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Village Voice

Chris Smith - We Remember!

ISSUE 250 | SEPTEMBER 2026



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Village Voice

Community magazine for
Sedgley, Gornal, Coseley & Tipton

Cover story

The end of September will once again see MacMillan Coffee mornings being held countrywide. The event raises in excess of £25 million a year for this excellent cause. Why not check out their very informative website at coffee.macmillan.org.uk/about/search for details of events planned near you. It also gives you the chance to register with them and host your very own event – the website will give you information on hosting, coffee morning resources and recipes. It will also enable you to request a fundraising kit to ensure that your coffee morning runs smoothly.



Gail



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Please note that the closing date for our competition this month is **THURSDAY, 24TH SEPTEMBER 2026**. Entries received after this date will not be entered into the draw. Please ensure your name, address, telephone number and email address are included on your entry.

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COPY DEADLINE

Please note that the copy deadline for the **OCTOBER 2026** edition of **VILLAGE VOICE** is **FRIDAY, 18th SEPTEMBER 2026**. Please book your space early to avoid disappointment.

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it's a fact!

- ★ In March 1900 a “drinking party” in Providence Street, Horseley Heath resulted in a number of men—John Jones, John Cooke, Mark Cox, Thomas Brookes, James Ralph and William Jones—being charged with being drunk and disorderly. All apart from William Jones were fined 2/6d plus costs. When the court heard that Jones had 42 similar convictions on his record they fined him 20s and costs with an alternative of a month’s imprisonment.
- ★ Wasdells, the grocers of Parkfield Road, Coseley had its safe stolen. It was later found at the bottom of a cliff at the Wrens Nest. It had been dropped from the top in order to break the door. £20 and papers were taken.
- ★ 1867 saw reports published about a competition between two local bricklayers. For a bet of a sovereign John Saunders and James Barrett attempted to make the most standard bricks in a day. They worked from 6.00am until 6.00pm taking a half hour off for breakfast and an hour for lunch. During this time Saunders made 6,470 and Barrett just 6,165.
- ★ The Census of 1861 saw the population of the various parts of the parish of Sedgley being recorded, together with the increase (or indeed decrease) in the numbers from the previous census in 1851. The figures were as follows with 1851 figures in brackets: Sedgley parish 36629 (29447); Upper Gornal 3522 (3291); Lower Gornal 5915 (4886); Cotwall End 741 (701); Coseley 7711 (6478) and Gospel End 314 (347).
- ★ In the 1950s the Bette Guest School of Dance was based at the Good Intent Pub.



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GORNAL—Upper, Lower or Wood?

Ask most people where Upper Gornal becomes Lower Gornal or where the boundaries of Gornal Wood are and the chances are that you'll be answered with a shrug of the shoulders.

There are, of course, lots of theories where one finishes and the other starts but there is no definitive boundary set out on any of the borough's maps. Indeed, there is also some confusion as to how far towards Dudley town centre Gornal actually stretches—at one time it was suggested that the old Burton Hospital was on the boundary between Gornal and Dudley.

Over the years there have been many changes to the names of various roads and streets in the area and this has done much to further confuse the situation. Take, for example, Vale Street. Today this is generally accepted as being part of Upper Gornal (or possibly Ruiton) - but when it was previously known as Botany Street it was frequently referred to as being part of Lower Gornal.

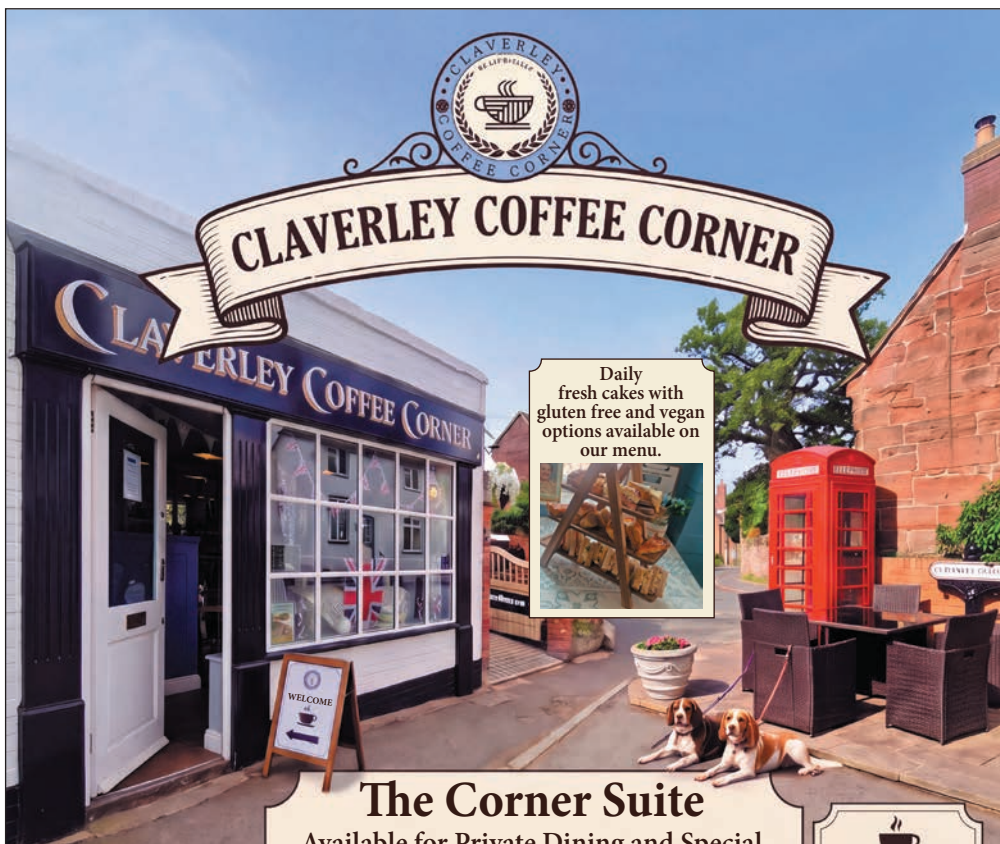
Similarly today Louise Street is firmly set in the middle of the area known as Gornal Wood but prior to 1871 it was universally known as being High Street, Gornal. The name change was in honour of Princess Louise, the sixth child of Queen Victoria and John, Marquess of Lorne.

