



Cotgrave and District U3A

Keeping in Touch 32

Sally Bates has kindly sent us an update on Rosie and Georgie

The kittens have settled in and are a great delight, every day. No trouble to cope with in these Covid times. It's great fun to see them playing and exploring. They are so noseey!



Their first journey into the back garden was full of wonder. It was interesting to see their awareness of the vast sky and then birds flying at height – it's a cat thing, genetically inbred! The garden shed is an Aladdin's cave to be explored.

They have had their jabs and we are now awaiting the neutering appointment. For anaesthetic purposes, this is weight-dependent so plenty of feeding up which suits them no end. They spend their lives sleeping, playing, eating and pooing. Well trained in the use of the litter tray, though.

They've already had a holiday at the Cotgrave cattery – very well looked after by Lynette, as we enjoyed a break in Llanbedrog before such travel was banned.

The only damage has been to my Bose earphones – wires were shredded! I am sourcing a wire-free set now. In the morning they chase shoelaces as we try to dress!

Rosie is the bigger of the two, braver but clearly a handmaiden to her sister. Georgie is smaller but aware of her regal position as the gorgeous one. Gorgeous and gormless, as my Grandpa would have said! She is using her nine lives with gay abandon. She nearly got squashed in the dishwasher. Exploring the garden resulted in her slipping into the pond – a pretentious name for my sunken bucket which I naively thought would incubate frogspawn!



As with all new things, we have to adapt – how to ensure we are not adding more single-usage plastics with their food pouches? It's a revelation how many folk in Cotgrave can help. Have a look at the plastic-free Cotgrave website:

<https://www.plasticfreecotgrave.org.uk/>

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Cotgrave Place

It seems time for a little more on Cotgrave's history and Cotgrave Place is surely the most glamorous site in the village (even if, to many of us, it seems not to be part of the village at all!). At present time it is, of course, the home of the Nottingham Golf and Country Club, where one



can get a pretty good lunch for a reasonable price or even play a round of golf, if one happens to be a member of the club. Also, and not to be overlooked, it is the home of one of our members, Chris Soar who runs the Croquet Club on his front lawn. But it also has history and, having been quite frequently the home of aristocracy, its history is often known in rather more detail than that of Cotgrave village, itself.

We first meet Cotgrave Place towards the end of the eighteenth century. At that time, just before Cotgrave's Inclosure Act of 1791, the land around Cotgrave Place was owned by Lionella Clay, as witnessed by the attached photograph of a contemporary map. She had inherited it from her Uncle, who had bought it from John Scrimshire in 1759, when the Scrimshire family had upped sticks and left the village, What is not clear is the fact that Lionella actually lived in a big house on the site. She had also inherited the Scrimshire house just off Scrimshire Lane but that was probably in a ruinous state by then so, as far as we know, she never lived there. Anyway, as we have noted previously, Lionella more or less gave Cotgrave Place to her friend William IAnson, who lived there from 1793 to 1801, during which time he demolished the house and replaced it with an elegant 'Georgian' building which still exists (see Photograph). When William died, he left Cotgrave Place to his son Thomas who was a Londoner and obviously had no interest in this far-away corner of the Country so he promptly sold it to Earl Manvers, in 1807. There is an interesting letter in the Manvers papers in which one of the Manvers agents, Nathaniel Stubbins strongly advised the Earl to buy the property at the asking price. Three pieces of land were listed, as follows:



House with land area 198 acres, 3 roods, 6 perches £21,000

Wolds closes 64 acres, 2 roods, 22 perches £ 2,262

Cottage House 1 acre, 0 roods, 0 perches £ 500

The Cottage House is almost certainly the house in Scrimshire Lane where I now live but that is quite another story. What is of particular interest here is the fact that Nathaniel Stubbins had a nephew, Robert Burgess (his sister Catherine's son) who was very soon afterwards to move into Cotgrave Place in order to farm the attached land. He lived there for almost forty years, became Steward to Earl Manvers and made something of a name as a sheep farmer and sheep breeder. Could it just be that Nathaniel had a personal motive in urging the Earl to buy? We shall never know but we can certainly be forgiven for our suspicion!

