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Welcome



Hi there everyone,
Our front cover picture has quite a symbolic nature to it this time; a winter sun setting on the western horizon, ending the day as a flight of swans head off to a new life; for this edition is in fact our swan song, the last Grantham

Now that Andrea and I will work on together. We have decided that life is too short and therefore we're bringing to a close our immersive involvement with the magazine and retiring.

The good news is that Grantham Now will carry on, thanks to its new owner Sara Gill who's standing by to take hold of the tiller and navigate the magazine through whatever waters lie ahead. We made friends with her thanks to our dogs forming a bond during our walks on Wyndham Park. It's been a delight to get to know her and her family and we know that the future of the magazine is going to go to a safe pair of hands. In any case, we'll only be a phone call away, if and when questions arise.

It only remains for us to say a big heartfelt thank you to all the many readers we have reached and to the advertisers who have kept our ship afloat. And where would we have been without Paul Bond our incredible designer, our many distributors down the years not to mention Paul and Lloyd at the printers who produce the finished thing.

To you all; goodbye, thank you, have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Please give Sara a warm welcome when springtime blooms.

Andrea & Richard Coppin



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Grantham *Then*

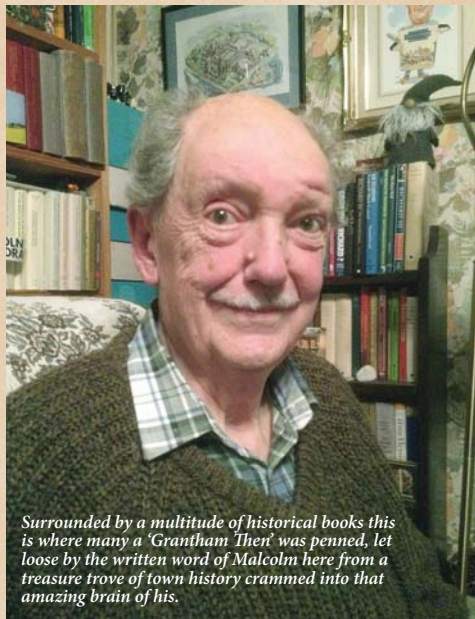
The Final Full Stop.

By Richard & Andrea Coppin

Ever since November 2007 we have been proud to publish a 'Grantham Then' section on page 4 of our magazine written by the renowned historian Malcolm G. Knapp. It is therefore with a great deal of sadness that we prepare the final full stop to these much-loved articles into Grantham's past by him and mourn the passing of a dear friend.

Malcolm was a fount of knowledge when it came to the history of this town; his mind was an ever-expanding library of facts and information on the place he called home. Far beyond the bare essentials of dates and events, Malcolm had a plethora of anecdotes and fascinating stories that he'd picked up along the way which gave the often dusty subject of history a vibrancy of life. Not only that, but he was able to communicate the love he had for the town's past in ways that engaged with everyone. There was never a dull and boring 'Grantham Then'; mainly because Malcolm had such enthusiasm for the topics he covered; schools, memorable events, house plaques and their dates, sport, famous characters who'd visited the town, early phone numbers, the town's military connections, the war, pubs & hotels, dancing, music and also long-forgotten shops (well, not so long-forgotten to those of a certain age).

The way the articles were prepared was also part of the past it seemed to us. Malcolm would hand-write each piece in his meticulously printed style, numbering each one efficiently to coincide with the publication number of the magazine. Often as not there would be a couple of cut-out photographs which he'd attach with a paperclip for us to scan. It provided the chance to discover how he'd formed each article in his mind, which was just as much fun as reading the piece itself; such was his abiding enthusiasm and dedication to the town's history. Usually he'd provide three at a time, which we'd then type up and send to Paul, our designer to prepare for proofing. These meetings at his welcoming home, Spire View on Swinegate were very special; a glimpse into a world of old



Surrounded by a multitude of historical books this is where many a 'Grantham Then' was penned, let loose by the written word of Malcolm here from a treasure trove of town history crammed into that amazing brain of his.

fashioned courtesy. His home was a place where good manners and good conversation were important; it was evident that Malcolm was very much a gentleman of the old school.

So many happy memories and so many wonderful nuggets of Grantham's past poured out on to page four of our magazine. He will be missed by us both. Malcolm passed away on August 9th leaving a large and loving family to remember his genial and amusingly quirky ways. He was, when all was said and done, a one off; a real 'character' living in an age where that sort of thing seems to be disappearing. The many books he wrote and published will stand as an historical legacy for Grantham long after the facts of his career, his walkabout guided tours and his lectures have slipped from living memory. And perhaps, if they survive the tests of time, sixty-one Grantham Then articles from the pen of the great man.

It seems too sad a thing to do, but here it is, our final sentence for Malcolm; our final full stop.

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Backing Acupuncture

It comes to us all in the end; the realisation that we're not invincible twenty somethings as we imagine but that our bodies have been telling us a few porkies by courtesy of a brain which refuses to accept that we're getting older.

Well Mark Brammer here looks fit enough; certainly with sufficient vigour it seems to lift a heavy steel gate into place wouldn't you say? Ok, so it wasn't as easy as he thought it would be, but hey; he's as fit as a fiddle, just another challenge to overcome. And let's face it, he did fit it, so there you go; this getting older business is all in the mind; right? The following day found him on a jet bound for Canada; a well anticipated holiday to see his family over there, nine and a half hours in an airline seat watching the Atlantic slip by; what could be more relaxing? The touchdown was perfect. Mark prepared to get up and collect his hand luggage only to find that he couldn't move, worse still, his lower back was in agony – disaster!

Mark's sister put him in touch with her Canadian doctor who prescribed painkillers and lots of rest. Not what he'd dreamed of as he wanted to catch up with all his relatives during the trip. On his return to the UK he stopped taking the painkillers to see how things would improve; they didn't, not by a long chalk. His G.P recommended an MRI scan at Grantham Hospital, followed by some physiotherapy. With a programme of stretching exercises things began to improve, enough of an improvement in fact for him to consider getting back to his part time job as a retained Fire Fighter. Once more that brain of his began to tell him that he was still full of youthful vim and vigour. With spade in hand he started work on digging



A knotty problem solved. Mark's ability to do this simple task is the result of a dozen slender needles and a few thousand years of Eastern medical knowledge.

out a base for a shed; lifting forty bags of rubble into a skip. The result – Twang! – back to square one. His doctor reprimanded him saying that if he didn't listen to advice, he'd be in a wheelchair if he wasn't careful. "You're not twenty-five anymore Mark," he told him indignantly, and he was left having to admit that he was going to have to act his age. He couldn't even bear the pain to do simple things like tie his shoelaces.

One day, under great pain he was walking back from the hospital to visit his pharmacy when he passed the Chinese Herbcare and Acupuncture Centre on the High Street. Before he knew what was happening his legs had propelled

him into the clinic for an examination; he even showed the resident Chinese doctor the picture of his scan. This leap into the unknown found him lying on the treatment couch there and then; painless needles placed in the back of his hand, his elbow, six in his ear and all down his lower back. Some of the places the needles were located seemed odd to Mark's rational mind. Doctor Ma explained that in Chinese medicine the understanding is that the body is latticed with a network of interconnecting lines of energy; meridians they're called. The needles relieve blockages in these meridians and cause the body to heal itself. Well the next day Mark thought it had all gone badly wrong; he felt as if he'd been kicked in the back by a horse. However the following day all the pain had gone; utterly and completely, his body had in fact healed itself just as he'd been told. Since then he's gone mountain climbing, jet skiing and enjoyed action holidays with his kids.

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And they all look just the same.

“Little boxes on the hillside, little boxes make of Ticky-Tacky...”

Well, you have to be of a certain age to understand the musical reference there; but for those in the glow of youth, just tap it into Youtube and you’ll soon be humming the tune all day long.

These little boxes however are crammed with Mesh Wi-Fi technology, set to make the wireless world of computing a synch; no more black spots to blight your life, no more quiet corners of the room to avoid but rather a blanket coverage of your home, taking all the unpredictability of wandering around your house a thing of the past.

