Real property, £2,779. Pop., 334. Houses, 79. The property is divided. The manor, with Orton Hall, belongs to the Rev. D. S. Perkins. The parish is a meet for the Atherstone hounds. The living is a vicarage in the diocese of Peterborough. Value, £236.\* Patron, the Bishop of Peterborough. The church is old and tolerable, and has a tower and spire."

John Marius Wilson's "Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales," 1870-72

The parish was in the Market Bosworth sub-district of the Market Bosworth Registration District.

The Anglican parish church is dedicated to Saint Edith. The church was built in the twelfth century. The church seats 250. The Anglican parish register dates from 1594 for baptisms and marriages and from 1554 for burials. The Bishop's Transcripts cover 1604 - 1887 with gaps. The church is in the rural deanery of Akeley (southern division).

Civil Registration began in July, 1837. The parish was in the Market Bosworth sub-district of the Market Bosworth Registration District. Orton on the Hill is a village and a parish which lie 106 miles north of London, 7 miles west of Market Bosworth and 4 miles north of Atherstone. The parish bordered Warwickshire to the west and covered about 2,033 acres.

Parliamentary troops visited the parish during the Civil War in 1643 and took several horses from the locals.

This place was an ancient parish in Leicester county and became a modern Civil Parish when those were established. The parish was in the ancient Sparkenhoe Hundred in the southern division of the county.

In March, 1855, this Civil Parish gained several acres from Merevale Civil Parish in Warwickshire. In April, 1935, this Civil Parish was abolished and all 2,033 acres were amalgamated with Twycross Civil Parish.

District governance is provided by the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council. Bastardy cases would be heard in the Sparkenhoe (Market Bosworth) petty session hearings each week, alternating between Hinckley and Market Bosworth. The Common Land was enclosed here in 1786. As a result of the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act reforms, this parish became part of the Market Bosworth Poorlaw Union.

A National School (later a Public Elementary School) was built here in 1839.

## **Life's What You Make It**

Excerpts from life writing.

### **Who's Santa**

Having the team's Christmas meal at lunchtime on the same day that the district's office party was happening seemed a great idea at the time. There wouldn't be much time for any blood to get back in to the alcohol stream. The venue for the lunch was The Forge Inn at Glenfield; a way out of the city centre, but it was a gastro pub, long before the term gastro pub had even been thought up.

Arriving before midday, it was straight to the bar and the first pint of the day. In retrospect, any day that you start drinking when it's still the morning is going to get messy. Nearly the whole of the income support section were at the meal, and the younger and newer members of the team, such as me, had congregated at the far end of the table away from the managers; as was normally the case at these kinds of things.

Personally, I didn't see the point of going to a gastro pub for Christmas dinner. It was still going to be turkey and the trimmings, pretty much the same as you would get anywhere else at that time of year, only a lot more expensive. But at the end of the day, I wasn't paying and the drinks kept flowing. The meal came and went in a bit of a blur, and it was back to the office, where seeing as this was a Government department in the nineties, the bosses all seemed to have bottles of spirits tucked away in their desk drawers.

These sprung out and kept things ticking over in the office until the clock hit three thirty and we could legitimately leave the building and start the journey over to the other crown property building the party was being held in, over on Lower Hill Street.

Normally pub choices to get across town to there would have been straightforward, The Saracen's Head, The Royal Oak and The Bowlturners Arms. But on a Friday in the run up to Christmas at any of the predominately Irish pubs could lead to a run in with parents or friends of the family; not what you need when the drinks have already been flowing. So instead it was the rough pub route, The Durham Ox, The Corn Exchange and The Tavern, places where there were no fancy furnishings, and everything was screwed down to prevent their use in fights. Places where, at the weekend all the drinks were served in flimsy plastic glasses. But those pubs helped keep the party atmosphere going in my head until the actual party officially started at five.