So, who was Robert Burgess? He was born in 1781, in a village called Hugglescote near Ashby-de-la-Zouch in Leicestershire. His father was called (would you believe?) Robert Burgess and his mother Catherine Stubbins. She came from Holme Pierrepont, where she and the elder Robert were married in 1777. Both parents remained in Hugglescote for the rest of their lives though the younger Robert must have moved away sometime about 1808. The connection with Holme Pierrepont was not lost, of course. Catherine must have returned there from time to time in order to visit friends and relatives and she presumably took her children with her. Hence, young Robert came to meet a young lady called Elizabeth Donnithorne, daughter of Thomas Donnithorne, the Holme Pierrepont Rector. They were married in St Edmonds Church in 1808. (*You're just beginning to feel a trifle confused by now? – well, I'm sorry, there's more to come!*). Yet another member of the Holme Pierrepont - Burgess clan was (just guess!) Robert Burgess, later to become Vicar of Radcliffe-on-Trent. He was born there in 1819 to a father named Joseph Stubbins Burgess and, remarkably, *our* Robert Burgess had a brother, born 1784 in Hugglescote, with the name Robert Stubbins Burgess! Could they, perhaps, have been one and the same person? Indeed, they were! Robert Stubbins Burgess was also a sheep farmer and bred sheep with his brother at Cotgrave Place. They were both well known in sheep farming circles and won prizes in Nottinghamshire competitions. And, while we are becoming ever more familiar with the Burgess/Stubbins family, we might note that Robert's Uncle, Nathaniel Stubbins was no run-of-the-mill villager – in 1798 he was High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire. No wonder that he was able to advise Earl Manvers on a man-to-man basis to purchase Cotgrave Place for young Robert to live in!

Anyway, Robert Burgess served Earl Manvers well at Cotgrave Place until his death (in situ) at the age of 65, in 1846. His place was taken by Charles John Hill, who, as far as we know, had no local connections at all. He was born in 1796 at Westbury-on-Trym, Gloucestershire and died in the New Forest, Hampshire in 1876. But more of him on another day – I suspect that you have suffered enough for one week!

I never said that local history was straightforward!

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Aposiosis – Appassiopesis – Apesioposis – App ...

Well, whatever ... we can rely on Chris Soar to ... and here we have it for better or...

Thanks Chris for yet another erudite article.

Consider this phrase – or else...

“Or else what?”

“Exactly!”

“What d’you mean exactly? “

“That’s what I’m talking about.”

“What **are** you talking about”

The phrase “or else”, usually followed by 3 dots when written, is an aposiopesis.

Dictionaries which include this word defined it as “the device of suddenly breaking off in the middle of a sentence, as if unwilling to continue”. Device, eh!

I did read that the Greek word is for “becoming silent” – sounds about right!

If only that were the sole meaning – if only... Whoops! There’s another one!

There are surely 3 main reasons for using an aposiopesis, the dictionary definition being “as if unwilling” (“as if...” - that’s another one) – that you don’t need to go on; that you can’t go on; or that you want to leave the audience hanging, oh, and what about those play and cinema death scenes when the victim gasps “It was... it was...” and then snuffs it, probably because the policeman trying to hear him, suffocates him with his ear – or am I being a little fanciful here?

Of course, the first example, in the title above, is probably mostly used when trying to get one’s children to do something, and not being able offhand, to think of an appropriate threat. Therefore using “Tidy your room or else...” may leave them examining their worst ideas of what their parent might conjure up, maybe thinking that their parent is so appalled at him/herself at the punishment in mind, that he/she can’t go on. Anyway, that’s probably the most used, in some cases enjoyably used, aposiopesis.

