



adding life to your years

A PLEA

Think before you forward.

". . . older adults are seven times as likely as younger people to share fake or misleading content on Facebook. The researchers hypothesized that some older adults may not have the digital media literacy and experience to recognize untruths."

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

I asked Professor JP van Niekerk to comment on the attached article from which these extracts are taken. He replied as follows:

This is a good article and worth sharing. A couple of minor comments: The article starts off with a question, which some people could erroneously read as it being necessary to wear gloves and wipe down groceries and bags.

Insufficient is made of the importance of the outdoors where the virus has much less chance of spreading. Confining people to their homes has been one of the big lockdown mistakes whereas limiting indoor numbers has been correct. Perhaps you could also edit out the US centric stuff and references?

I have removed most of the references to the USA as he suggested.

10 SURPRISING THINGS ABOUT THE CORONAVIRUS

A year into the pandemic, we now know a lot more about the virus that causes COVID-19. We now know that many of our early assumptions about the new coronavirus were wrong. Here are 10 things we've learned about it:

1. It's in the air.

We were told to wash our hands frequently and disinfect surfaces. But as the pandemic went on we learned about just how important a part the air played in spreading this disease. Airborne transmission is especially likely in enclosed spaces with poor ventilation. That realization helped shift health guidance to focus on mask wearing and social distancing.

2. It's worse than the flu — much worse.

The coronavirus is significantly more infectious than the flu. A person with seasonal flu infects on average 1.28 additional people while a person with COVID-19 infects two to three. In addition to being more contagious the risk of death from COVID-19 is more than triple that from seasonal flu.

3. People with no symptoms can spread it.

It is estimated that about 59 percent of all transmission is caused by people who haven't yet developed symptoms or asymptomatic people who never develop symptoms. That's why precautions like screening questions and temperature checks aren't enough to prevent its spread.

4. COVID-19 is more than a respiratory disease.

The virus was also causing damage in the kidneys, liver, cardiovascular system and even the brain. If the virus infects blood vessels and circulates through the body, it may produce wide-ranging symptoms. This could explain why high blood pressure alone puts people at significantly higher risk.

5. It can cause your body to attack itself.

It causes an exaggerated and dangerous inflammatory response in some people. That's why immunosuppressive drugs typically used for inflammatory diseases like rheumatoid arthritis can help COVID-19 patients during later stages of the disease.

6. It's mutating.

Mutation is expected when it comes to viruses. What was more interesting to them was the rate at which new variants emerged.

7. The older you are, the more dangerous it is.

Age is by far the strongest predictor of your risk. Fortunately, studies show avoiding chronic conditions such as obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes can significantly improve your odds, no matter what your age.

8. People of colour are at a higher risk.

Experts believe a variety of factors contribute to the disparity, including unequal access to medical care and health insurance as well as economic and cultural factors.

9. The vaccines work.

The COVID-19 vaccines are some of the best ever developed in the history of time. All three are at least 86 percent effective against severe disease, and in their clinical trials, not one person died from COVID-19 after getting the shot.

10. It's not going away.

Most experts now believe the coronavirus will never totally be eradicated. Even if the required 70 to 85 percent of a population gets vaccinated for herd immunity, the virus has already spread too far, and it's changing too fast.

AARP. Michelle Crouch is a contributing writer who has covered health and personal finance for some of the nation's top consumer publications.

<https://www.aarp.org/health/conditions-treatments/info-2021/one-year-of-covid.html>

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

HOW VULNERABLE IS THE WORLD?

One way of looking at human creativity is as a process of pulling balls out of a giant urn. The balls represent ideas, discoveries and inventions. Over the course of history, we have extracted many balls. Most have been beneficial to humanity. The rest have been various shades of grey: a mix of good and bad, whose net effect is difficult to estimate. What we haven't pulled out yet is a black ball: a technology that invariably destroys the civilisation that invents it. That's not because we've been particularly careful or wise when it comes to innovation. We've just been lucky. But what if there's a black ball somewhere in the urn? If scientific and technological research continues, we'll eventually pull it out, and we won't be able to put it back in. We can invent but we can't un-invent. Our strategy seems to be to hope that there is no black ball.