The cash and carry had been very busy and the bar volunteers were still loading up trollies to carry all the crates of drinks up to the tenth floor. While they were setting up the bar, I was helping on the door. Taking tickets, or charging those who didn't have ticket the grand sum of two pounds to get in. One of those without a ticket just happened to be the district manager, who quite happily paid the fee and entered the room. My colleagues on the sports and social committee were however, horrified that I would do such a thing. I was adamant (Not to be confused with Adam & The Ants) that they had told me to charge anyone without a ticket, no exceptions, and that if they wanted to refund the district manager, they could go and do it themselves.

I was relieved of my doorman duties, probably to the relief of many others, and therefore was set free to be able to settle back into my drinking duties. The DJ had already set up and started playing, so I was already on the dance floor, can of beer in my hand dancing away quite happily.



A couple of hours later the music stopped as it was time for the Christmas raffle to be drawn. I headed back to the bar and got another can. Then Santa arrived, obviously not the real one, but the district manager dressed as Santa to draw the raffle.

There is no logical reason for what happened next, there rarely is where alcohol is concerned, but all of a sudden I found myself stood on a chair at the back of the room screaming "Fuck Off Santa," repeatedly at the top of my voice, whilst colleagues were trying to drag me off the chair and shut me up. This was a task which took them a few minutes; before they decided just to tip the chair over so that I fell to the floor and bounced.

However, the shouting didn't stop, although it was now interspersed with bouts of giggles from me, and it was only when the raffle ended and the music restarted that I was finally drowned out.

The district manager didn't really seem to mind; he joked about it for years afterwards, as did many others who were there to witness me making a spectacle of myself.

## Top Tens

### Random Top Ten

The ten most population cities in Malaysia.

Rank	Name	Population
1	Kuala Lumpur	1,588,750
2	Seberang Perai	818,197
3	Kajang	795,522
4	Petaling Jaya	744,062
5	Subang Jaya	708,296
6	George Town	708,127
7	Ipoh	657,892
8	Klang	613,977
9	Kuching	570,407
10	Selayang	542,409

### Chart

The top ten in the UK singles chart on this day in 1978

Position	Last Week's Position	Title	Artist	Label	Peak Position	Weeks on Chart
1	1	THREE TIMES A LADY	THE COMMODORES	MOTOWN	1	4
2	2	YOU'RE THE ONE THAT I WANT	JOHN TRAVOLTA AND OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN	RSO	1	15
3	4	IT'S RAINING	DARTS	MAGNET	3	4
4	5	RIVERS OF BABYLON/BROWN GIRL IN THE RING	BONEY M	ATLANTIC/HANSA	1	18
5	6	FOREVER AUTUMN	JUSTIN HAYWARD	CBS	5	8
6	18	DREADLOCK HOLIDAY	10CC	MERCURY	6	3
7	3	SUBSTITUTE	CLOUT	CARRERE	2	11
8	11	SUPERNATURE	CERRONE	ATLANTIC	8	5
9	7	BOOGIE OOGIE OOGIE	A TASTE OF HONEY	CAPITOL	3	11
10	25	JILTED JOHN	JILTED JOHN	EMI INTERNATIONAL	10	3

## Poetry Corner

### Spirit Trees



The footpath here is lined to either side  
By thin, bare, leafless silver birches standing proudly  
Like ghostly apparitions they are leading the way  
Through the forest, leading the lost and the lonely

Are they the spirit ancestors of long dead trees?  
Or memorials to our own pre descendants  
Wisps of mist wind between the shiny trunks  
And rays of sunlight pierce the gloom like wire filaments

I reluctantly take a step onto this spooky path  
Feeling daunted by the thought of what surrounds me  
A spectral realm closes around my body  
The hairs on my neck rise and I want to flee

I force myself to carry on walking past the birches  
These spirit trees reaching into my very soul  
A connection is made to their roots in the ground  
And I am drawn into them, falling into a hole

Becoming one with the trees and the nature around  
Losing myself, becoming planted, putting down roots  
Slipping away from my own everyday world  
Branches for arms and dark brown earth for boots

Between realms I am free, no worries or doubts  
I see all there was, all this is, and will be  
Everything together in this single moment in time  
Until shouted back to reality by "do you want a cup of tea?"