All kinds of things can obscure the signal of your wireless devices working as you’d like. Modern homes are often stud walled made with plaster board backed by an aluminium foil of insulation, this along with the wireless shadow caused by things like the metal body of a fridge simply block the stream of data. After all, it’s basic radio technology we’re talking about here, just made that bit better using what’s called MIMO (Multi In – Multi Out), a capacity that enables this sort of thing to work well, giving your wireless world the ability to seemingly look round corners .

Globally, we’ve been used to getting radio signals around the world via satellite. These little boxes do practically the same thing; a master box connected to your modem connects to its other two companion boxes to create a relay of super-strong signals to other rooms, upstairs and downstairs, with the potential to cover 6,000 square feet. With this Mesh Wi Fi installed, your home is flooded with uninterrupted beams of all the data you need; phone to PC, laptop to printer. It’s the way forward and helps to make



These little white boxes are set to transform the wireless performance of the devices in your home with their superb networking ability; helping to flood your home with an uninterrupted stream of data.



life that bit more convenient. The ones we sell are made by Tenda, rated by Amazon at four-and-a-half stars of excellence; pretty impressive stuff. And don’t worry about installation, we’re more than happy to come to your home and get it installed for you. Actually you’d expect no less from us; it’s our guiding principle to be as helpful as

it’s humanly possible to be; something we’ve been doing for over twenty-five years. Our desire to be customer focussed has seen us repair machines, sort out malware, retrieve lost files where possible, match up customers with the right kind of machine, provide a vast array of inks (the largest range in town to be honest) and sort out more queries, quibbles and questions that we could ever remember.

It all goes to show that Grantham Computer Centre is constantly one step ahead of the curve and always keen to give you a superb service. We might be a small team but you know what they say about things that come in little packages; rather like our little boxes for example – nuff said!



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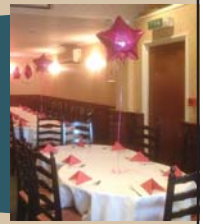
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Mention names like Dylan Hartley, Owen Farrell, Sarah Hunter and Eddie Jones and you'll find those with a particular sporting interest will know that the spotlight's shining on Rugby football. It's a game that has unleashed a great many characters over the years; most notably players like Rory Underwood and Jonny Wilkinson. And who can forget the Scottish accent of commentator Bill McLaren the legendary "Voice of Rugby"?

Many of these famous people began their careers in their local clubs, learning about team work and the tactics that go into creating a winning score. Kesteven RFC, the Rugby Club of Grantham is just such an organization; a club that has the game right at its centre but one that offers a lot more besides; a growing and friendly social scene for example offering an ever-expanding set of regular events put on to bring people together just for the fun of it. This highly welcoming aspect is what makes the club so approachable and inviting. There's no pressure to get involved in the nitty-gritty of club life and yet it's this very pleasant aspect that inspires people to want to embrace it. Of course for those with a love of sport and Rugby in particular, they'll find a club with a vibrant heart; somewhere to get stuck into a game that's been part of English culture since 1857. Laws and codes of conduct there might be, but

Kesteven Rugby Club aims to keep the essential essence of fun squarely at the centre of the games they play and the training they do; to that end it extends a meaningful welcome to all comers.

There are three adult senior Rugby teams with the men training on Tuesdays and Thursdays; beginning at 7.00 in the evening and the Ladies training on Mondays at 7.00. Saturdays of course are reserved for those all-important matches. For youngsters wanting to get in on the action there's Mini Rugby on Sunday morning for an hour between 11.00 and 12.00, Junior Rugby from 11.00 to 12.30 along with matches throughout the season.

There's a thriving momentum for women and girls who have a passion for playing Rugby too, with two squads for girls; an under thirteen and an under fifteen each with training sessions between 11.00 and 12.00 on a Sunday morning. For more information; just phone up or check out the web site.

Rugby football, which was once the preserve of a single Public School, is now a global sport, loved by millions the world over, be they players or spectators. At Kesteven, The Rugby Club of Grantham the emphasis is on safety and fair play, but it also has at its heart the dynamism and excitement that comes from playing this vigorous game. If you're interested in joining,

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The car park owners offer a totally personalised service as well. Long term parking for multiple consecutive days can be paid for in advance; particularly suitable for business people or holiday-makers going away for several days at a time. At incredibly competitive rates it has to be said too (just £5.00 per weekday and only £2.00 per day at weekends). For shorter stays of up to 5 hours, the rate is only 85p per hour, and, just three minutes from the town centre it's a car park worthy of serious consideration.

Even more convenient, especially for the regular daily commuter, there is the personalised reserved parking option, giving you your own allocated space bearing your car's registration number. This has proven very popular with commuters; even so there are still a few spaces available on a first-

come-first-served basis and can be paid monthly by Bank Transfer/Standing Order (no contract required – contact for more details). Flexibility can also be arranged for absence during holiday/Christmas periods. Comparing the costs to those of the railway station's car park it's not unreasonable to state that if you're a regular user you could save yourself somewhere in the region of £1,500 per year. The car park is continually

monitored closely by CCTV. Flood lighting illuminates the car park from when darkness descends to midnight in the winter. In any case, during the day there's usually a member of the management in attendance making this a very safe and secure car park indeed. In fact as far as car parking in Grantham is concerned it's a no-brainer really, don't you think?



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A Café fit for a King

Have you discovered one of Grantham's hidden gems yet? Tucked away between Guildhall Street and Narrow Westgate you will find a quaint and delightful courtyard flanked on each side by local independent shops and a lovely café; kings walk café to be precise where you're about to receive a right royal welcome.

Always a friendly face behind the counter with a smile to greet you, pointing you towards a table and allowing you to sit in comfort and enjoy the good old fashioned art of waitress service. No queuing or trying to remember your table's order. Just sit back and enjoy the company of your fellow diners whilst they serve you. All around you are couples meeting up for lunch, a shop owner grabbing a quick bite, the four ladies who always meet here on a weekday and a group of friends who visited here a month ago and won't go anywhere else for a meal now. Meet, Eat and Relax is the café's mantra and makes this almost like a home from home.

It's now that you begin to feel that special quality which the kings walk café possesses; every member of staff here understands the value of you, the customer and has that intrinsic human quality of likeability. They're naturally engaging people; the word 'genuine' seems to sum them up quite nicely. You've seen it already with those who are regular customers; enjoying a bit of light-hearted banter with as much bonhomie to affirm that this is where they 'belong'. And even though you're new here, you feel relaxed enough to ask for a

few subtle alterations to what's on the menu, after all, you've never liked mushrooms, and here, it's not a problem. "How about an extra egg instead?" you're asked, after all you are the customer, the jewel in this particular crown.

You've chosen a Full English Breakfast this time with poached eggs; (but no mushrooms of course) from the breakfast menu that's served all day every day, but it could just as easily have been freshly made American pancakes with warm cherries and ice cream if you'd have preferred, or a free range omelette maybe, or even a hot jacket potato with homemade chilli or cheese perhaps. Their pulled pork, a signature dish, 24 hour marinated, and slow cooked



All the King's Horses; The café owners, Leza and Mark, along with the friendly waiting team and the superb cooks that go to make the king's walk café the superb establishment it is.

for 12 hours is simply mouth-watering and that's before we've got on to the homemade cakes and treats to go with the large selection of tea or freshly ground coffee, again done to your liking and which, as rumour has it, is the best in Grantham. Over the last 16 months



since

Leza and Mark bought the business, it's been their mindset from the very start, to deliver delicious home cooked fresh food, offer a great customer experience and pay attention to the detail. In fact it's these three pillars on which the café is really built and continuously strives for.

Taking care of everyone who visits, matters, because at kings walk café, you'll always matter and feel valued and part of their journey as the café continues to evolve around its customers and local community to become more than just a café; a meeting place, a friendly face and warm feeling of belonging.