By Nick Bostrom and Matthew van der Merwe

CLIMATE CHANGE

The MIT Technology Review had an article entitled: We asked 10 experts to name the most effective way to combat climate change, I could not resist responding with: They may start here:

"The traditional objective of making products for their self-evident usefulness was displaced by the goal of profit and the need for a machinery of enticement. - There are the behemoth forces of power and money reinforcing the status quo . . ."

Short-Terminism

- Victor Lebow remarked in 1955: "Our enormously productive economy demands that we make consumption our way of life, that we convert the buying and use of goods into rituals, that we seek our spiritual satisfaction, our ego satisfaction, in consumption.... We need things **consumed, burned up, replaced** and **discarded** at an ever-accelerating rate."
- Vance Packard (1914-1996) identified both **functional obsolescence**, in which the product wears out quickly and **psychological obsolescence**, in which products are *"designed to become obsolete in the mind of the consumer, even sooner than the components used to make them will fail"*.
- Add to this the costly "War on Drugs". An alcohol free New Year's weekend resulted in a Johannesburg Hospital having its first casualty free weekend - EVER. You may rest assured that the consumption of "illegal" drugs had not lessened during that period.

- Then reflect on the billions spent on “trips to Mars” . . .
- And then we begin manufacturing new items, wind turbines, batteries, solar panels - using more resource generating more carbon emissions . . .
- Just along the 5kms on the R311, from RK to RW, convoys of trucks trundle with wind turbine components – three trucks at a time, each carrying one blade, escorted by 8 police and contractors’ vehicles . . . Heaven knows how many trucks are used to transport the components of one tower.

By any measurement an advanced civilisation – observing the above – would regard Homo sapiens as . . .?

I have no reply to date . . . Ray

KNOWLEDGE

QUO VADIS HUMANKIND?

And this seems like a good time to share this quote from **The Once and Future King** by T.H. White.

“You may grow old and trembling in your anatomies, you may lie awake at night listening to the disorder of your veins, you may miss your only love, you may see the world about you devastated by evil lunatics, or know your honour trampled in the sewers of baser minds. There is only one thing for it then — to learn. Learn why the world wags and what wags it. That is the only thing which the mind can never exhaust, never alienate, never be tortured by, never fear or distrust, and never dream of regretting. Learning is the only thing for you. Look what a lot of things there are to learn.

AUDIO BOOKS

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FOR CRICKET LOVERS

BRADMAN'S DREAM TEAM - In batting order

Barry Richards (South Africa),

Arthur Morris (Australia),

Don Bradman (Australia),

Sachin Tendulkar (India),

Garry Sobers (West Indies),

Don Tallon (Australia),
Ray Lindwall (Australia),
Dennis Lillee (Australia),
Alec Bedser (England),
Bill O'Reilly (Australia),
Clarrie Grimmett (Australia)
And Wally Hammond (England, 12th man).

Bradman had drawn a pool of 69 players from all the cricket playing countries since the first Test in 1877, over a five-year period from 1995, to pick 11 greatest players of the game, from W G Grace and Victor Trumper at the beginning of the 20th century to Shane Warne and Sachin Tendulkar at the end of it.