## Thirty-Three And One Third Revolutions Per Minute

### **Kraftwerk – The Man Machine**

The Man-Machine (German: Die Mensch-Maschine) was the seventh studio album by German electronic music band Kraftwerk. It was released on 19 May 1978 by Kling Klang in Germany and by Capitol Records elsewhere. A further refinement of their mechanical style, the album saw the group incorporate more danceable rhythms. It includes the singles "The Model" and "The Robots".

Although the album was initially unsuccessful on the UK Albums Chart, it reached a new peak position of number nine in February 1982, becoming the band's second highest-peaking album in the United Kingdom after *Autobahn* (1974). It spent thirteen weeks in total in the UK album charts.

The *Man-Machine* is the first Kraftwerk album to have Karl Bartos co-credited as a composer along with Ralf Hütter and Florian Schneider. Emil Schult co-wrote the lyrics for "The Model". AllMusic editor Steve Huey described the album as "closer to the sound and style that would define early new wave electro-pop", and noted its "feel of a divided concept album", with some songs (such as the title track and "The Robots") exploring "the science fiction-esque links between humans and technology", and others (such as "Neon Lights" and "Metropolis") celebrating "the glamour of urbanization". Uncut critic David Cavanagh called "The Model" a "wry pop satire", and wrote that "the sparse lyrics lend themselves to considerable interpretation."

The first German pressing was on red vinyl. The *Man-Machine* was certified gold by the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) on 15 February 1982, denoting shipments in excess of 100,000 copies. In October 2009, a remastered edition of the album was released on CD and digitally by Mute Records in Europe and by Astralwerks in the United States, with heavyweight vinyl editions released in November 2009.

The artwork for the cover was produced by Karl Klefisch, based on the work of the Russian suprematist El Lissitzky – the words "Inspired by El Lissitzky" are noted on the cover. The back cover image is an adaptation of a graphic from Lissitzky's book for children *About Two Squares: A Suprematist Tale of Two Squares in Six Constructions*.

Reviewing the album in 1978, Andy Gill of NME stated that "The *Man-Machine* stands as one of the pinnacles of 70's rock music", adding that "the sparsity of the lyrics leaves the emphasis squarely on those robot rhythms, chilling tones and exquisite melodies." Mitchell Schneider from *Rolling Stone* found that the "chilling restraint and relentless sameness" of the lyrics and music are tempered by Kraftwerk's sense of humour and "sheer audacity", which makes for a listening experience that is "strangely pleasant in an otherworldly way." In a retrospective review for AllMusic, Steve Huey wrote that the album is "less minimalistic in its arrangements and more complex and danceable in its underlying rhythms" than the group's previous works, and noted its "tremendous impact" on subsequent synth-pop artists. NME ranked *The Man-Machine* as the 57th greatest album of all time in 2013, citing it as Kraftwerk's "definitive" album and the catalyst for the synth-pop "revolution" that followed its release.

## Track listing

All lyrics are written by Ralf Hütter except "The Model", lyrics by Hütter and Emil Schult.

### Side one

No. — Title — Music — Length

1. — "The Robots" ("Die Roboter") — Hütter, Florian Schneider, Karl Bartos — 6:10. Released as the first single from the album with "Spacelab" as the B-Side". Reissued in 1991 with additional tracks "Robotnik" and "Robotronik". Remixed and reissued in 2007 as "Die Roboter (3-D)". Has been sampled in 58 songs, and has been covered another 18 times. The 1991 remix reached number 20 on the UK Singles chart and spent four weeks in the chart.

2. — "Spacelab" — Hütter, Bartos — 5:50. Was released as a single in Brazil, with "The Model" as the B-Side. Has been sampled in three songs (including the 1990 remix of "I'm Riffin" by MC Duke from the *Omen - The Final Conflict* film soundtrack, which also used "The Model" as it's main riff all through the remix), and has been covered another three times.

3. — "Metropolis" — Hütter, Schneider, Bartos — 6:01. Released as a single in Argentina, with a Spanish language version of "The Model" - "El Modelo" as the B-Side. Has been sampled in four songs, and has been covered once.