Can we think of some more? What about the beer drinker attending a party where they all start drinking shots, and is encouraged to join in? He might think “Well, when in Rome...”; and when the Monday Club are questioning why Michael O’Connor is not present, and he walks in? “Talk of the Devil...” .

But then....

However, on that note ...

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Art Group

The Art Group continues to surprise us with the quality of their offerings. This week we have contributions from Dorothy Albans and Don Whitaker. Thank you both and thanks to the Group – we may well need to rely on you for some time yet, so I'm holding several of your artworks for another week!



Puzzle Corner

This week we have the answers to Sue Hillyard's Crossword puzzle. Thanks, again, Sue.

ACROSS

1. The birds at the back fly from side to side (12) **SHUTTLECOCKS**
5. You will find part of a fish in here (3) **FIN**
6. As well as can be expected (4) **ALSO**
7. Caps seen in the Himalayas maybe? (3) **ICE**
9. You might have little but you can definitely start small in America (4) **LACK**
11. You can get this without difficulty (6) **EASILY**
14. Get near and shut it! (5) **CLOSE**
15. Unhappily a winter disorder (3) **SAD**
17. Yorkshire sweets (5) **SPICE**
20. Metallic and colourful sounding, quite pleasant to listen to (10) **CHROMATIC**
22. Those in third and second place came as a bit of a shock! (2) **OH**
23. A cracked one sounds dull and crazy (3) **POT**
24. Nottingham is apparently in this backward little region (2) **ME**
25. Perhaps the confused sailor was unwelcome onboard? (3) **RAT**
27. It's definitely not us who are short of a topic! (4) **THEM**
29. and 29 down. I heard you on the radio (3) **TEN**
30. Just look at her age and you'll find her particular time period (3) **ERA**
31. Even without King George it's still very good that we all do this (3) **EAT**
32. The tart lost her companion, but the guitarist can still play (5) **STRUM**
33. Sounds like the chap got his money through altruistic provisions? (6) **GRANTS**

DOWN

1. Without nitrogen the tobacco sniffers don't do so well (6) **SUFFERS**
 2. Lovely money laying around (5) **LOLLY**
 3. 7 across combined with 2 down results in one of these (12) **COOL CUSTOMER**
 4. I can can do high ones (5) **KICKS**
 7. Symbolic of the brand? (6) **ICONIC**
 8. A tasty sounding symbol (2) **PI**
 10. This short man was one of the writers (2) **AL**
 12. Was this the original broad band? (4) **SASH**
 13. The noisy confusion could be fair game (4) **LUDO**
 16. That sailor got mixed up to use this creative medium (3) **ART**
 18. The inverted triangle top is one you can descend into (3) **PIT**
 19. They can take 3 days; others not so long - or even longer (6) **EVENTS**
 20. Without a royal warrant you can still plot a safe voyage (5) **CHART**
 21. Not a copy cat but a species with the same characteristics (3) **APE**
 22. The confused flower produces minerals (4) **ORES**
 24. See me at the butcher's (4) **MEAT**
 26. The aforementioned sailor is sticky (3) **TAR**
 28. Half of the fence is in the ditch (2) **HA**
 29. See 29 across (3) **TEN**
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The Carpenter

I was sent this lovely photograph of a stained-glass window in the form of a Birthday Card in recognition, I believe, of my own attempts at woodwork. I think you will agree that it is simply beautiful – just look at the detail, the wooden plane, the bowsaw, the tenon joints in the door (or whatever he is working on). And look at the date 1558 – everything is as clear as if it had been made last year. It's in Ilkley Church. We were on our way to the Yorkshire Dales a couple of years ago and were in something of a hurry so the stay in Ilkley was a brief one and I didn't even see the window then, so it was a delight to receive the photograph recently. I hope you enjoy it too. Blow it up – it's sharp enough to stand considerable magnification.



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Creative Writing Group

This sees the last of the Creative Writing Group contributions about 'Money'. It's by Elsie Warby. Thank you Elsie and, indeed, the Group – it makes life so much easier to have an excellent and reliable contribution each week.