Sir Donald George Bradman, AC (27 August 1908 – 25 February 2001)

Bradman's Best by Roland Perry. Publication date 01 Jul 2002. Random House Australia

TOPICAL WORD

LOCKDOWN

Monks Of The ancient Cistercian Priory of Ellestrey once stood on the site of the studio where we record Pointless. It was sacked by Henry VIII in 1539 but the ghostly figures of the monks are still said to appear at certain times of the year, most particularly around the **Festival of Lockdown**, one of the foremost Red Letter Days in the old liturgical calendar. Lockdown fell on the first Sunday after Whitsun (better known to many as Trinity Sunday) and was traditionally the day on which the strict feudal hierarchy of the priory and the village of Ellestrey was relaxed. This custom was to allow even the humblest citizen to approach the abbot to repair any grievance or injustice of the previous year. The monks came to resent this parity with the citizenry, as it was frequently used by the latter as an excuse to demand monks' privileges and access to the monks' cellar and fish larder. To police this, lines of monks with torches would patrol Ellestrey for the duration of Lockdown, chanting and swinging censers. When parity is achieved on Pointless (i.e. we have a tie-break) the spectral chant of the monks of Lockdown is said to be audible, although we have never yet seen the monks processing through the studio.

The A-Z of Pointless: A brain-teasing bumper book of questions and trivia (Pointless Books) (Armstrong, Alexander; Osman, Richard)

FOR TRAVEL BUGS

PLACES TO VISIT

I've been sitting here going down memory lane thinking about all the places I have been. Thought I would share some with you.

I have been in many places in my life, but I've never been in Cahoots. Apparently, you can't go alone. You have to be in Cahoots with someone.

I've also never been in Cognito. I hear no one recognizes you there.

I have however been in Sane. They don't have an airport; you have to be driven there. I have made several trips there, thanks to my friends and family. I live close so it's a short drive.

I would like to go to Conclusions, but you have to jump, and I'm not too much on physical activity anymore.

I have also been in Doubt. That is a sad place to go and I try not to visit there too often.

I've been in Flexible, but only when it was very important to stand firm.

Sometimes I'm in Capable, and I go there more often as I'm getting older.

One of my favourite places to be is in Suspense! It really gets the adrenaline flowing and pumps up the old heart! At my age I need all the stimuli I can get!

And sometimes I think I am in Vincible but life shows me I am not.

People keep telling me I'm in Denial but I'm positive I've never been there before!

I have been in Deepshit many times; the older I get, the easier it is to get there. I actually kind of enjoy it there.

So far, I haven't been in Continent, but my travel agent says it is on the list ...

(Thanks for sharing, Karl-Heinz Michel)

HISTORY

POLISH PILOTS AND THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

In total 31 out of the 145 Polish pilots who took part in the Battle of Britain died in action, while the Polish War Memorial at RAF Northolt commemorates 1903 personnel killed. The Commander-in-Chief of Fighter Command, Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding, was blunter in his assessment, 'Had it not been for the magnificent work of the Polish squadrons and their unsurpassed gallantry, I hesitate to say that the outcome of battle would have been the same'. This assessment was echoed by the Secretary of State for the Air Force and indeed, during some of the most desperate points of the battle, the RAF had 'only 350 pilots to scramble, of which nearly 100 were Poles'.

Yet at the end of the war Polish troops were not allowed to participate in the Allied Victory Parade so as not to aggravate Joseph Stalin. Brexiters or not, we should all be grateful for the sacrifice made by so few for so many. **Without the two squadrons of 'plucky Poles', it is eminently possible that there would neither be a Britain, nor an EU to vote out of.**

Joss Meakins is a graduate student at Columbia University New York, studying Russian and International Politics. Prior to Columbia he graduated from Cambridge with a B.A in French and Russian. His primary research interests

include Russia and the former Soviet Union, reforms in Ukraine and Russia's relationship with NATO.

THE LUDICROUS LAWS OF OLD LONDON

Impersonating a Building

The owners of the Royal Albert Hall in Kensington sought an injunction to restrain a Mr Albert Edward Hall from calling his band the Albert Hall Orchestra, on the grounds that the public were fooled into thinking that his orchestra was in some way connected with their building. As at the time the Royal Albert Hall had no orchestra of its own, there was no evidence of injury, so the injunction was denied.

Bill Stickers

The Public Order Act 1986 makes it an offence punishable with a fine of up to 1400pounds to display 'any writing, sign or other visible representation which is threatening, abusive or insulting thereby causing that or another person harassment, alarm or distress'.