Princess Louise (seen right) was something of a rebel and had refused to consider marriage to the various Crown Princes that had been put forward by her mother, the Queen. Unfortunately, though, her own choice proved to be somewhat disastrous and within a few years the two had grown apart (although later they were to grow close). This was partially due to the Marquess having been appointed Governor General of Canada and the Princess becoming very homesick during their time in Ottawa.



Princess Louise was an accomplished sculptor and raised many eyebrows with her sometimes outspoken support for the blossoming feminist movement.

It is thought that one of the reasons that the decision was made to change the name of High Street was because Princess Louise had visited the area, staying at Himley Hall.



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BRAINTEASERS

We do hope that you like these Brainteasers—with a little luck you should be able to come up with the answers. If not, the answers can be found on page 56.

1. Imagine you are a contestant in a quiz show. The host gives you the chance to open one of three boxes—A, B or C—in front of you. In one box is a cheque for £1 million and in each of the other two is a £1 coin. You have a free choice and choose Box A. The host knows in which box the cheque is and opens box B to show a coin. He gives you the opportunity to stick with your choice or to change to Box C. What do you do?
2. In the equation $SEND + MORE = MONEY$ each letter stands for a different number. Can you work out the numbers?
3. One evening there was a power cut and the four people watching the television suddenly found that there was nothing to do but actually talk to each other. One of them said: *"Did you know that sitting here is a mother, father, sister, brother, son, daughter, nephew, niece, aunt, uncle and a couple of cousins—and yet we are all blood relations?"* How can that be?
4. If you were to write every number in words (one, two, three etc) what number would be the first one with an "A" in it?

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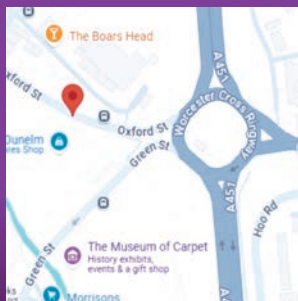
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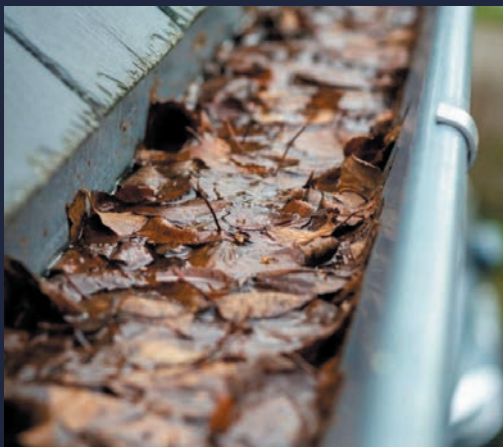
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TALES FROM THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

One of our readers sent in a request for us to repeat an article that Chris first published back in 2006 about Ted Beardsmore, the local blacksmith. We are very happy to oblige.

For around 25 years from the early 1930s, Edwin (Ted) Beardsmore plied his trade as a blacksmith in Redhall Road, Lower Gornal. His forge (an unprepossessing corrugated iron structure) was demolished in 2002 but in it were found a number of records of the work that he carried out in the early 1950s.

The records show that for general shoeing of horses the Co-op was by far the best customer with both the Bakery and Milk Departments regularly using him to re-shoe their horses. In his ledgers Ted not only made a note of the date, customer and price of the work but also detailed the names of the various horses. So, for example, we know that in 1951 the Co-op Bakery had horses named ‘Dolly’, ‘Molly’, ‘Polly’, ‘Boxer’, ‘Bob’ and ‘Captain’ whilst the Milk Department had horses called ‘Joe’, ‘Prince’, ‘Laddie’, ‘Duke’ and ‘Monty’.

In addition to this regular business Ted also shod up to 15-20 other horses a week from local businesses and traders. There was also a steady stream of horses and ponies from the local gypsy population.

As well as dealing with horses, Ted used his forge for a wide variety of other blacksmithing tasks. These ranged from making buckets, chisels and spades to custom-made hooks, brackets and sickles. Again for this side of the business he had a number of regular customers including London Fields

Colliery, Sedgley Gas Company and Sedgley Urban District Council. Other local companies that used his services were Hermit Industries, Gibbons, D.D. Fields and Clifford Williams. Although most customers were from the Gornal/Sedgley/Pensnett area, the records show that there were many orders from as far afield as Wolverhampton, Wombourne and Willenhall.