### Side two

4. — "The Model" ("Das Model") — Hütter, Bartos — 3:38. Released as the third single from the album with "Neonlicht" as the B-Side. Was the second listed side of double A-Side release with "Computer Love" in 1981. When promoted as the A-Side in early 1982 it returned to the UK chart and became a Number 1 success. Has been sampled in 25 songs, and has been covered another 62 times. It reached number one on the UK Singles chart and spent 21 weeks in the chart in total.

5. — "Neon Lights" ("Neonlicht") — Hütter, Schneider, Bartos — 9:03. Released as the second single from the album, with "Trans-Europe Express" and "The Model" on the B-Side. Contains a sample of Claude Debussy's "Reverie". Has been sampled once, and has been covered another eight times. It reached number 53 on the UK Singles chart and spent three weeks in the chart.

6. — "The Man-Machine" ("Die Mensch-Maschine") — Hütter ,Bartos — 5:28. Has been sampled in 32 songs, and has been covered another five times.

Total length: 36:10

## Personnel

Kraftwerk

Ralf Hütter – album concept, cover, electronics, keyboards, Orchestron, production, Synthanorma Sequenzer, synthesiser, vocoder, voice

Florian Schneider – album concept, electronics, production, synthesiser, vocoder, Votrax

Karl Bartos – electronic drums

Wolfgang Flür – electronic drums  
Additional personnel  
Günther Fröhling – photography  
Leonard Jackson – engineering  
Karl Klefisch – artwork  
Joschko Rudas – engineering  
Henning Schmitz – engineering assistance  
Johann Zambryski – artwork reconstruction (2009 remaster)

Recorded at Kling Klang Studio in Düsseldorf, Germany  
Mixed at Studio Rudas in Düsseldorf, Germany

### **Charts**

Chart — Peak position  
Australian Albums — 56  
Austrian Albums — 15  
Dutch Albums — 29  
French Albums — 14  
German Albums — 12  
Swedish Albums — 24  
US Billboard 200 — 130  
UK Albums — 9  
Italian Albums — 94

### **Certifications and sales**

Region — Certification — Certified units/sales  
Germany — 150,000  
United Kingdom — Gold — 100,000

## **Story Time**

### **Night Hawks**

Phillies was the only place open in the city at that time of night back in the sixties. The other bars, restaurants, even the nite clubs would have closed. The diners and coffee shop workers were still happily dreaming long before their shifts would start in the light of the morning.

I rarely went in. I wasn't one for a late night or early early morning coffee or soda. The little sandwiches old Earl put together for the insomniacs left a lot to be desired.

But I liked to watch the comings and goings to help me through my own insomniac nights. There was nothing on the small wooden black and white television back then at night. There was no cable TV, that was still years away. And so, I would watch Phillies and make my own soap opera up in my head, night after night.

I wondered if it was a varied character list, as if I'm honest it was difficult to tell whether there was a regular cast or not. The dark suited men with their homburgs and trilbies casting shade over their faces. The women with their hair sprayed within an inch of its life, and their colourful dresses that came to light in that yellow glow once they took off their dark overcoats.

It didn't matter what the season was, there was always that night chill in the air at three in the morning and the visitors to Phillies dressed for the weather.

Until the night they didn't.

That night started as any other night did. I tossed and turned until the bed looked as if a tornado had passed through my apartment. I got up, went to the kitchen and poured myself a glass of milk, and went and sat in the armchair in the dark and looked out over the street to Phillies. From my first-floor window across the wide street, I had a great view into the establishment.

There were twenty seats surrounding the dark mahogany triangular counter, and in the middle was Earl. I never did know if he owned the place, or if he was just the poor sap that worked the nights there. He looked ancient then, and still he was there for another twenty years before they came along and knocked the place down to make way for another thirty-story behemoth of boring concrete and one-way glass. There is little to see nowadays when my insomnia returns.