Three days before the election in 1987, a policeman on patrol in Kensington High Street caught a fly poster in the act. The poster he was intending to stick on the wall depicted Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in fishnet stockings and suspenders, wielding a whip. Under her were the words, 'On your knees to Madam M. You must make up your mind — do you want to work with madam or not?'

The policeman thought that this was abusive and insulting within the meaning of the Act and brought charges. But cross-examined in court, the PC admitted that he had found the poster funny, though not hilarious. As the prosecution failed to produce anyone who had been harassed, alarmed or distressed by the poster, the magistrates ruled that there was no case to answer.

Jennens vs Jennens

When William Jennens died in 1798 he was thought to be the richest commoner in England, worth some 22 million — over £200 million now. A will was found in his coat pocket, but it was not signed, apparently because when he went to his solicitor to have it witnessed, he had forgotten to take his glasses. So the subsequent dispute by members of the family passed to the Court of Chancery, where litigation dragged on for over a century until the entire fortune was swallowed up by lawyers' fees. This case was the inspiration for the fictional case of Jarndyce v Jarndyce in Charles Dickens' Bleak House, published in 1852-53.

PS Under English law speaking the truth is no defence. Telling the truth is still considered libel if it is done maliciously, or even seditiously.

Nigel Cawthorne

LANGUAGE

THE VERSATILITY OF ENGLISH – Shakespeare :

If you cannot understand my argument, and declare ``It's Greek to me'', you are quoting Shakespeare;

if you claim to be more sinned against than sinning, you are quoting Shakespeare;

if you recall your salad days, you are quoting Shakespeare;

if you act more in sorrow than in anger; if your wish is farther to the thought; if

your lost property has vanished into thin air, you are quoting Shakespeare;

if you have ever refused to budge an inch or suffered from green-eyed jealousy, if you have played fast and loose,

if you have been tongue-tied, a tower of strength, hoodwinked or in a pickle,

if you have knitted your brows, made a virtue of necessity, insisted on fair play,

slept not one wink, stood on ceremony, danced attendance (on your lord and

master), laughed yourself into stitches, had short shrift, cold comfort or too much of a good thing,

if you have seen better days or lived in a fool's paradise -why, be that as it may,

the more fool you , for it is a foregone conclusion that you are (as good luck would have it) quoting Shakespeare;

if you think it is early days and clear out bag and baggage,

if you think it is high time and that that is the long and short of it,

if you believe that the game is up and that truth will out even if it involves your own flesh and blood,

if you lie low till the crack of doom because you suspect foul play,

if you have your teeth set on edge (at one fell swoop) without rhyme or reason,

then - to give the devil his due - if the truth were known (for surely you have a tongue in your head) you are quoting Shakespeare;

even if you bid me good riddance and send me packing,

if you wish I was dead as a door-nail,

if you think I am an eyesore, a laughing stock, the devil incarnate, a stony-

hearted villain, bloody-minded or a blinking idiot, then - by Jove! O Lord! Tut tut!

For goodness' sake! What the dickens! But me no buts! - it is all one to me, for you are quoting Shakespeare.

Bernard Levin

SONNET

TYPECAST

The barman had seen many people walk into his bar,
He'd met with folk of all persuasions, nations near and far.
They'd ordered every type of drink, they'd ordered them with puns,
he'd seen celebrities walk in, as well as ghosts and nuns.
But never had he seen a pair stroll in just like these two;
Helvetica and Times New Roman, print in letters true.
They strolled up arm-in-arm and asked the barman for a drink.
'A gin martini, my good man, and stout as black as ink.'
The bar fell grimly silent like a Western with John Wayne,
before the cowboys throw down cards, and guns and whisky reign.
The letters gazed about them, not suspecting any trouble,
not guessing they were on the rocks, this most unlucky double.
The barman didn't want a scene, but drew a warning breath,
he leaned across the counter and his eyes were cold as death.
He stared them down, a warning hand upon the tap of beer;
'You're going to have to leave now. We don't serve your type in here.'