Edwin ‘Ted’ Beardsmore at work in his blacksmith’s shop alongside his house, ‘Chase View’ in Gornal.

Locally, Ted Beardsmore was a well-known and respected member of the community. A churchwarden at St. James’ Church, he was a devout Christian who believed that Sunday was a day of rest and he would not undertake any paid work. However, if a horse was brought to him that was in distress then he would re-shoe them without charge. Canny Gornalites were known—it is said—to take full advantage of this and often the number of horses shedding their shoes on a Saturday evening reached epidemic proportions! Ted Beardsmore died in March 1966 at the age of 75.

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A WEEK IN PRISON AFTER DEATHS OF TWO DAUGHTERS

IN 1862 Isaac Thompson from Sedgley stood trial for killing his 8 year old daughter in a fit of temper. He was found guilty by the jury...but sentenced to just a week in prison. And what is more amazing was that he had previously appeared in court for unlawfully wounding another daughter, Rachel, and killing a third daughter called Martha!

In all three cases Thompson blamed his wife whom he described as a “drunkard”. On the first occasion Thompson said he arrived home to find his wife was out and that Rachel—who was only 13 at the time—had not been looking after her sisters properly. He lost his temper and threw a metal spike across the kitchen at her—and the spike embedded itself in her back. Somewhat surprisingly the local magistrates sympathised with Thompson by taking into account the actions of his wife who was clearly a somewhat inadequate mother and fined him just 5 shillings plus costs for this act.

It was just two months later that Thompson was again in court charged with causing the death of 18 month old Martha. He had taken her down to the kitchen one night but had left her there. In the morning the baby’s dead body was found on the floor. Thompson appeared in court but the magistrates remanded him on bail to appear before the forthcoming Assizes in Stafford. Before he was due to stand trial, however, he was again arrested, this time for “accidentally” throwing a poker at Hannah and killing her. The jury took a long time deliberating on their verdict and eventually declared Thompson guilty of the murder of Hannah but then they recommended a light sentence because of his “thoroughly bad wife”.

He was sentenced to just one week in prison. The case against him for the death of baby Martha was not proceeded with by the prosecutor and he was therefore found not guilty of that charge.

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it's a fact!

- ★ In 1873 when Rupert Kettle accepted the County Court Judgeship of Staffordshire he wanted to live in Wolverhampton. The Treasury said that he must live in Dudley otherwise he would be fined. Kettle said that as far as he recollected Dudley was *"composed principally of mounds of cinder or slack and it was not unusual to find heavy-looking men lying upon these mounds with short pipes in their mouths and a bulldog between their legs"*. Not being partial to cinder heaps nor bulldogs he still insisted that he wished to live in Wolverhampton. The Treasury said that if he did he would be fined £130. he moved to Sedgley which, although not in Dudley at that time was also not in Wolverhampton.
- ★ In 1909 it was reported in the local papers that a youth called Enoch Hampton from Upper Gornal had been killed in an unfortunate accident involving a horse. The lad had thrown his cap at the horse when it would not move forward and when he went to retrieve it the horse kicked him. He later died of abdominal injuries.
- ★ Thomas Waterhouse of Sedgley was a surgeon who, in the 1820s and 1830s achieved almost legendary status for his skills. In June 1829, for example, The Chronicle carried a story about how he performed an operation on a 60 year old man to remove a gall stone weighing more than two ounces. The operation lasted just a few minutes and within 10 days the patient was up and walking and in less than a fortnight after the operation he had returned to work as a labourer.
- ★ In May 1867 the Earl of Dudley paid £100 of the debt on Christ Church Coseley.

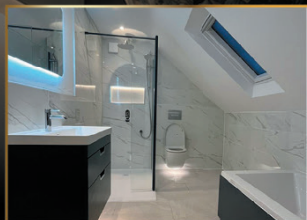
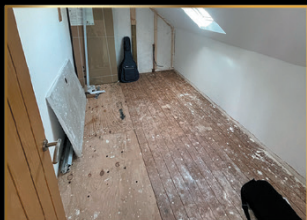


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MAKING THEIR MARK

They may not quite be 'A' list celebrities but a substantial number of Black Country men and women have, over the years, risen to important positions in their chosen professions. Take, for example:



William Ernest Jones.
Born in Upper Gornal on 14 July 1867 he went to medical school

where he became interested in psychiatry. At the turn of the century he left for Australia where, in 1905, he became Inspector General of the Insane for the whole of Western Australia. His work in Western Australia though brief, reflected his broader commitment to improving mental health services across Australia.



Although born and raised in Bexhill in Sussex, the **Venerable Nicholas Reade**, Bishop of Blackburn has substantial Black Country connections. From 1973-1974 he was Assistant Curate at St Chad's in Coseley and then between 1978 and 1982

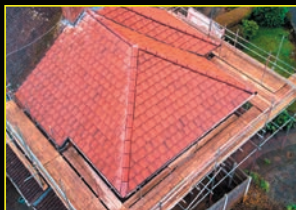
he was Vicar of St Peter's in Upper Gornal as well as being Chaplain to Burton Road Hospital.