The Scratch Card

“Money, money, money must be funny in a rich man’s world.” Tracy walked along singing the familiar ABBA song to her three year old son Ethan who was giggling away. She was on her way to collect her five year old son Thomas from school.

“ I wonder what it would be like to be wealthy,” Tracy mused. She was a single mum, her two children were the result of short lived failed relationships, the fathers having long since vanished.

Tracy struggled to make ends meet, she had two part time cleaning jobs which fitted in with the times that the boys were in nursery and school. These jobs weren't well paid and it was a constant struggle to make ends meet. There was little money left after paying for rent and food and the electric meter swallowed money at an alarming rate in their poorly insulated, rented flat. The boys were in desperate need of shoes and clothes for the cold winter weather ahead. “Thank goodness for charity shops” she thought.

Tracy called in to the newsagents, close to school, to purchase a top up for the electric meter. Her one treat was to buy a scratch card once a week in the vain hope that she might have a substantial win. The shop was busy and there was a long queue waiting impatiently whilst Tracy topped up her electric card. Ethan was pestering for some sweets so Tracy gave in and bought a small bar of chocolate for both boys, ignoring the self righteous looks of people behind her, no doubt they didn't have young children. Whilst Tracy was placating Ethan who had decided to scream the place down, the assistant passed over the scratch card Tracy had asked for. In a hurry to escape the stares and tutting she grabbed her change, chocolate and scratch card and left the shop. It was only when she got outside and Ethan had calmed down that she realised, with a shock, that she didn't have as much change as she'd expected. She looked closely at her precious scratch card and realised to her horror that the shop keeper had given her a £5 millionaire scratch card instead of the usual £1 one. She was about to take it back into the shop but time was moving on and she only had a couple of minutes to get to the school.

Tracy put the card in her pocket intending to call back in the shop on the way home. However when Thomas came out of school he wanted to go and play with his friend Nathan. Nathan's mum, Gemma, invited them all round to her house for tea and cake, she also had a girl, three year old Emily, who liked to play with Ethan.

With the children playing happily in the garden Tracy told Gemma about the mistake. She wondered whether to return to the shop and swap her scratch card back for the one she originally intended to buy. Gemma pointed out that she might as well keep that card and then save the money by not buying another card for four weeks.

Tracy appreciated the point Gemma was making, so, not feeling particularly lucky, she started to scratch the card - one gold coin, then two and then three! This meant that she had a winner but how much? It would be at least £5 so that would cover the cost of the card. She carefully scratched off the winning box. Unable to believe her eyes she looked in amazement at the amount £1million! She gasped. Could it be true?

“Gemma look at this. Does it mean what I think it means?” Tracy’s hand shook as she passed the card to her friend.

Gemma screamed. “OMG it’s true Tracy. You’re a millionaire!”

Tracy sat in stunned silence, unable to grasp the enormity of what she’d just discovered.

Somehow she made her way home keeping the card tucked safely into her bra. After feeding and putting the children to bed she sat and stared at it for hours. Slowly it dawned on her. No more money worries, she could buy her own house and a car. She could afford to go on holiday with the children, her life would be changed forever.

Six months later Tracy and the children were living in a four bedroom modern detached house. She had the latest model hybrid car and the children were well fed and dressed. They continued to attend the same school and nursery as both children were happy there and she saw no reason to move them. They were planning a summer holiday at a holiday park with Gemma and her children, like Tracy she was a single mum who also had to watch her spending. Tracy was pleased to be able to help Gemma by paying for the holiday because Gemma had been such a support in the days following her windfall, showing no envy, and not broadcasting her win to all and sundry.