Janine Beacham, *The Spectator*

TECHNOLOGY

WHAT GOOGLE LEARNED FROM 1 BILLION EVIL EMAIL SCAMS

After digging in to phishing and malware campaigns automatically blocked by Gmail, they've discovered quite a few things about current trends and happenings in the world of phishing.

Rogue email analysis: key findings

- 42% of attacks target users in the US
- 10% target users in the UK
- 5% of attacks target users based in Japan

Attacks primarily focus on North America and Europe, with the US receiving the highest volume of phishing and malware mails. However, **the highest risk countries are in Africa** and Europe. According to the study, 16 countries exhibited a higher risk on average than the US.

The risk of being targeted increases a little as you move upward through each age group. If you're in the 55-64 bracket, you're potentially a more attractive proposition than someone sitting in the 18-24 or 35-44 age ranges.

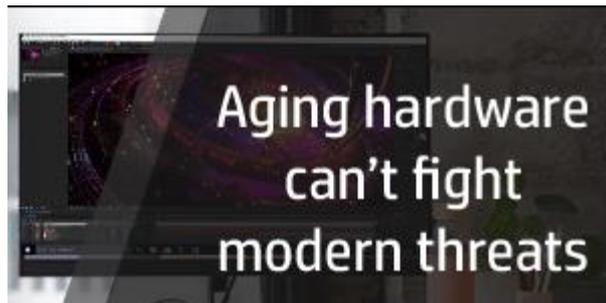
Previous [data breaches](#) bump up the risk. You have far higher odds of being attacked if your details have been exposed in a data breach. You can't put that data genie back in the bottle. Sticking to your mobile phone gives you the lowest

risk of attack, and the highest risk comes with using multiple devices. Using one single personal computer places you in the middle.

Posted: February 10, 2021 by Malwarebytes Labs

https://blog.malwarebytes.com/privacy-2/2021/02/what-google-learned-from-1-billion-evil-email-scams/?utm_source=double-opt-in&utm_medium=email-internal-b2c&utm_campaign=EM-B2C-2021-February-newsletter-Issue2&utm_content=what-google-learned-from-1-billion-evil-email-scams

NO WORDS NECESSARY



THE SAME APPLIES TO SOFTWARE

Over 10,000 new malware threats are discovered every hour, about a quarter million a day.

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SAARP NEWS

SHORT STORIES FEEDBACK (Verbatim)

- Just some feedback on the Short Stories. Love em. Most good reads. Some absolutely stunning. Keep up the good work.
- Thank you for the 'short stories'. I enjoyed reading them and found them to be original, fast and captured my attention immediately. The gist of the stories are original in content and each author managed to introduce atmosphere and the characters were depicted in a very realistic way.

The "Snake story" was so real and as I do not like snakes at all, the words chosen to paint a picture of "creepy crawlies", who could escape at any time, was enough for me to be thankful that the story was not long and drawn out. "Equipment failure" starts on a 'fast note' and also depicts the character of the traveller very well. The 'atmosphere' surrounding the visitor is actually so typical and the reader senses his frustration - it is not the 'mountain' he wants, but the waitress. Brilliant read and excellent writing and the reader can soon visualize the setting. I have not been able to read the "Christmas stories" you sent, but will certainly delve into them soon. There are many and it appears good ones too. My housework is what suffers most, as I am an avid reader and can always find a reason to read. These short stories are absolutely, just what the doctor ordered!

- For years I've not just enjoyed your Newsletters but also your short stories - thank you so very much. However, looking at the list of short stories, I'm never able to easily find the new ones and so spend much time doing just that! I wonder if you could possibly consider storing them in some kind of order as they're added - or even date each one - please? REPLY: The new ones are always loaded at the top of the list.
- Please keep on with the short stories. They are entertaining and we all need some entertainment in our lives, especially in these sad times of the virus and the lockdown!
- The books sic) are brilliant. Thank you, I am an avid reader, such a blessing
- A spark of genius introducing the short stories. Everyone enjoys them

Go to www.saarp.net . . . to read them.