Although a devout Baggies fan, Gornal-born **Peter Brookes** became Managing Director of MUTV, the subscription-based television channel run by Manchester United Football Club. Peter started life as a newspaper journalist before moving into the broadcasting media with Beacon Radio in 1977. He went on to join Central TV in 1984 and then short spells with TV-am and L'VE TV as well as the Today newspaper before joining MUTV.



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it's a fact!

- ★ For many years the strict Baptists in Gornal were served by Pastor Simeon Burns who preached weekly at their chapel in Turner Street. He lived in Walsall and for many years he would walk all the way to Gornal to take the service before walking all the way back home again. The congregation eventually clubbed together in order to purchase a horse for him to make the arduous journey somewhat easier. In 1874 Pastor Burns managed to raise enough money to have the new Baptist church in Robert Street built. The old chapel in Turner Street was converted into a house where a blacksmith called Sam Marsh worked (the old schoolhouse at the rear of the building was converted into a forge).
- ★ There was a great controversy in 1991 when a book entitled "*Haunted Pubs in Worcestershire & the Borders*" included a story about the Tipton Slasher. According to the author William Perry—the Slasher—committed suicide in the cellar of the Station Hotel in Dudley. Critics of the story were quick to point out that the Slasher's death certificate tells a very different tale. It confirms that he died in Bilston as a result of "*alcoholism and pulmonary congestion*" and anyway he died in 1880, some 16 years before the Station Hotel was built!
- ★ In August 1863 an excursion to Bromsgrove and the Lickey Hills by members of the Old Meeting House in Coseley almost ended in disaster. After a pleasant day out the party headed for home in a number of pony and traps. Unfortunately as they were nearing the church in Coseley one of the ponies bolted and the carriage hit the kerb, causing slight injuries to two of the customers.



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Back in 2016 we put together a series of ‘Unanswered Questions’ which seemed not to have any rational answers. Here are a few more for you to think about:

How do you know you’re not living in a simulation?

What happens after we die?

Is there such a thing as objective morality, or is everything relative?

How do you know your perception of the colour blue is the same as everyone else’s?

Would you rather know all the questions or all the answers?

If you describe something as indescribable, haven’t you already described it?

Isn’t good health just a slower rate at which to die?

If you punch yourself and it hurts, are you weak or strong?

What shape is your field of vision?

If the past is gone and the future hasn’t happened, does the present really exist?

What is nothingness?

Can two identical objects exist?

If you replaced every part of a ship one by one until none of the original remained, then built a second ship from all the original parts, which one is the real ship-and at what exact point during the replacement process did it change?

Can you trust a memory if you can’t tell when it started?

Can an all-powerful being create a rock so heavy it cannot lift it?

How can you ever reach a destination if you have to get halfway there first, then halfway again, and so on forever?

How big is the universe and does it have an edge?

Why does anything exist rather than nothing?

If every possible outcome of quantum mechanics happens in some universe, are there infinite copies of you reading slightly different versions of this article right now?

What happens when an unstoppable force meets an immovable object?



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FAMOUS EVENTS IN SEPTEMBER

1st—1715: The “Sun King” (King Louis XIV of France) died. He had ruled since the age of five and was succeeded by his 5-year old great grandson, Louis XV.

1st—1983: Korean Air Lines Flight 007 was shot down by a Russian fighter jet whilst on route from New York to Seoul, killing all 269 persons on board. The Boeing 747 reportedly strayed 100 miles off course over secret Soviet Russian military installations on the Kamchatka Peninsula and Sakhalin island. It crashed in the Sea of Japan.

2nd—1870: Napoleon III surrendered to the Prussians during the Battle of Sedan, resulting in the fall of the Second French Empire.

10th—1897: Twenty-five year old London taxi driver, George Smith, became the first person to be fined for drunk driving after crashing his car into a building. Smith pleaded guilty and was fined 25 shillings. Despite the invention of equipment like the breathalyser, it was not until the late 70s and 80s that public awareness of the dangers of drunk driving increased and police officers became tougher on offenders.

25th—1818: The first transfusion of human blood was performed by James Blundell at Guy’s Hospital in London. Injecting a patient who had hemorrhaged with blood during an era that was still in the habit of draining blood away to cure illnesses, Blundell was way ahead of his time.

29th—1916: Founder of the Standard Oil refinery, John D. Rockefeller, became the world’s first billionaire. Rockefeller’s fortune was worth almost 2% of America’s entire national economy. In October 1928, John D. Rockefeller leased land from Columbia University for the future site of what would become the Rockefeller Centre which was completed in 1939.

MANY CONGRATULATIONS HIMLEY SAILING CLUB

A fantastic £108,736 raised over the last 50 years for the RNLI

Over the last 50 years Himley Hall Sailing Club, one of the smallest sailing clubs to be affiliated to the RYA have raised £108,736 for the RNLI.

The club which is situated in beautiful historic parkland laid out by Capability Brown has a lovely 1920's thatched club house, purpose built changing rooms and a new starters hut for sailing races which was rebuilt two years ago following an arson attack. The park is owned and administered by Dudley Council who are extremely supportive of the Club's work. Although they are a small club they have regular training activities and awards, welcome schools and host many local scout groups, have competed nationally and support local events. The Club have enjoyed a visit from the Princess Royal who is President of the RYA and this year Sara



Sutcliffe who is Chief Executive of the RYA.