When I started my night's episode, Earl was attempting to keep busy, polishing the polish on the polish on the bar. I suppose he was the opposite from me, and he was trying to keep himself awake by just doing something. There were three people sat in seats around the outside. What I assumed was a couple sat at one corner of the triangle. She was red haired, with a dress that almost matched the colour of her hair. The man sat next to her wore the usual dark suit and a trilby. They sat drinking coffees and didn't say much to each other at all.

On the seat nearest the door sat another dark suited man, with another hat on, his back to me, motionless, appearing to be staring at the couple. If he was speaking no one was paying him any attention, and the couple didn't look his way. It certainly wasn't the most exciting episode I had ever seen.

And then the others started to turn up. I blinked and there was a blonde man sat at the furthest point of the triangle from the door. No hat, coat or jacket. Not even a shirt or tie. He wore a white t-shirt and a pair of jeans and dark sunglasses. At night! I hadn't seen him approach Phillies, let alone enter and move across the room to sit at the seat he was at. I thought I might have snatched a couple of minutes sleep. Yet Earl turned and looked surprised to see the man sat there as well, and the other customers saw the newcomer and did double takes. None of the people in there seemingly able to work out how the newcomer had got to where he was.

He obviously ordered and Earl, still looking confused filled a glass with soda and placed it in front of the man before turning back and shaking his head, went back to polishing his polish.

The second newcomer wasn't as much of a surprise as the first had been to me. I wasn't close enough to say for sure, but he looked as if he could have been the twin of the first one, and he was wearing identical clothes. When Earl looked back the poor man nearly jumped out of his loose skin. I couldn't say for sure, but it did look as if he had just appeared sat on the chair without any journey across the room preceding it.

At regular intervals another man would appear, as if out of thin air, identical to the last one as if someone was just popping them out of a mould straight onto the seats. With each new arrival Earl looked more dismayed, and by the time the tenth and final man turned he was as white as the uniform he wore. The original three customers that night just sat in silence watching the newcomers, fascinated by their similarity and the clothes they wore. How they drank in unison, and then sat as still as statues until they drank another bit of their sodas.

Then a car arrived outside of Phillies, a driver got out and walked around the car to open the rear door, and a large man wearing a colourful suit (but no hat) got out and walked into Phillies. Earl now looked more surprised that the latest customer had arrived by the traditional route of through the door.

The large man waved away Earl's question about a drink and sat on a seat facing the carbon copies and started speaking. An animated conversation went on for a while, and the large man would occasionally turn to gesture at the other customers before continuing. And once done the big man got up to leave. But as he did the ten white t-shirts all turned and pointed.

Directly at me.

I nearly jumped out of my seat. Surely, they couldn't see me, there was no light behind me to outline my presence in the window, but it felt as if all eyes and fingers were directly beaming onto my location. The big man nodded and left anyway, and walked back to his car. His driver closed the door behind him and instead of going around to his seat he crossed behind the car and across the road in my direction.

There was a knock at the door, but I didn't move. I was barely breathing. Whoever it was knocked three times, and then I heard something drop to the floor by the door. Thirty seconds later the driver was crossing the road again, he got in the car and the car drove away.

As it did the ten men stopped pointing at me and went back to their drinks. As each one finished their drink and put their glass on the counter they left in the same manner as they arrived – as if by magic. And soon all that was left were ten empty glasses. Earl went to clear them away, and the other customers ran out of Phillies as if the devil was chasing them. Earl washed the glasses, turned out the lights and left. It was the only time I've ever seen the place closed.

When I did feel able to get out of my chair, I shuffled my way to the front door and picked up the envelope. Inside was a note,

If you ever tell a soul what you saw this night, there are nine identical items to the one enclosed with your name on.

Also, inside the envelope was a single bullet. The mention of ten identical items was enough for me and so I've never said a word before tonight. After all, who would have believed me anyway. But I am dying now from an aggressive form of cancer, and I wouldn't mind nine bullets finishing me off and putting me out of my agony.