It's also a disabled-friendly place too with easy access and a washroom that's perfect for everyone. There's a licensed bar serving wines, beers and ciders. Both upstairs and out on the courtyard (especially in the summer months) you'll find even more room which is just as well as the success of the kings walk café has gone from strength to strength. They also offer outside catering, private hire and Christmas menus. This year's yuletide festivities begin on December 3rd, concluding on the 21st.

But to enjoy another secret of this unique eatery they have a further surprise up their sleeve for December. If it's a special discount you like, just try saying the word 'King' as you leave, then see what happens; just another good reason for visiting this hidden gem.

kingswalkcafé

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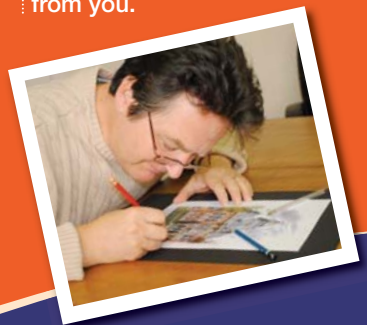
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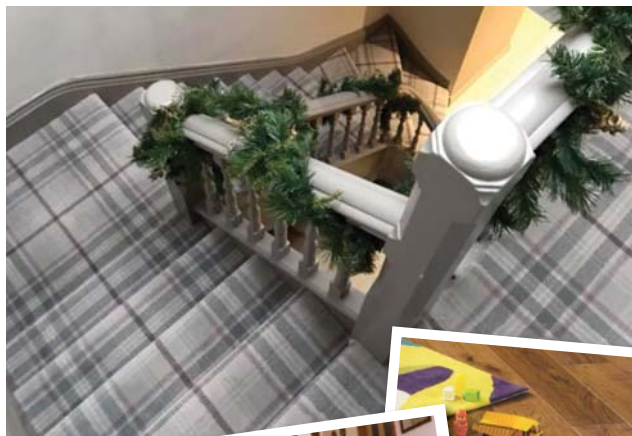


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Our Great Pre-Christmas Promotion...kind of!

All the pre-Christmas hype is out there as we're sure you're well aware. Furniture retailers are standing by to give you the 'perfect' Christmas if you buy their three piece suite 'Now', reduced to just £Blah, Blah, Blah! You can even jet away over 'The Holidays' so you can actually achieve the 'ideal' Christmas break, whatever that is.

At Floor Designs we know that having a new carpet isn't going to give the bells any more jingle, the holly and the ivy won't grow any faster, there won't be any 'magic studio snow' to engender the festive season with that fairytale perfection. We don't promote ourselves like that; we just make sure that you get what you want on your floor at a price that's fair and with a service that's second to none. The smell and feel of a brand new living room carpet, for all its wonder and luxury, won't make crackers bang any louder or create even more hilarious party games. It'll just do what it's meant to do; keep you comfortably warm and make your house feel even more like a home. As for the rest of the party season, well, that's up to you. What you will get from us are decades of professional experience, a desire to guide you towards the floor you want, and the highly polished skills to bring it into your home. These are no empty boasts; Floor Designs would not have survived the years without these three key factors, each one



encapsulated under the umbrella of something that people are putting before all else these days; integrity. If this makes Floor Designs appear to have one foot in the past then that's great. Integrity is a word that seems to belong there. Without it though, a business is adrift and open to justifiable criticism. Richard Malley who runs Floor Designs won't have it any other way. From the moment you pick up the phone to enquire about a new floor, to the time you receive a call from them to ask if everything is as it should be when the job's been done, you'll experience that integrity all the way. Like all good things, it's simple, like a mantra that insists on nothing but the best all the way along the process. Making it happen though is a matter of being at the top of your game; it's this which epitomises the Floor Designs team; no hype, just a



golden seam of quality running through the entire business.

So, go and enjoy Christmas. Watch the kids faces glow when they unwrap the presents, enjoy that glass of sherry, revel in good Yuletide conversation, tuck into that mouth-watering Christmas dinner, soak up the entire atmosphere. If we can add that little extra touch by providing you with flooring that makes it that bit cosier then we'll be happy. We won't make any claims that what we do will make your Christmas any more brilliant; we'll just play our small part to add that tiny bit of sparkle to the festivities, no more, no less. Merry Christmas, and remember, we're still here come the Happy New Year.

Richard Malley

FLOOR DESIGNS

Unit 15, Partnership House, Withambrook Park,
Londonthorpe Road, Grantham, Lincs. NG31 9ST
Tel: 01476 564718 www.malleyfloors.com



Focus on...

Avenue Veterinary Centre

and Private Wojtek, soldier bear

by Richard Huddart, a veterinary surgeon at the Avenue Veterinary Centre in Grantham and Bottesford.



I was delighted this week to hear about the prospect of a forthcoming new animation film. The makers of the popular animations "The Snowman" and "Father Christmas", based on the childrens' books by Raymond Briggs, are about to tackle a new challenge.

This story is different, however, for it is true. The film will be very poignant no doubt, as it describes the life and heroism of a bear, named "Wojtek" (pronounced Voi-tek) by his comrades in the Polish army during the Second World War.

In the earlier phases of WWII, a large part of the Polish Army was in captivity in the Soviet Union. In 1941, Hitler invaded Russia with "Operation Barbarossa". A new Polish Army was organized under General Wladislaw Anders and mobilized rapidly towards the West to help fight the Nazis. Legend tells that a group of these soldiers adopted a Russian bear in Siberia and named him "Wojtek". However, in reality, "Wojtek" had been bought as a cub from a boy street seller in Iran



(Persia at that time). He grew into a huge but tame and popular beast, being treated to sandwiches and bottled beer by the men! He would famously eat cigarettes too, but only if they were lit! By the time he was two years of age, he weighed 500lb and learned to help the troops by carrying artillery shells, putting his great strength to good use.

His fame spread, no doubt with some embellishment, and he was given the rank (and pay) of Private in the 16th Artillery Transport Company.

The Polish Army under General Anders, joined by Private Wojtek, went on to play a crucial role in the battle for Monte Cassino in Italy, which helped to turn the tide of the war against the Nazis in Europe.

Having survived the war, "Wojtek" sailed with the army to Scotland, where he remained in Edinburgh zoo until he died of natural causes in 1962. Many Polish war veterans were among his frequent visitors, some of whom still treated him to lit cigarettes! His place in the rich

Polish history is assured thanks to many memorials.

While at a veterinary orthopaedics conference in Edinburgh last year, I walked past and took this photograph of the statue of "Wojtek" and a Polish soldier, situated in his memory in Princes Gardens in the shadow of Edinburgh Castle.

My own experience with veterinary treatment of bears is very limited. Fortunately, the bad old days of circus performance of wild animals have passed. Many years ago, however, I had been involved in the euthanasia of a poor old brown bear which had been badly gored by a tiger in



the adjacent cage! Now a trip to the circus in this country may only involve domestic animals. And humans of course!

Microchipping reminder!

Latest figures released by Battersea Dogs Home show that 35% of stray dogs have no microchip! This is despite the law requiring owners to have their dogs microchipped for over two years now.

They also found that only 29% of dogs which had a microchip had accurate, up-to-date details on the database. So - please remember to alter these details if you move house, or change telephone numbers.

On site 24 hour emergency service available at reduced prices for our regular clients.

JOIN OUR PET HEALTH CLUB NOW AVAILABLE!

We are committed to the proper health treatment of the animals under our care, and can now offer a Practice Healthcare Plan to help clients to spread their veterinary costs over each year. In addition to providing a convenient way to ease the finances, the Healthcare Plan offers significant savings on the total cost of vaccinations, worm and flea treatment as well as big discounts on all other fees. Combined with our Puppy and Kitten Packages, out of hours emergency care at our own premises (the only local practice to offer this), we provide a complete service for the pets of Grantham.



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If you would like to make an appointment, contact the Avenue Veterinary Centre on

01476 563371
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Award-Winning Opticians Right on your doorstep

Lunettes Opticians are a leading group of three independent opticians, based in Sleaford, Grantham and Ruskington with over 27 years' experience in providing professional eye care to the local community.