Tracy wasn’t a greedy person and she was well aware of how lucky that mistake by the shop assistant had been for her. She was also mindful of how different her life would have been if she hadn’t won that money. She resolved to try, in some way, to help other parents struggling to bring up children with limited funds. She started helping out with the breakfast club at school, often contributing the food and also at the local food bank. In addition to that she applied to train as a nursery teacher with a view to opening her own nursery especially for disadvantaged families.

“Money, money, money..” the ABBA song came back into Tracy’s mind as she contemplated her change in fortunes. She wasn’t massively rich but was comfortable enough to not have any money worries. She wouldn’t be heading off to Las Vegas or Monaco any time soon but that didn’t worry her, she was happy as she was.

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Three Tiers

We've been a bit thin on limericks of late so here is a wodge of them to make up for lost...!

Now, how many Tiers have been shed
Since our last Weekly Letter was read?
"Is it up one – or down?
For each city or town"
Must be everyone's everyday dread.

We know Nottingham's now in Tier Two*
But we don't always know what to do.
Is it alright to go?
You never quite know -
Need a mask if I go to the loo?

And then, if I step out of line,
I may well face a hideous fine.
And this is the rub,
If I go to the pub,
Do I stick to my beer or drink wine?

And suppose that I need a haircut,
Is the barber still open – or shut?
What should I intend?
Have it cut by a friend?
There's always an 'if' or a 'but'!

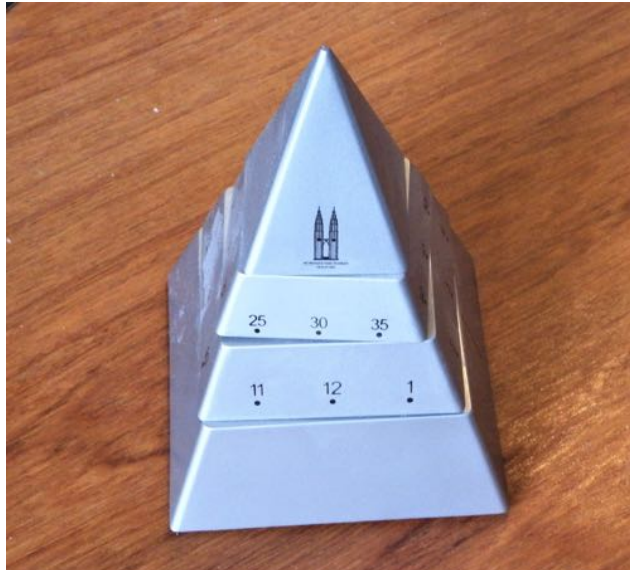
And again, at a range of events,
With even the best of intents,
One wonders how few
May stand in the queue
And how many 're allowed in the gents.

Already, for most of my life,
I've stayed close to my beautiful wife
But this Pandemic is prone
(As we're living alone)
To encourage our Marital Strife

* Or, at least, it was when I wrote this!

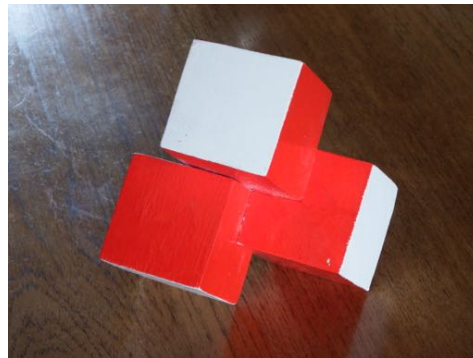
Four Tiers

We bought this clock in Kuala Lumpur about twenty-five years ago! It still goes – when I remember to change the battery.



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Look after yourselves and don't shed too many Tiers. See you next week.

John



PS. Now we are definitely in Tier Three, you might like to replace verse two above with the following:

We know Nottingham's now in Tier Three
But we don't always know how to be.
Is it alright to go?
You never quite know -
Need a mask if I go for a pee?

PPS. It has come to my notice that Weekly Letter 30 was actually labelled "Keeping in Touch 29" and you were all too polite to point it out! Thank you for your forbearance. It certainly won't happen again - if only because we are now onto number 32.