SAARP HOLIDAY CLUB

NOTE: Due to unprecedented demand for our holiday offers, we will restrict the number of points available each month.

The following are examples of discounted off-peak holidays which our Holiday Club has on offer for you and your families. *To book phone Renske on 021 592 1279 or email her at renskes@saarp.net*

RESORT	AREA	DATE	UNIT	PRICE
BOOKINGS FOR 2021				
Royal Atlantic	Sea Point	6-10 Sep	1 bedroom	R1725
Royal Atlantic	Sea Point	6-10 Sep	2 bedroom	R2156.25
Formosa Bay	Plettenberg Bay	6-10 Sep	1 bedroom	R1725

Sudwala Lodge	Nelspruit	6-10 Sep	1 bedroom	R1725
Hazyview Cabanas	Hazyview	23-27 Aug	3 bedroom	R2156.25
Hazyview Cabanas	Hazyview	30/8 - 3 Sep	3 bedroom	R2156.25
Waterberg Game P	Limpopo	6-10 Sep	2 bedroom	R2156.25
Waterberg Game P	Limpopo	6-10 Sep	2 bedroom	R2156.25
Dikhololo	Brits	6-10 Sep	2 bedroom	R1293.75
Dikhololo	Brits	6-10 Sep	2 bedroom	R1293.75
Dikhololo	Brits	6-10 Sep	Studio	R1293.75
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	6-10 Sep	1 bedroom	R1725
Formosa Bay	Plettenberg Bay	6-10 Sep	1 bedroom	R1725
Dolphin View	Umdloti	6-10 Sep	1 bedroom	R1725
Dolphin View	Umdloti	6-10 Sep	1 bedroom	R1725
Placid Waters	Sedgefield	6-10 Sep	1 bedroom	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	3-6 Sep	1 bedroom	R2587.50
Umhlanga Sands	Umhlanga	4-6 Sep	1 bedroom	R3018.75
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	10-13 Sep	1 bedroom	R2587.50
Umhlanga Sands	Umhlanga	11-13 Sep	1 bedroom	R3018.75
Seasons Golf	Brits	13-17 Sep	3 bedroom	R3018.75
Banana Beach Club	KZN	13-17 Sep	2 bedroom	R1725
Hazyview Cabanas	Hazyview	13-17 Sep	3 bedroom	R2587.50
Dolphin View	Umdloti	13-17 Sep	1 bedroom	R1725
Royal Atlantic	Sea Point	13-17 Sep	1 bedroom	R2156.25
Sudwala Lodge	Nelspruit	13-17 Sep	1 bedroom	R1725
Sunshine Bay	Jeffreys Bay	13-17 Sep	3 bedroom	R2156.25
Tableview Cabanas	Blouberg	20-24 Sep	Studio	R2156.25
Cayley Lodge	Drakensberg	20-24 Sep	Studio	R2156.25
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	2-6 Aug	2 bedroom	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	2-6 Aug	3 bedroom	R2156.25
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	16-20 Aug	1 bedroom	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	16-20 Aug	3 bedroom	R2156.25
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	23-27 Aug	1 bedroom	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	23-27 Aug	2 bedroom	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	23-27 Aug	1 bedroom	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	23-27 Aug	Studio	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	30/8 - 3/9	1 bedroom	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	30/8 - 3/9	1 bedroom	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	30/8 - 3/9	2 bedroom	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	30/8 - 3/9	2 bedroom	R1725