Lunettes Opticians' focus is to put their customers at the heart of the business. 'Our aim is to offer a personalised approach to each consultation based on the individual's needs and lifestyle to provide the best possible eyecare' says managing director, Tushar Majithia, who has also recently been appointed to the Board at the Association of Optometrists. Their success has been recently recognised with the business winning in 2 prestigious national awards and short-listed in another.

So, what makes Lunettes Opticians stand out?

- 👁️ A highly trained, motivated, friendly, compassionate and enthusiastic team.
- 👁️ The practices are designed with the customers' needs in mind. Their facilities are very modern, clean, well-accessible and have the latest eye testing technology.
- 👁️ An innovative approach, from investing in the latest equipment to dispensing aids and frame-styling techniques. All 3 practices are equipped with state-of-the-art 3D OCT scanning technology to help with early diagnosis of eye conditions.
- 👁️ They stock an extensive selection of stylish eyewear and can supply high quality bespoke lenses whatever your requirements, style and budget. Lunettes have many exclusive leading brands such as Oliver Peoples, Tom Ford, Oakley, Tiffany and many more.

All three practices provide NHS and private eye tests, colour vision testing and contact lenses. Lunettes also offer a Low Vision Service for people with sight impairment, and are locally commissioned by the NHS as a Minor Eye Conditions Service (MECS) provider.



For more information or to book your next appointment at Lunettes Opticians visit the website www.lunettes.co.uk

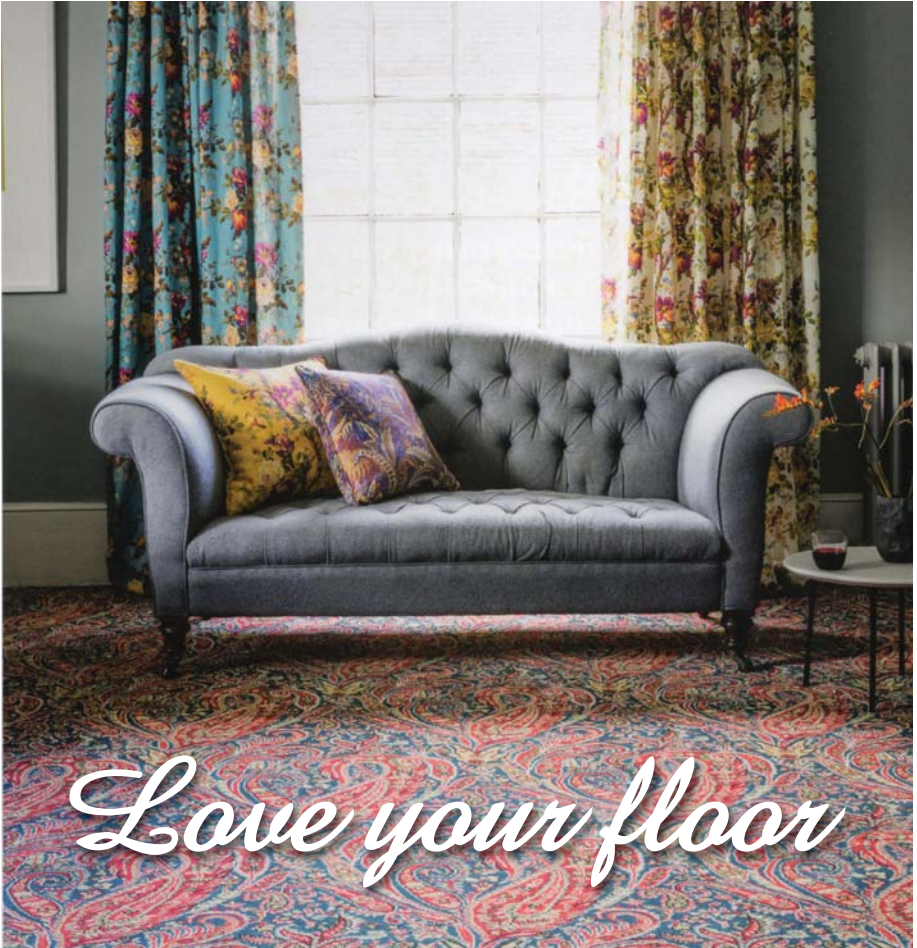


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Please call to arrange a home visit

Read All About It

By Richard Coppin

Up until now, almost everyone has taken Archie's shyness as a sign of mental frailty. The meeting going on in the Boss' house to figure out what the Mayor's Compulsory Purchase Order really means is proving that Archie has a razor sharp mind; something that has excited Noel Blockhead's imagination more than anyone would expect. Let's be a fly on the wall, and listen to their secret conversation.

Chapter Twenty-Four

"Doesn't a compulsory purchase order have to wend its way through certain channels?" said Archie as curls of cigar smoke pithered into the air of the drawing room which the men had adjourned to.

"That's an incisive question dear chap," said the Boss.

"What made you think of that?"

"And why would a farm need an aeroplane?" said Archie cutting through the conversation; trying to examine what had so far been unearthed.

"Modern methods," said Pitchblack who, up to this point, had been wondering how to engage his brain.

"I don't buy that," said Archie forging on with his thinking. "The old hands at Grabham Manor know them fields like the backs of their earthy hands. They don't need contraptions like aeroplanes; all they need is a red sky at night and the right moon to plant by."

"Just look at you Archie dear fellow," said the Boss.

"You have come a long way."

"I've been led by the best Sir," he said in a forthright manner. "If I feel more grown up, and I do, it's all down to you."

The Boss smiled though a misty layer of emotion, taking in his little protégé with something akin to admiration. He was reminded of a certain lieutenant he'd known during the recent war who'd tried his best during a sea battle and had lost his life to save him, his captain. More than ever he now wanted to take Archie under his wing and give him all the opportunities in life he felt able to.

"What we need," continued Archie, his nerves braced with boldness, "is an *agent provocateur* of some sort; a spark to light the tinder box."

"What do you propose?" asked the Boss, eager to see how expansive this young brain could be.

"Look what Princip managed to create," said Archie.

"Gavrilo Princip," said Pitchblack quietly. "Creator of a nightmare."

"Yes, him," said Archie. "And if it hadn't been him it would have been someone else. Someone else would have fired the shot that began four years of carnage. All the conditions were there, just like here; tension, battle lines, friction. Look what's already happened; fights in the Midland Hotel, the Town Hall. The whole thing is about to erupt. How better it would be if we had hold

of the reins instead of being prisoners of fate."

"And to think you've been wasting your time in the comp room all these years," said the Boss. "Tell me more."

So Archie stood up from his comfy armchair and stood with his back to the glowing fire, thinking. It was, just as his Boss had once said, like playing chess, only this time Checkmate was going to be more spectacular than anyone could ever imagine.

"We must find our very own Archduke Ferdinand, and, well, you know, shoot him, figuratively speaking of course."

"I'm glad you qualified that dear boy," said the Boss, his eyes displaying a face returning from its expression of horror.

Archie caught sight of Lizzy removing the tablecloth for washing and his mind swirled through a maelstrom of imaginings until another visage of beauty rested in his mind.

"If we could manipulate Amelia Geoffrey to inadvertently act as our Princip and set up the mayor as the Arch Duke, then I fancy we'd have our bullet in the shape of the new lipstick tube that ladies have been keen on employing just lately."

"Only trouble is we don't know where she is," said Pitchblack with a slice of pragmatism.

"How about another photo shoot. I could even be the bait, so to speak. We could peddle the idea of some advancement in social circles; the word Royalty might pull her in or smoke her out. How about; 'Pictorial Woman of the Year', her face could go on to the front of a calendar say. We could even turn ourselves a profit."

"How old are you Archie?" said the Boss.

"Twenty-seven Sir," he said wondering what his age had to do with it.

"Mmmm?" mused the Boss. "Never had any doings with The Mafia, have you?"

This didn't mean anything to Archie, who'd never heard the word before. He was more intent on making his plan come to life, and revelling in how Machiavellian he could be, though he'd never heard that word before either.

"What happens if and when you set all of these fireworks off then?" put in Pitchblack.