I saw that man with the sunglasses again. In fact, I saw him a lot of times. So, did all of you. Within a year of that night in Phillie Phanatic, president Kennedy had been shot, so had Johnson, Nixon, Kissinger, Stevenson, and a whole host more. In the pictures from all the scenes there was a man in jeans, white t-shirt and sunglasses. Just stood there in the crowd scenes.

And then he wasn't wearing sunglasses, and he was on every television and radio in the country. He was the new energetic candidate for the presidency. Elroy Jones.

They said he had the energy of ten men. That he didn't need to sleep. That he appeared to be in several places at once, appearing at the last moment as if blown in by a gust of wind. And the public loved him. They loved him so much they changed the constitution to allow unlimited terms of office. He is still the president now almost thirty-five years on.

But I know he doesn't have the energy of ten men. He is ten men, or at least ten of what appear to be men, I'm not really sure what they are, but in the background is his chief of staff. The big man with the colourful suits, pulling the strings, subverting the nation.

I need to expose them before I die. I want death now, but I also want everyone else to be free and so my tale is done. I can hear those nine bullets whizzing towards me. They are too late. The internet is a wonderful thing, and my broadcast is away.

## **World's Greatest Cathedrals Top Trumps**

<b><u>Cathedral of Maringa</u></b>	
City / Country	Maringa, Brazil
Height	124 metres
Commenced Building	1972
Character	16
Global Fame	62
Top Trumps Rating	54
Details	The Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Glory of the city of Maringa in Brazil was built in 1972, and is the tallest church building in South America. The foundation stone is a piece of marble from St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, which was blessed by Pope Pius XII and laid on August 15, 1958.

## **Chapter and Verse**

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

### **The Eyes In The Dark - Refuge**

It had only been a few days since Hodson and the boy had crossed over the border from Chardom into Aspepsia. It had seemed an easy decision for Hodson to make. To leave Florivan in charge of getting all the displaced people who had followed them back from the southern continent of Archmelia back across the other border. The one into Malimiland, and to reunite them with their families. Florivan was much more suited to that kind of thing. It also meant he could carry on without Florivan second guessing him all the way.

Despite the help Florivan had been in facing the Magicusians, and the return to Chardom to replace the Gargoyle icon, Hodson still didn't fully trust the man who had spent so much time chasing him around Malimiland under the instructions of Haritonio. Aristor and Grimel may have told him Florivan could be trusted, but Hodson still couldn't bring himself to.

On top of this there was the boy. Marcon had proved himself invaluable in helping all of them find their way around the side of the portal so they could return to their own continent. And on this part of the journey he had already led them through the darkness of the cave system under the mountains. But it tore at Hodson's sensibilities. The boy had only been reunited with his mother after years apart, when they were in Archmelia. Hodson knew he needed a blind companion to find the eyes of the statue in the pits of Parapsley. He trusted the boy more than anyone he had ever met, but the boy should be with his mother, and reunited as a family with his father back in Haystead.

Hodson knew Florivan had gotten involved. And although Dorothea had said that Marcon must carry on with him to finish the quest; the words coming out of her mouth didn't match the pleading look in her eyes. A look that the boy couldn't see, and a tone in her voice the usually perceptive Marcon didn't pick up on. Instead the boy pestered Hodson into taking him with him. A decision he felt he was going to regret until the boy was safely at home at the family's tannery.

Escaping the lunacy of Chardom now that all the gargoyles had returned to the land of the living was one thing. What Hodson hadn't been expecting was that they were being followed and harassed and had been since they'd stepped into Aspepsia. They had been lucky so far. The felled tree across the chasm had given them a bit of breathing space. As had the passage through the mountain. Their followers unable, or unwilling to follow their footsteps. But they were picked up again within hours. And each time they were, there were more of them.

Now they were in the capital of Aspepsia. The ancient city of Lausieux. The huge statue of the now blind man towered over them. Blinking briefly out of view as they walked past buildings, only to reappear. A looming presence over them regardless of where they were in the city.

Every alleyway they passed had men in them. None of them appeared to be doing any work or have any business. All of them just stared at Hodson and the boy as they passed. Whispers could be heard in the shadows of the alleyways. But no words could be deciphered. The whispers followed them more than the men's eyes could.