Club Mykonos	Langebaan	30/8 – 3/9	Studio	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	6-10 Sep	3 bedroom	R2156.25
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	6-10 Sep	3 bedroom	R2156.25
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	6-10 Sep	Studio	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	6-10 Sep	2 bedroom	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	13-17 Sep	2 bedroom	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	13-17 Sep	2 bedroom	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	13-17 Sep	3 bedroom	R2156.25
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	13-17 Sep	Studio	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	13-17 Sep	Studio	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	13-17 Sep	2 bedroom	R1725
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	20-24 Sep	1 bedroom	R2156.25
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	20-24 Sep	Studio	R2156.25
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	1-5 Nov	1 bedroom	R2156.25
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	8-11 Nov	1 bedroom	R2156.25
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	15-19 Nov	Studio	R2156.25
Club Mykonos	Langebaan	29/11-3/12	1 bedroom	R2156.25

NOTE 1: The above prices include 15% VAT.

NOTE 2: The price is for the entire period.

NOTE 3: All cancellations must be made 7 weeks before check-in date.

NOTE 4: These are Holiday Club Regulations, to which all members MUST adhere.

Note: 5: In making a booking you agree that these regulations apply to you.

PAYMENT: Once Renske has **CONFIRMED** your booking she will submit an invoice containing SAARP's bank details. Once you have deposited the required amount in SAARP's bank account, please provide proof of payment using one of the following:

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DO NOT PAY ANYTHING UNTIL YOU HAVE RECEIVED THE CONFIRMATION OF THE BOOKING AND THE INVOICE

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TRIVIA

SNIPPETS

- Year after year in the UK, glossophobia claims the top spot as Britain's number one phobia, repeatedly knocking 'fear of death' down into second position. At a funeral, the average Briton would rather be in the casket than deliver the eulogy. **Richard O. Smith; *The Man with His Head in the Clouds*; Signal Books; 2015.**
- Here is a pop quiz: How many light-years does it take for an astronomer to change a lightbulb? The answer, of course, is none. She knows a light-year is a unit of distance, not time.
- Laws are the spider's webs which, if anything small falls into them they ensnare it, but large things break through and escape. **Solon, statesman (c. 638-c. 558 B.C.E.)**
- We are so vain that we even care for the opinion of those we don't care for. *Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach, writer (1830-1916)*

EVER FEEL THIS WAY?

My heart, "Once pregnant with Celestial Fire", is now a womb of dying embers?

WHY MEN WEAR EAR RINGS

I have often wondered how this trend got started, I now have the answer. A man is at work one day when he notices that his co-worker is wearing an earring. This man knows his co-worker to be a normally conservative fellow, and is curious about his sudden change in "fashion sense." The man walks up to him and says, "I didn't know you were into earrings." "Don't make such a big deal, it's only an earring," he replies sheepishly. His friend falls silent for a few minutes, but then his curiosity prods him to say, "So, how long have you been wearing one?" "Ever since my wife found it in my car."

TOPICAL QUOTE

The best of the book's many pertinent quotations and anecdotes is a remark made by the Duke of Edinburgh. Should he ever be reincarnated, the Prince once said, he would like to return as a deadly pathogen — **'one that might solve human overpopulation and the harm it has persisted in visiting on the natural, God-given landscape'**.

A Spectator book review

I HAVE GREAT SYMPATHY WITH THIS MAN

I have always wished that my computer would be as easy to use as my telephone. My wish has come true. I no longer know how to use my telephone.

Bjarne Stroustrup, computer science professor, and designer of C++

(C++ general-purpose programming language)

SMILE

Years ago, when my children were small and we were leaving for an out-of-town trip, my babysitter's father was supposed to come to the house to pick up the spare key for her. We had never met him before. Around dinnertime, when the doorbell rang, I opened the door and found a clergyman standing there who said, "A man's dead." While I was processing this, I gave him, I'm sure, one of my blankest "what are you talking about" looks. He repeated himself. When it dawned on me, I was embarrassed and went to get him the key. What he had actually said was, "I'm Anne's dad."

—Susan Frank, Rockledge, Florida

ANSWER TO QUIZ

Ray Hattingh

PS: The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function.

F Scott Fitzgerald

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