"Chaos," said Archie with a gleam in his eye. "If you're

in command of your own chaos you become a master of everyone's destiny," said Archie, making the Boss' left eyebrow raise a further sixteenth of an inch. "I'm not sure that would work dear fellow," said the Boss. "But I do like your idea about chaos. You're perfectly right of course; the lion tamer should always be in charge of the beasts which seem intent on devouring him. What is needed is mischief." The Boss stared into the fire and lit up a cigar from a taper made glowing from the bright yellow coals which kindled like a miniature version of Hades. "Amelia's no good this time; far too smart to be caught out again. What we need..." and he allowed a fraction of quietness to bewitch their anticipation, but Archie jumped into the oasis of silence created by his editor. "We need a bomb," he said finishing off the Boss' sentence. "My word, dear chap, how did you know I was going to say that?" "You lit your cigar. You looked at the smouldering tip and it reminded you of a fuse. You then thought of a bomb and how such a possibility could feature in your plans. I don't think you've quite thought out the mechanics of the plan as yet, but that even now is being computed in your brain. I venture that if I hadn't interrupted you, then that too would have fallen into place. Am I right?" "My goodness dear fellow. You don't read Conan Doyle's stuff by any chance do you? That was outstanding." "Just elementary my dear Mr Blockhead," said Archie with a smirk of pride. The Boss smiled with the kind of approving warmth as a father would spare for a son. He sank once more into a state of reverie and brought his index fingers, church steeple like up to his pursed lips as the cigar sent what looked like wisps of thought up towards the ceiling. Only two words emerged, slowly and quietly. "A bomb." "Good Lord, have you taken leave of your senses Noel?" said Pitchblack, who, as far as Archie knew had never addressed the Boss by his Christian name before. "We're going to allow threats to pass back and forth," murmured the Boss. "Each side cranking up the tension; phone calls, letters, possibly a telegram or two. Then, after testing the waters, and finding the one most likely to blink first, well you know." and he threw his hands as wide as his arms would allow..."BOOM." "This is your entire fault Crimm," said Pitchblack. "You've made him take leave of his senses." "Sense doesn't come into it," said Archie. "Making history doesn't have a rule book." "My word Archie lad," said the Boss. "You're full of surprises tonight, aren't you?"

"I want none of it," said Pitchblack. "I don't see why not. No one's going to get hurt. It's all for show. It's all for chaos," said the Boss. "I had enough of bombs in France, or have you forgotten those days. Oh, but I forgot, you were at sea, weren't you?" "There were bombs there too, not to mention torpedoes," said the Boss. "And drownings too. Not much of that occurred in the trenches I fancy." "I can't believe your squabbling between yourselves," said Archie. The Boss and Pitchblack looked sternly at their young apprentice then at each other. A smile broke through the tension and hands were extended into a solid manly shake. "No one's to get hurt?" said Pitchblack in what passed for a question mated with a command. "No one will get hurt," the Boss confirmed. "That's that settled then, said Archie, who sat back into an easy chair as if his brain needed cooling down. At that point Lizzy came into the drawing room to say that she was going off to bed. Archie stood bolt upright and offered his own hand to shake hers. Her little hand held his as she performed the slightest courtesy. Before Archie could reason with himself he had kissed the minute, soft, white knuckles on her right hand then raised his head to look upon a face which appeared pristine, like freshly drifted snow. Here was no forceful beauty like Amelia Godfrey, here was loveliness through and through. "Good night Miss blockhead," he said in a whisper. She gently withdrew her hand and went over to her father who kissed her on her forehead, whereupon she bowed a graceful nod to Uncle Jimmy and turned to climb the stairs. Archie watched her every move, an action that was rewarded by a final smile from her as she held the banister rail; a look that was reserved just for him before she disappeared from view. Archie's heart was cart wheeling as he flopped back into the chair as chaos took hold. "Come on, that's enough talking for one night," said the Boss. "See you all tomorrow." "I'll give you a lift in my taxi," said Pitchblack. "It's a nasty night out there." But Archie could only nod his approval of a taxi ride. In his heart it felt very warm and dry indeed and no amount of rain seemed able to alter that.

And so our story takes a slight but sinister turn, but to where?

We've been together now for forty years, (unfortunately).

By Neil Remnant

I read a magazine article recently about Jane Fonda in which she described taking stock of her fifty-nine year-old self; entering what she called her 'third era'. Despite her wealth it was a seminal moment, causing her to reach the decision to end her ten year-old marriage to cable TV tycoon Ted Turner. That was in May 2001; she was sixty four years old. Hollywood, you won't need reminding is awash with film stars going through a conveyor belt of divorces; you've only to look at Elizabeth Taylor to discover that; divorcing her final husband Larry Fortensky when she too was sixty four. In my work as a family lawyer I don't even have to read a celebrity magazine to realise that there's a rise in the number of couples divorcing from the over fifty bracket; the phenomenon even has a name, the 'Silver Separators'. Latest figures from 'The Office for National Statistics' record that not only do a quarter of all divorces in the UK belong to this group but it's also the fastest growing set.

It begs the question; why? Well, we're living longer; extending our life experience; exposing couples to destabilising events like redundancy, empty nest syndrome, age-related sicknesses, even retirement; any of which can split up a once fully-functioning relationship. Movie stars of course are usually financially secure enough to make a divorce just a matter of the heart. A typical fifties' housewife didn't have that option and many a marriage had to be endured to the bitter end. Today's women in their more mature years are more likely to have their own careers to support them. The decision to separate therefore is freed of the chains which once bound man and wife together.

It has to be said though that divorces between younger couples compared

to older married people differ greatly bringing with them much deeper-set issues, often because the tangled roots of their marriage go down a long way. If emotions prevent an amicable split these couples find it vital to get the right kind of lawyer involved, to form what should be a very business-like relationship. Getting to know a lawyer's background properly is also a good idea beforehand; to learn about their reputation in the town, and examine their profile and experience on their firm's web site. For a solicitor to be truly on a client's side, it's best to only share with them the vital facts of the case. Naturally people will want to divulge their heartache with their lawyer, but that's not really their job. Whereas friends will provide a shoulder to cry on and offer much needed moral support, a good solicitor will work best with hard data, to work in partnership with their client to shape the way their divorce will move forwards, operating with them as a team to become the architects of the future they want.

If you feel that you're about to enter the world of a 'Silver Separator' you'll have, on top of dividing up your assets, possessions and financial responsibilities, issues like pensions to divide and retirement funds to protect. This will require a court order, so you need to make sure that you file away all the relevant documents to help your case. Communicate as much as possible with your lawyer via e-mail or letter

so that you have a chronological record of who said 'what', to 'whom' and 'when'. Above all, trust in the integrity and experience of your lawyer. My experience goes back a very long way (more years than I care to remember) and is as broad as it's wide. Sometimes my advice will seem to go against the grain a bit, but I can promise you that I know what I'm doing and acting with your best interests at heart. It's not belittling your case at all by saying that I've tackled thousands of cases like yours. Be assured, you're in safe hands. Of course, on occasions we'll have to meet up and discuss things. These meetings should be pre-arranged so that they can be logged in the company's diary. Calling on spec might find me in court, fighting your corner or working on another case. If you treat all our interactions like a business arrangement then you'll find that the stress levels will be more under control. Keep feeding me with raw data or details of the latest relevant developments in writing or e-mail so that each essential twist and turn of your divorce can be acted upon accordingly. It's a brave move bringing a long-standing relationship to an end, but you'll not be doing it lightly. Likewise I'll be taking your decision very seriously too, and doing my utmost to make sure that you reach the happier times you yearn for.



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The Poetry of James' Jewellery



We live in a world that is made all the more beautiful through the talents of artists, composers and poets. But not all artists work through the medium of paint, music and words. James Rudge, a master goldsmith and silversmith is, in a way, a three dimensional poet par excellence, creating exquisite pieces of jewellery specially designed to move the heart with as much rapture as a lilting symphony might do, or else the way the text of a poem has the means to reach the soul.