It felt as if the whole world was closing in on Hodson. He needed to get inside and get safe. He needed to find a refuge for the pair of them. And quickly. And so, he headed for the cathedral and hoped the men would not.

Although old and grand, the cathedral here was nowhere near as impressive as the huge edifice back in Malimiland City. But Hodson hoped it would be as sage.

Going inside quickly, Hodson closed the door behind them and then stood to let his eyes adjust to the gloom. Marcon had no such issues and walked straight up the aisle of the nave towards the altar. The building seemed deserted and Hodson could hear the soft echo of each of the boy's footsteps, and he started to follow.

Before they reached the altar, a priest appeared from between two rows of seats and stopped in front of them.

"I'm sorry, but we are closed for prayer."

Hodson stared at the priest and replied.

"We are not here for prayer. We are here to see the high priest and to arrange for refuge."

"What makes you think the high priest would want to see you, let alone offer you refuge?"

It was the kind of response he had been told to expect. The priests here were not friendly to outsiders. Aristor had told him what to say back when Hodson had been in the library beneath the cathedral in Malimiland City. And Florivan had reminded him before they had parted in Chardom. Hodson had the answer.

"Aristor sends his regards and his emissary."

The eyebrows on the priest's face rose by a couple of notches as he inspected Hodson and the boy again, before he scuttled off. A few minutes later another priest returned.

"My brother tells me you are claiming to be Aristor's emissary. I have to say you don't look the type. A vagabond soldier and a young boy aren't exactly emissary material."

"Yet here we are."

"How do I know Aristor sent you?"

"You don't. Not for certain. But let me ask you a question. Where have all your gargoyles gone?"

"Any fool could have seen they have gone."

"But none could tell you how or why. I can. I was responsible. The Magicusians are itching to return, and it would appear they need me to help it happen."

The high priest pondered this for a while.

"Let us say this is the case. Why would someone with that kind of backing require refuge here?"

"Because I'm tired of being followed and harassed by what looks to be every grown man of fighting age in the whole of Aspepsia. I need it to stop. I need time to think and plan, and then I need to get out of this city and to the pits of Parapsley without an audience."

The mention of Parapsley caused a deep intake of breath from the high priest.

“You aren’t. You can’t be. No one can find the eyes of the statue. Nothing can be found once in those pits. It is impossible.”

“The Magicusians don’t appear to believe so, and my blind companion is what it needed to prove you wrong.”

The high priest looked over the pair of them again, and there was a long silence.

“I am Jungth, high priest of Lausieux. Please follow me. I have just the place you need, and the way out of the city you will require.”

He turned and Hodson and Marcon followed. A secret door in a stone wall swung open and torches were lit. they followed Jungth through a labyrinth of passageways until they came to another door.

“Wait here”, Jungth said, “I need to check he way is clear for us, and to make sure the rooms are in a fit state for visitors.”

Hodson nodded as Jungth left through the door. They stood in the passageway waiting. It was difficult to know how long it was before Marcon spoke.

“I don’t trust this priest.”

“Who? Jungth?”

“Yes, he isn’t telling us the truth. I am sure of it.”

“I’m not sure I trust him either, but Aristor vouched for him, and as it stands, he is the only option we have here.”

“I think we should leave.”

Only for the door to open and Jungth to lean in and beckon them to follow. The torches were extinguished and left by the door, and they followed Jungth through more passageways, these ones lit. the look and feel of them seemed familiar to Hodson, and it suddenly dawned on him why. They reminded him of the Emperor’s palace in Malimiland City. He turned to Marcon and said.

“I’m sorry, I think you were right.”

And Jungth led them through another door. Into a throne room. One full of soldiers.

## 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>

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>

I've recently been submitting to Paragraph Planet and have had some pieces published there, they will be in the archive somewhere, one piece a month from me since June. <https://www.paragraphplanet.com/index.php>

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 pens left in one colour if you are quick.

E-mail any ideas or suggestions to [kev@onetruekev.co.uk](mailto:kev@onetruekev.co.uk)

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