Soon after the club was formed in 1970 (at a time when the club had many more members) a team attended a 24 hour race at a club in Bedfordshire and decided that this was possible at Himley as a charitable event and the RNLI was chosen for its affinity to sailing and water-based activities.

From 1976 onwards a 24 hour race was held with many teams competing and camping out near the lakeside and clubhouse. Despite falling numbers and financial difficulties club members have always been adamant that this must be held every year and all proceeds must go to the RNLI. The Club have worked closely with the Kingswinford and Brierley Hill branch of the RNLI who have always been most supportive and join in with the food provided at the end to help raise funds and with many other events. More recently the Club have received support and help from regional RNLI staff.

Both Himley Sailing Club and the RNLI are desperately in need of new members. If you are interested in learning to sail or are returning to sailing, please contact the sailing club via their website at www.hhsc.weebly.com. If you are interested in assisting the RNLI please contact Alan Price on 07860 472222.

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Pumpkin Cake



*This month's recipe has been supplied by the lovely **Helen Beeston-May** from **Windmill Bakery**.*

INGREDIENTS

- 200g butter
- 200g castor sugar
- 200g self raising flour
- 4 eggs
- Vanilla essence

Buttercream

- 500g icing sugar
- 250g butter

PREPARATION

- Grease and line 2 x 6" tins with greaseproof paper
- Place the 200g of softened butter and 200g of castor sugar into a bowl and beat to a creamy consistency
- Slowly beat in 4 eggs, one at a time with a small amount of flour each time and add a few drops of vanilla essence
- Sift in the rest of the flour into the bowl and hand mix
- Divide the mixture between tins and bake for approximately 20 minutes until the sponge is golden. The cake should spring back when gently pushed in the middle

- Allow to stand for 5 minutes and then turn out onto a wire rack to cool
- Sandwich one on top of the other with jam in the middle and carve the cake to resemble a pumpkin shape

BUTTERCREAM ICING

- Carefully mix together icing sugar and softened butter until light and fluffy and add the colouring. Put the mixture into a piping bag and pipe all over the cake to resemble a pumpkin.
- Use green buttercream for the stalk or you can use a small amount of sugar paste



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Our good friends at the Odeon Cinema have very kindly given us 2 x family passes to the Odeon Cinema at Merry Hill, Dudley. There are lots of great films due to be released in the coming months so our winners will have a wide selection to choose from. But remember – if you don't enter then you can't win!

All you have to do is search out the square below for the 16 words associated with **ODEON CINEMA** on our list. Fifteen of them are hidden in the square (spelt forwards, backwards, up or down or diagonally) whilst one is not there at all – or it may be misspelt! Once you have identified which one is missing just fill in the form below and send it to us.

Alternatively send us an email at villagevoice@hotmail.co.uk

(remember to include your name, address, postcode, telephone number and email address).

The winners will be the first two correct entries drawn at random after the closing date of **Thursday, 24th September 2026**. Good luck!

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C	J	O	J	C	I	S	U	M	I	T
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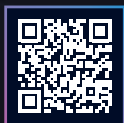
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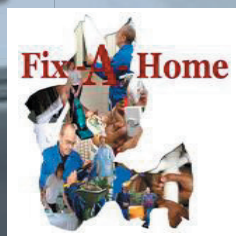
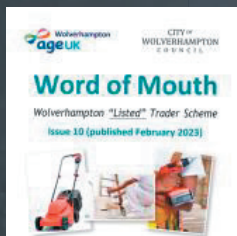
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In days gone by—long before television, radio, DVDs or even cinemas—the most common entertainment in and around the Black Country often involved animals fighting each other.

Every town (and most villages) had their own bullring in which bulls were tethered whilst half starved vicious bulldogs were set upon them. Such “attractions” regularly drew crowds of several hundred onlookers, and during the Wakes weeks over a thousand spectators was not unusual. In many cases once the bull had been killed it would be cut up and the meat sold to the crowds.

Less frequent—but equally popular—was bear baiting. Only the most vicious dogs were pitted against a full-grown bear and usually it was the dogs who ended up dead as the bear used its strength and agility to fight its tormentors. Another popular pastime was badger baiting and more than one local family made a good living by capturing badgers on Pensnett Chase ready for them to do battle in pits across the area.



Badger baiting was particularly popular in the area.

The real money, though, was to be made by breeding a champion cock who had proved himself in combat.

Almost every tavern had a cockpit in its backyard and often substantial amounts were wagered on the outcome of fights between specially bred birds fitted with metal spurs to inflict maximum damage. It is said that many of the champion birds were bred in Upper Gornal and the Cockpit at The Green Dragon saw fights staged almost every day. Indeed, on several occasions it is said that the All Midland Championships were held there.



Bear baiting often saw the dogs rather than the bear being killed. This engraving shows a typical scene enjoyed by men and women alike.