James' skills, gained through a thorough apprenticeship, followed by some serious hands-on professional experience in Birmingham's famous Jewellery quarter and later in Southampton, go hand-in-hand with his innate and enviable talent. Delightfully long hours spent with his mentor Graham Saunders honed his abilities to perfection, which, along with a fertile imagination made him stand out from his peers. For many discerning jewellery connoisseurs, he's the 'go-to' craftsman these days, someone who has that special touch and artistic mind to create jewellery it seems from the scraps of your dreams.

Although James has kept his early sketchbooks full of hand-drawn jewellery designs, it's what he can do with the wonders of technology that astound customers today. His CAD system (Computer-Aided-Design) allows him to create and display exact images of a bespoke piece of jewellery on his laptop, glittering with the enchantment of light's reflections, moving it around

on the screen so as to see it from all angles. The technology goes a few steps further, allowing plastic 3D prototypes to be made. To hold such an item in your hand is to get a feel for the real thing to see how it gives you that tingle of

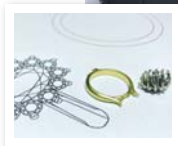
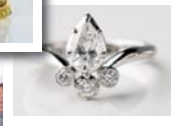
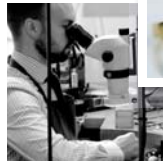
together in that random way relationships are apt to begin; simply on a night out with their respective friends. Natalie, who up until now has spent her career as a highly experienced Human Resources Advisor is perfectly gifted to take care of the business aspect of the shop, leaving James to do what he does best; to let his imagination fly and capture those wonderful designs that we love to adorn ourselves with.

As well as producing bespoke commissions, James can use his CAD system to scan existing pieces of jewellery too.

This is perfect for repairing a broken or badly damaged item. Using software that converts the 3D scan (rather like an MRI scan in reverse) he is able to rectify the item on the computer and re-form the part that is broken.

Even if you've lost a precious earring, he can manufacture a 'mirror image' this way and so authentically that no one would ever know which one was the replacement.

As Christmas approaches and thoughts of giving something special to someone special, it would be something of a delight to give a bespoke piece of James' jewellery to a loved one. Either that or sift through an exciting and dazzling shop full of collections and displays of tantalising beauty. This really is MD Jewellers re-born and a shop not to be missed as that most wonderful time of the year gets ever nearer.



amazement. It's then a simple step to use the information to make the real thing, to hand-set the stones, to polish the gold or silver, in short to bring into being an item of jewellery like no other, a piece that fits you not just physically, but emotionally too.

If you've never heard of James Rudge or his wife Natalie O'Brien, then you should know they are the new owners of MD Jewellers on Welby Street, having taken over the diamond-studded reins from Melvin Dobbs and Rosina Armitage who have now retired. It was the hand of fate which brought them



56 Welby Street, Grantham Tel: 01476 591762 **MD JEWELLERS**

Some like it hot!

Down the years Wyndham Park has been a gem of tranquility and peace for Grantham's young as well as the young at heart. Who remembers the old green traction engine that stood on the hill, ready to take excited children on their imaginary journeys? With the playgrounds (yes, there are two of them here) and the serene flow of the river Witham meandering through the park and giving home to ducks, moorhens, geese and on occasions a few elegant white swans, you have a truly lovely place to find balm for the soul even when all the leaves have fallen as the cold autumn and winter days begin to bite.

When you eventually sense you need a warm up, head over to the Wyndham Park Café, where a friendly welcome will put you in the mood for some proper piping hot food to follow. During weekdays only pop in and take the weight off your feet, linger for a moment as your face and fingers come back to life whilst your nose picks up on the aromas of winter foods wafting over to you from the kitchen. This is food as you'll no doubt remember it; steaming home-made soups, meaty cottage pies and stews with dumplings, even chilli and rice to name but four. It has to be said that everything that goes into a Wyndham Park Café meal is made from locally sourced produce; fluffy mash from freshly picked potatoes via nearby Manor Farm, lean meat from local farmers, vegetables too, crammed with vitamins taken only days before out of the ground, truly organic and reminiscent of the produce many a gardening parent would have cultivated in family plots and allotments in those bygone, healthier days. This is all on top of the Full English Breakfasts or mouthwatering bangers & mash with vegetables which they serve (ask about their new takeaway service for meals like these) as well as sandwiches, scrambled egg on toast, cakes and a full menu of smaller choices for children (that means



Take your seats please; this is where you'll get warmed up with some piping hot food and a welcome to match.

grandchildren too if they're with you as well) and a good range of options for those who prefer vegetarian dishes.

A brisk walk around Wyndham park on a chilly Sunday is a good way to get an appetite for a good old Sunday Lunch Roast, made especially by Ruth, the matriarch who plays such a pivotal role in this family-run business. This is incredibly good value for money it ought to be pointed out; Home made soup of the day for just

£3.00, a main course of beef or pork with roast potatoes and turnips, fresh vegetables and home-made gravy for just £6.00 and a fruit crumble and custard pudding if you've got a bit more room for just £2.00 (or a piece of home made cake for just £2.20 instead)*. All main meals are served to your table deliciously hot and tasty; ready to set you up for a slow stroll home and a doze in front of the TV. During the Sundays in December you might guess what comes next. You've got it, Christmas Dinners; pork or turkey roasts with all the trimmings, just the thing to get you in a festive mood. You could even bring your family and have an impromptu party revelling in the family atmosphere that's right at the heart of this welcoming place.

The thing is, we've only scratched the surface of what this café has to offer. To really find out what makes it so



Cup cake anyone, or how about a slice of chocolate chip cake, all homemade and incredibly Moorish?

special on these ever colder days, drop by when you next take a walk in Wyndham Park, a place that will more than warm the cockles of your heart.

*Applies to Sundays only

Wyndham Park Café

Wyndham Park, Hill Avenue,
Grantham, Lincs

Tel: 0788 122 6044



WyndhamParkCafe

Open

Mon – Sat 9.00 am to 5.00 pm
Sunday 10.00 am to 4.00 pm

Fitting Tributes



You've only to saunter through Grantham on a busy day to see people from all walks of life going about their business. In a way you get a glimpse into all kinds of lives in various levels of complexity; from the simply happy to those thriving in the midst of exciting challenges. In between these extremes are a host of other lives, like your own for instance with its delights and heartaches, achievements and disasters. We each use our days on earth in our own way, but eventually it will come to its close. Only then will the sum total of those milestones form a complete picture of who we were and the time will come to honour what those milestones meant to those left to grieve us.

This is why getting a funeral just right is vitally important to whoever is left behind to remember us. It's something that Robert Holland does with consummate skill and empathy, with a team who work hard to shape the funeral around a life that was special in its own idiosyncratic way. Recently a funeral was held for someone who had meant a great deal to Grantham, not to mention being the heart of that person's family too. In amongst

the prayers and hymns there was music favoured by the individual being remembered along with a selection of readings and reminiscences that pertained to the one laying at rest during the unfolding service. Amid the sadness of loss there existed a great deal of recollected humour unlocking the character of a life lived to the full as we said our goodbyes. As funerals go, it was beautiful, just the kind of thing that attention to details creates; a truly Robert Holland type of funeral, tailor-made to pay the



most perfect of tributes. Robert Holland and his team are first and foremost listeners. It's only by allowing thoughts and memories to spill out that an idea of the right way to honour whoever has died can be formed. With compassion and sensitivity each part of the procession, the service, burial or cremation is turned into a fitting reality. When the day comes, with its pall of heartbreak and sadness, it's these small points of detail that give comfort to the grieving. It means something to family and friends that the important parts of a person's life were given their final

public airing and in a tasteful way, celebrated. Being alive is the most wonderful thing imaginable; to see the world around us and to feel the love of those we care about is what makes life the special thing it is. It's so special in fact that it deserves to be held in cherished remembrance when it comes to an end, to be given the type of respectful goodbye that makes a funeral directed by

Robert Holland so gently memorable and able to ease the years of loss that lay ahead.

RH

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Are you a Ren or a Mowgli?

Two great shows that let the bare necessities make you feel foot loose



Jungle Book (Juniors)

It's a story as old as time; the baby Moses found in a basket, the newborn twins Romulus and Remus suckled by a she-wolf, Edgar Rice Burrows' 1894 books about Tarzan raised by apes in the forests of Africa and the Jungle Book tales by Rudyard Kipling of the infant Mowgli brought up by wild wolves who find him in a basket in the jungles of India. Seventy three years later Walt Disney put his own animated stamp on Kipling's stories with a film that has stood the test of time, mainly through the musical numbers that are sprinkled throughout the movie; 'I wanna be like you' and 'The Bare Necessities' to name a couple. Eventually made into a stage play it's become a favourite of performers ever since, and now it's New Youth Theatre's turn to allow youngsters to perform it and for the audience to re-discover Kipling's great Victorian tale merged with Disney's twentieth century's music courtesy of the famous Oscar-winning Sherman brothers. Unlike Tarzan who yearns to return to his jungle home, Mowgli finds his way back to human civilisation thanks to the help of Baloo the bear and Bagheera the panther. Back with his own kind he falls in love with a village girl which provides the perfect happy ending. If you wanna be like them, get involved with New Youth Theatre; just bring with you the bare necessities of your talent.



Foot Loose (Seniors)

All it takes is disillusioned teenager Ren McCormack to move with his mother from the vibrant city of Chicago to the backwater of a far away small town for a clash of cultures to take place. He discovers that the local minister has banned dancing for a start and sees Rock and Roll as the work of the devil. He's also banned his daughter Ariel from seeing her no-good boyfriend Chuck Cranston; not that she pays any attention to him, a situation that goes from bad to worse when he catches her in flagrante with this young man. The next relationship Ren discovers is that of Hillbilly cowboy Willard Hewitt and his girl Rusty. Willard tries to stand up to the minister and wins even more adoration from his girl. The stage is now set for high-tension drama and a great deal of opportunity for some great song and dance routines.

It takes a while for the reasons of the minister's hatred of teenage life to become apparent, even to himself. When he finally looks inside his own soul he comes face to face with the loss of his son who was killed on his way to a dance. His eventual about turn provides him with the redemption he so sorely needs. All of the other relationships find a safe harbour to settle in too and the town puts on a dance that no one is ever likely to forget, creating the perfect finale with the song; 'Footloose'. Talk about a feel good show, this is one

not to miss, especially if you're a member of New Youth Theatre, actually playing an integral part in it. This is a show full of all the life and the vibrancy of youth and like all great musicals is crammed with the highs and lows of a spectacular emotional journey.

About New Youth Theatre

Whatever age you are and whichever show fires up your imagination one thing is clear; your time with New Youth Theatre will be wonderful. Admittedly it'll be hard work and you'll be required to put the effort in, but that's part of the fun; nothing worthwhile ever came easy. By the time the curtain has come down and the standing ovations have faded away you'll be left with that sense of accomplishment that can't be found by doing nothing. Achieving something like this, even if you're cutting your theatrical teeth in the chorus gives you a sense of pride and allows your confidence to soar. New Youth Theatre has the ability to guide you through from the junior group to the seniors, then on to Next Step for those keen on a theatrical career. Even if your life takes a different turn, this kind of confidence stands you in good stead for the other challenges that life will present. Of course, by then you'll be ready with all the presentation and self awareness skills that New Youth Theatre has provided you with; truly a way of dealing with people and situations to last your whole life through.



Grantham.newyouththeatre.co.uk Sleaford.newyouththeatre.co.uk
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If you feel that the major stores are a bit limited for choice this Christmas, then you need to pay a visit to Notions Antique Centre. Here there's choice upon choice with so many types of great gift notions; toys, books, jewellery, trinkets, ornaments, furniture, clothing, cameras, nautical



equipment; well we could be here all day just listing them.

Just one visit to Notions Antique Centre will give you so many special ideas for a loved one this Christmas, you'll get top marks for putting so much thought into it. But that's what Santa's little helpers at Notions do best; provide you with something special, for someone special.

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When you're feeling a bit 'Ruff'



We're told, especially by the likes of Andy Williams, that 'It's the most wonderful time of the year' and for many of us that's how it pans out. Family members gather together, some from far-flung places, to rediscover their kinship and wallow in this incredible annual festival.

For others, denied those personal connections for whatever reason, it can be a time of abject loneliness, made even worse by the constant badgering from the media pushing the concept that we should be having copious amounts of fun; no, for them, the so-called festivities are anything but festive.

There is a way though to put a smile on such faces as Christmas looms ever nearer, and that's through becoming a host for Barking Mad, a superb organisation which needs good hosts to take care of the pets of people who might go away for winter or else, faced with a house full of guests, need to give their dog a calm retreat away from the mayhem. Whether you've once had a dog in your life or have never been blessed by it, this is a beautiful way to have the company of a perfect companion; a creature who will never judge you, find fault with you, just bring you smiles and joy and help to lift the cloud of loneliness that blights what should be a happy time.

A dog will provide you with a reason to get out of bed in the morning, to care for another life, to enjoy the bliss from a wagging tail and a smiley face. Even doing something no more energetic than sitting watching the telly can be made better by having a dog nearby or resting on your lap. "Come on," you say, "Let's go for a walk." And instantly your heart fills with that sense of fulfilment as you watch the enthusiasm in a dog's eyes. In a way, this often represents the best Christmas present of all.

If this appeals to you, why not give Barking Mad a call and let Colin or Jacqui talk you through what's involved. For the sake of the owner's peace of mind it will necessary to have as much detail about your house and home as you can give, if your garden is the right size if you have one, for example, and if so, is it fully secure? Everyone has their own personal level of ability and physical strength; and it's all the little things like this which they find out to assure the owners that their dog is going to just the right home. It also gives them

the chance to match up the right dog with the right person. If you don't feel that you have sufficient muscle, it's obviously not a good idea to set you up with a Saint Bernard or a Great Dane; that cuddly Yorkie is just the right little playmate for you. Put simply Barking Mad wants to know that everyone will be happy including you, and that's just as it should be.

So don't let the blues drag you down at Christmas, or any other time of year for that matter; become a host for Barking Mad and let the sunshine of a dog's company blow those sad moods away.

Barking Mad charge a one-off registration fee of £35.00 which includes the completion of a pet schedule. There's a £35.00 transport fee and a charge of £23.00 per day to have your dog looked after in the home of a host best placed to provide individual care.



**Contact Colin Murphy & Jacqui Benzie.
Call 07384 252 920 or
01636 302636
Or email murphy@barkingmad.uk.com**

Let's go Japanese!

Ever since the time of the seafaring adventurer William Adams in the 1500s, we in the West have been fascinated by the island of what was once called Nihon (meaning 'Origin of the Sun') now called Japan. Sailing ships brought back silks and spices, the latter of which also influenced an interest in Japanese cuisine. The way Japanese food is cooked is immensely varied; certainly not all sushi as some have come to expect. In fact at the Katana restaurant in the George Centre you can pick up on the multi-levelled atmosphere, from the exciting and entertaining Teppanyaki tables to the quiet and often romantic places where you can dine in peace.