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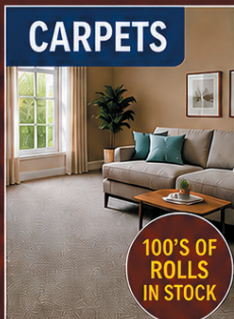
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- ★ In the 1920s many of the handmade bricks manufactured in the brickyards of the area were moulded by women. For every 1050 bricks made the moulder was paid 1s/7d and their assistant would get 1s/1d.
- ★ In September 1900 a parade through Tipton was organised in aid of the Reservists Fund. It included four local fire brigades (from Tipton, Dudley, Darlaston and Oldbury) plus horse riders in fancy dress and the Excelsior Brass Band. The parade finished at the Tipton Victoria Football Ground where a sports day was held. This, however, was not the only procession to take place through Tipton that year. In May a special torchlight parade was organised to celebrate the relief of Mafeking. At the front of the procession were the Tipton Volunteer and Princes' End Brass Bands.
- ★ There was a long running court case in the late 13th century involving the theft in Tipton of property belonging to Alice Fitzwarine. On 28th October 1278 she alleged a horse worth 20 shillings and an ox worth 13s/4d plus goods from her house were stolen by Richard le Wodeward of Berden and William of Hansacre. It took some time for the two defendants to be persuaded to appear in court—indeed it was not until 1293 that the case was heard. By then one of the defendants (William) had died and the aggrieved party (Alice) had become a widow and then remarried. Despite these complications the case went ahead although it was finally decided that the defendants were not guilty of the charges after all.
- ★ Before it was demolished in 1966, Abbey Farm in Gornal Wood was the family home of Dr Hicken, a local GP.

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DID YOU KNOW?

In 1935 the shops in Sedgley were very different to the ones we have today. In the Bull Ring, for example, was 'E. Kunzli' who supplied "*Wedding and birthday cakes and dainty fancies*" whilst one of the neighbours was 'The Misses Butler' who were "*dealers in drapery, stationery and fancy goods*". One of their rivals must have been 'Miss Chavasse' in Bilston Street who was a "*Draper & Outfitter*". In High Holborn was 'Arthur Cox' who proudly proclaimed that he was a "*House & Church Decorator*". And finally, away from the centre was 'T. Sidney Norton' in Sandyfields. He advertised the fact that he was "*Factory Trained*" in his job as a "*Turner & Voicer, Mechanic to the Music Trade*".

One of the most popular marching bands in the area was Pensnett Victoria Brass & Reed Band which was renowned for being prepared to perform anywhere, anytime for a jug of ale per bandsman.

Between 1905 and 1968 Jones' Newsagents and Tobacconists in Abbey Street, Gornal Wood was a major distribution centre for the 'Express & Star'. At its height 22 paperboys would arrive at the shop every evening to deliver more than 2000 papers to homes as far away as Pensnett and Coseley.

In 1969 the Straits Community Association organised a Donkey Derby in Major Jones' fields off Himley Road. There were five races—the Coleridge Canter, Tennyson Trot, Chaucer Chase, Grafton Gallop and Ruskin Romp—with the winners all taking part in a Grand Final race called The Straits Stakes. During the afternoon entertainment was provided by the 'Silver Threads Choir'. Apparently, a very good time was had by all.



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PERCEPTION IS EVERYTHING!

There have been many writers throughout history who have the time to describe in their own words the Black Country. Here are a few that we have found. In 1868, Elihu Burritt (the American Consul in Birmingham) described the view from the top of Dudley Castle as:

"the sublimest battle-scene ever enacted on earth: ten thousand Titans were essaying to breach heaven with a thousand mortars, each charged with a small red-hot hill".

Charles Dickens, however, was less enamoured by the scene that he saw:

"Not a blade of grass was seen to grow, where not a bud put forth its promise in the spring, where nothing green could live but on the surface of a stagnant pool, which here and there lay idly sweltering by the black roadside".

As well as a politician (he was Prime Minister in 1868 and from 1874 until 1880) Benjamin Disraeli was an author of some considerable note and in his book "Sybil" he described how in the Black Country:

"Men, women and children, wan in their looks and ragged in their attire, tended their engines fed their tributary fire, begging upon the road or scowled half-naked from the doorless houses".

He also painted a word picture of the scene at night:

"When every chimney squirted its flame; and places that had been dark vaults all day now showed red-hot, with figures moving to and fro within their blazing jaws and calling to one another with hoarse cries...when carts came rumbling by filled with rude coffins".

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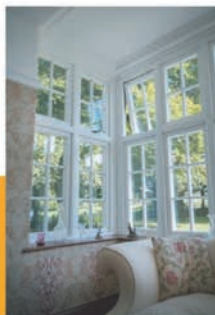
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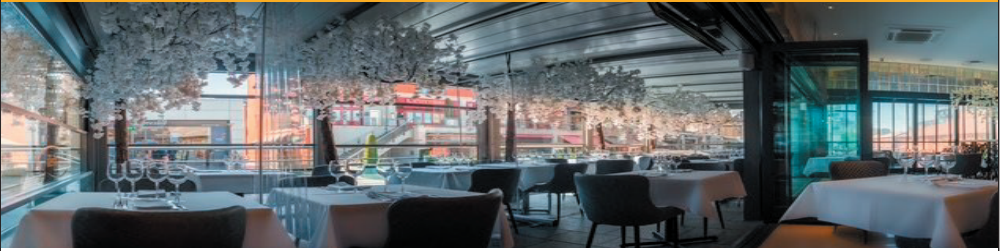
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OUT AND ABOUT: LUCARELLI

A review by Trevor Langley



It is said to be a good idea, for the heart, mind and soul, to get ‘out and about’ – maybe to somewhere that has not been visited for a while (possibly years). Perhaps a favourite village, town or city, from past times comes to mind with a return to view if it is the same, similar or has changed beyond all recognition. I located multi award-winning Lucarelli restaurant (Est. April 2021) in Birmingham, at a scenic canal-side setting. I had been recommended Lucarelli, for providing elegance, style and authentic Italian cuisine to a high standard. Pristine table settings greet the eye, with crisp white linen.