鉄板焼き or Teppan-Yaki, means 'Iron Plate Grill' in Japanese and it's here at the Teppanyaki table where you can gather round and watch a performance that will mesmerise you. A Japanese master chef like Gee, Bizzi and Nepte who have honed their talents in Dubai and London over the past ten years, can juggle their cooking knives with consummate skill, flinging food into the display and making you gasp in wonder at the sheer fun of it. Right before your eyes your sizzling meal is prepared from the freshest of ingredients and cooked in a way that's more theatrical than you could ever imagine, as the scintillating aromas prepare your senses for a delicious meal to come. Once tried, it's an experience you'll want to introduce your friends to. Just watching the spectacle of a chef flicking an egg into the air and catching it in his hat is pure pantomime; the whole evening is totally enthralling and prime entertainment for diner participation. Chicken, Rib Eye Steaks, Lamb,



Calamari, Sea Bass, Scallops and Prawns can be cooked in this way, but for a real humdinger of a meal the Wagyu Beef is a true Japanese speciality and best reserved for an equally special occasion. During its life Wagyu beef has been specially pampered more than you'd believe. Their diet will have contained the best of feed, even adding Japanese beer or Sake to their meal and proving them with relaxing massaging sessions away from the fields. The beef once matured is the most succulent in the world, and it's here in Grantham's Katana Restaurant for you to enjoy, cooked in tantalising fashion of course at the amazing Teppanyaki tables. Deepak Chetri, the restaurant owner and his loyal team does provide Sushi of course, from the very freshest fish and made to order the moment you make your choice including cooked salmon and even a vegan sushi option. This can be accompanied by Ashai; Japanese beer as well as the time-honoured Japanese drink of Sake. Pervading the restaurant is the ever calming sound of Japanese music coming from instruments like the Tonkori, the Yamatogoto and Koky Shinobue the which along with the gentle sound of a fountain creates a tranquil mood to contrast with the thrill of the Teppanyaki tables. Presentation is



also high on the culinary agenda with exquisite decorations make by the chefs from carrots and even beetroot; everything in fact to make you feel that you've stepped out of Grantham and discovered you've arrived in a little piece of Japan. For birthday parties, hen nights, and other special occasions why not book a table and let the magic of Japanese cuisine take you on a journey of the senses, the like of which you'll want to repeat again and again? さようなら, Sayo nara.



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About Time!



Time is the most precious possession we have; time spent with loved ones, time for our interests, even simply time for ourselves. Finding time to get jobs done

around the home is often the last thing on our list, taken that we have other commitments to give our time to. In any case, who really wants to use this precious resource to

wallpaper a lounge, retila a bathroom or meet a host of other demands a home presents us with, and who has the inherent skills to properly carry them out either? So, let me release you from these burdens and give you back your time.



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Woodwork

Wooden fence panels, decking, even timber window frames have had a good dry out during this record-breaking summer which has either damaged paintwork or withered away wood preservative. And now the rainy season is looming, threatening to further harm what is essentially a biodegradable substance. Left untreated this will lead to quite an expensive repair. The question is; do you have the time to do these jobs yourself? If not, I'm standing by to tackle these jobs to free up your precious time.

Garden Structures

Sheds, pergolas and other garden features made of wood require an overhaul more often than you care to think. The roof felt on sheds for example are prone to crack when the sun has done its best over the summer. And there's always gravity making wooden things fall away to require running repairs. Re-felting a shed can save you a fortune if you consider the amount of stuff that the roof is protecting below. Don't have the time to fix it up? I do.

Painting & Decorating

Ugghh; that old chestnut. National DIY chains ram the idea of home decorating down our throats as if we crave to spend Bank Holidays slapping paint on skirting boards, door frames or windowsills. We might well be experts in our own field, but a talent for Do It Yourself might have just as easily escaped us. In any case precious time off should be spent enjoying family life or being with someone whom we love; not getting into a dither with pots of paint. No, you have your time back, I'll do the job. Sorted!

Gutter Cleaning

It won't have escaped your notice that the leaves have almost fallen. Just how many have ended up in your gutter can only be seen with an inspection. The fact is that a clogged up gutter is the start of what can be a disaster for your house. Water overflows can create damp brickwork, causing eventual mould inside our homes; something that's a health risk as well as being an unsightly mess. Don't have a ladder? Don't have the time? I have both, and you'll soon have a clean gutter.



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For all those jobs you can't get round to, get Michael round to get them done.

Shhhh; the garden's having a doze!

A garden at this time of year seems to behave rather as if it's a sleepy child doing its best to stay awake. Like drooping eye lids the leaves begin to fall; whilst emulating tired limbs, the garden starts to sag and succumb to the quiet slumber of winter. Soon the trees will bare their skeletal shapes and the earth below will pocket the daffodil bulbs beneath the frosty surface ready for the promise of warmer days ahead as we wait patiently for the spring of a new year to set in motion a new growing season.

If that's got you feeling sleepy too; hard luck; this is a busy time for gardeners. First things first; that mower of yours will need a service and its blades sharpened. After all, a mower cutting an average lawn over a year would have sliced through something like thirty six million blades of grass. To put that in perspective, just imagine Wembley Stadium full to capacity with each person representing a blade of grass; you'd need four hundred stadia to hold in that equivalent number of people. Dull blades quite understandably bludgeon the grass, damaging each tiny leaf rather than cutting cleanly through it. This damage isn't healthy and can cause all kinds of problems to your lawn over time.

With leaves now laying on the floor, you're faced with two jobs; firstly raking them up off the lawn before they cause problems to your lawn though decomposition and secondly you'll get your first glimpse of all the deadwood and overgrowth that needs cutting away. Ugh, it's all a bit too exhausting, don't you think?

Well, not on your Nelly. You weren't put on earth to work yourself to a shadow. Jump in the car, head for Belton Lane in Grantham, head down to the bottom of the small industrial estate there and visit the showroom at LRS. Bring your mower with you if you wish, because this is the perfect place to get it serviced (it's cheaper from November to February it's worth noting) and where those

blades can be sharpened ready for the following year's work to come. With your lawnmower in the service bay you can take a look at the leaf blowers on display; some really light and portable battery powered ones to try out; just the thing to drive those composting leaves into the dormant flower beds, ready to give valuable nutrition to the soil over the winter months. There are extendable tree loppers to try out, perfect for reaching the deadwood we touched on without pulling a muscle or risking your neck up a tree. Or how about a chain saw for pruning thicker branches away? See, this takes all the hard work out of your list of gardening jobs. With all that deadwood cut down you'll find a shredder useful; just the thing to clear up the cut-away detritus, with the benefit of being able to make your own wood shavings that are a great help at keeping weeds at bay come the spring. For wider diameter pieces LRS has an array of log splitters. If you know of anyone who has a wood burning stove, you'll discover a ready market for what you end up with after using this bit of kit.

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Winter gardening is no walk in the park, unless you have some serious labour-saving gear from LRS to come to the rescue. It's then that you re-discover the pleasure of getting your garden ready for the springtime to come.

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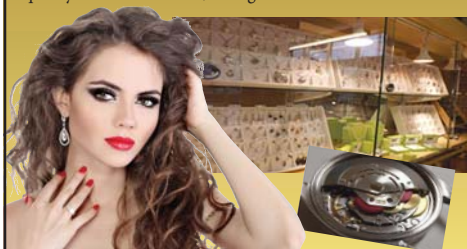
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Anchors Away

Nestled in the delightful village of Welby there's a country pub steeped in time; **The Crown & Anchor**. The village is like something out of a Constable painting set amidst a timeless rural landscape, evidently far from anything maritime, which begs the question why put an anchor in the pub's name, let alone a crown? They do say that in days of yore an old Royal Navy sailor had retired and took up ownership of the place. Old illustrations of the interior show a poop deck in the bar and a porthole gracing the walls. Today, the sign which swings in the breeze bears witness to his service to both crown and navy. A thorough refurbishment by Larry Humphries and his partner Janice, completed in August, has brought the amenities bang up to date, making sure that the essential age-old welcome is as warm as can be. Along with a new cellar, this work also

allowed for a new lettings room thereby giving the pub the ability to offer a bed-and-breakfast facility. At its heart the Crown and Anchor is a proper pub; a place for folks to get together, to chat about the day, enjoy the restorative effects of laughter, sink into that mellow mood that a warm and friendly public house like this can create helped along by the fine beers supplied by Everards Brewery. Supporting the essential qualities of such fine beverages is the superb skills of Head Chef Oliver Walton bringing to your plate traditional mouth-watering dishes of exquisite quality (with that little extra twist!)

This is a family-friendly pub, with full disabled access. As the pub mascot, a fox-red Labrador called Bradley can testify, it's dog-friendly too. For those who want to relax, meet up with friends and re-discover the delights of a quintessential country pub, pay a visit to this lovely old establishment and drop anchor for a while as its ancient atmosphere warms the cockles of your heart.

*Bradley says
dogs are
always
welcome*



*The pub at the turn of
the last century*

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