To commence I chose BURRATA E ASPARAGI (Toasted Altamura bread with fresh Apulian burrata, fresh tomatoes, roasted asparagus) from the Antipasti (Starters) list on the main menu. This aroused my taste buds and gave me undoubted confidence in the courses to follow.

For the ‘main event’ I selected POLLO ALLA CALABRESE (Supreme of chicken, roasted peppers, Calabrian ‘Nduja – Italian spicy pork sausage, spicy tomato sauce) from the Old Italian Favourites part of the main menu. This dish arrived in style and aromas enticed me on to the mouth’s pleasures. Flavoursome, and with a succulence that increased my confidence, the sensation of tastes, for the complementing flavours of ingredients, showed that the very experienced kitchen personnel certainly know how to impress diners. Head Chef is Doriano, who, with the brigade, all ensure that diners enjoy a most memorable dining time. Other choices included Pasta, Risotto, Meats, Seafood and Pizza variations, plus sides. ‘Compliments to Chef’ – absolutely!

TIRAMISU (had to be) is my favoured dessert – Splendid! Quality wines/drinks have all requirements covered. Classic Italian Liqueurs, Coffees, Teas and more are also listed. Gift vouchers are available – perhaps surprise someone special? Parties, receptions, plus corporate events etc are easily arranged. Thank you to Pasquale, for his genuine welcome and to Simone, for exemplary service throughout. Highly recommended.

**Lucarelli, 117 Wharfside Street, Mailbox, Birmingham B1 1RF. Tel: 0121 665 6762.
E-mail: mailbox@lucarelliholdings.co.uk Web: www.lucarellirestaurant.co.uk**

**Lucarelli’s sister restaurant with rooms (Est. June 2019) is also award-winning and located at
58 – 60 Seagar Street, West Bromwich B71 4AN. Tel: 0121 532 1552.
E-mail: westbrom@lucarelliholdings.co.uk Web: www.lucarellirestaurant.co.uk**

**COMING UP IN THE
OCTOBER EDITION:
“Out & About: Lowe’s
on Carter Street”**



As always,

Enjoy!

Trevor Langley

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- ◆ Approximately £3.3 billion every year is spent on pet food in the UK alone.
- ◆ There are approximately 11-12.5 million cats in the UK; around 12 million dogs; 1 million rabbits; 24.7 million fish (including 14.7 million goldfish and in excess of 9.3 million tropical fish).



- ◆ There are approximately 600,000 hamsters in the UK.
- ◆ The average dog owner will pay around £850-£900 per year in vets bills and up to £1500 per year for cats.
- ◆ During the average life of a cat it will cost its owner between £11,400 and £13,000;

◆ During the average life of a dog it will cost the owner in excess of £15,000.

◆ The longest-lived cat ever recorded was Crème Puff who lived 38 years and 3 days and lived in Austin, Texas. Crème Puff was a domestic short-hair cat and was born on 3 August 1967 and lived until 6 August 2005 thus reaching the remarkable age of 38 years and 3 days.

◆ The oldest dog was 'Bobi' who lived to 31 years and 165 days. Bobi was a male Rafeiro do Alentejo from Portugal and was officially recognised by the Guinness World Records as the oldest dog ever. He spent his entire life in the village of Conqueiros with his owner Leonel Costa and family, passing away on 20 October 2023.



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OR WHATEVER by John Sparry

Gone Fishin'

When the Tesla trillionaire, Elon Musk's team of robot roofers, painters and decorators first unload the solar-powered builders' carts on the planet Mars, in preparation for the erecting of pressurised flatpack prefabs for those unable to get on the housing ladder in either Dudley, Dusseldorf or Dixville Notch, there could be a caveat from the world of real estate.



As a confirmed subscriber to the 'IMCIU Society' (it-might-come-in-useful) my scrapbooks include this spot from the News of the World, November 27, 1988. 'Angling fans are hooked on a New York firm's offer of fishing rights on Venus and Mars. United Planet Commission gets £11 for a fifty yard stretch and says, 'Business is booming'.

Temperatures resembling these during a 'melt' in the furnaces at the Earl's Round Oak Steelworks, and in addition, rivers flowing with sulphuric acid rather than water, seemed to negate Venus as a piscatorial paradise.

However, despite little digging machines already prospecting on Mars, one hopes

the long-held belief in the existence of canals on the Red Planet has not been entirely dis-counted.

In any event we may be able to appoint a great, great grandson of James Brindley to program the robots. As his canal-building ancestor used to tell fellow-waterway engineers treating the clay at the bottom of the cut, "Puddle it, puddle it!".

Anorakian note: 'Cut' was the proper word employed by those intrepid engineers of old. Black Country folk, who don't care for too much change, kept it along with their cups of tay.

Mid-term note: Dixville Notch is usually first in delivering its vote in Presidential Elections.

By John Sparry, Ridge Cot, 15 Enville Road, Wall Heath
Mobile: 07831 342209

(Sorry folks, no texts or voicemails accepted—I just can't cope with that!)

BRAINTEASERS ANSWERS

The answers to our Brainteasers this month need a little more explanation than usual. So here goes:

1. The answer to this puzzle has caused great controversy both in America and the UK. Indeed, in 2006 a full day's debate about the answer to the question was held at Oxford University. The generally accepted answer seems to be that you should change your choice. This is based on the fact that when you chose Box A initially you had a one-in-three chance of being correct. If you now change to Box C then you have a one-in-two chance of the £1 million cheque and so the odds

are better. We, however, are not convinced!

2. The numeric value of the equation is
 $9567 + 1085 = 10652$

3. This is much more straightforward. The four people were a man and his son, his sister and her daughter.

4. The answer (which surprised us) is "one thousand".

**WATCH OUT FOR MORE
BRAINTEASERS IN THE
OCTOBER EDITIONS**

COMPETITION WINNERS

The answer to our Wordsearch Competition in the **AUGUST** edition was **SCREWS** which was misspelt. The two lucky winners who each receive a **£50.00 B&Q VOUCHER** are:

HEATHER BRADLEY of **STOURBRIDGE** and
RUSS BANKS of **WOLVERHAMPTON**

You can find this month's competition on page 34.

PLEASE NOTE: Only one entry per person per month is allowed – multiple entries will be disqualified. Winners are chosen at random from all correct entries received by the closing date.

WIN
TWO
TICKETS TO



Courtesy of **THE ROBIN** in Bilston, we have two tickets up for grabs for one lucky winner. All you have to do to be entered is to send your **NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER** and **EMAIL ADDRESS** to villagevoice@hotmail.co.uk or write to us at The Robin Tickets, Forge House, 50 Redhall Road, Dudley DY3 2NL. The lucky winner will be drawn on **Friday, 23rd October 2026 – GOOD LUCK!**

Congratulations to **PATRICIA TUCKER** of **COSELEY** who was the lucky winner of the two tickets on offer in the **AUGUST 2026** edition.



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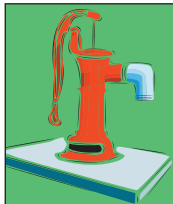
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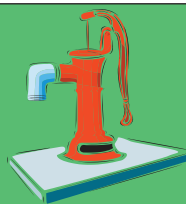
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out more*





The Sedgley, Gornal, Coseley & Tipton **PARISH PUMP**



SEDGLEY ACTIVE RETIREMENT GROUP

meet every Thursday morning at **Sedgley Community Centre, Ladies Walk, Sedgley DY3 3UA**
from 10.00am-12.00 noon (term time only).

SEPTEMBER

- 10th—**Postman's Knock** by speaker Alan Godfrey
17th—**The Story Teller** by speaker Gavin Young
24th—**China, Land of Pandas and Dragons** by speaker Ray Sturdy

OCTOBER

- 1st—Perils of an After Dinner Speaker by speaker Penny Wheat
8th—Animal Conservation at Dudley Zoo by speaker Jack Williams
15th—Grand Theatre by speaker Ian Watkins
22nd—QUIZ
29th—Half Term: No meeting

NOVEMBER

- 5th—Red Flower and a Bag of Old Bones by speaker Barry Picken MBE
12th—Ordinary People doing Exceptional Things by speaker John Pittwood
19th—Nostalgic talk of old Dudley by speaker Keith Hodgkins
26th—68 Years in Show Business by speaker David St. John

DECEMBER

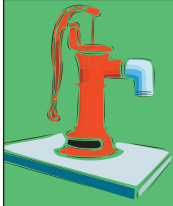
- 3rd—Hadrians Wall by speaker Rob Broadbent
10th—A Grim Almanac of Staffordshire by speaker Karen Evans
17th—Musical Entertainment by The Ploughmen
Christmas break, the Club restarts on 7th January 2027.

**Visitors and New Members are always welcome. For more information, please contact
Stuart Lawley on 01902 882973**

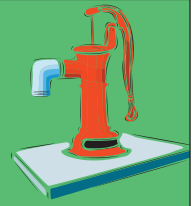
....SALE OF PRE-LOVED CLOTHES, TOYS AND BOOKS....

**Memorial Hall, St James the Great, Lower Gornal
Saturday, 26th September from 11.00am-2.00pm.**

All proceeds from this event will go to the Memorial Hall fund to help towards the cost of uninsured losses and expenses following the hall's recent break-in.
Proceeds from the sale of Tea, Coffee and Cakes will be donated to the MacMillan Cancer Fund.



The Sedgley, Gornal, Coseley & Tipton PARISH PUMP



SEDGLEY TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILD



* A chance to make new friends

* Speaker or entertainment event every
3rd Monday of the month 7.15pm
Sedgley Community Centre,
Ladies Walk DY3 3UA

Monday 21st September:
Rose Cook-Monk will tell the story of Coco Chanel -
'Love, Lipstick and Lies'.

* Plus lots of enjoyable activity groups to join:
craft group (every Wednesday 2pm Sedgley Community Centre)
TG Singers choir (most Mondays 7pm Sedgley Community Centre)
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For more information, please contact Karen
07473885197 or karenm_moore@sky.com
www.facebook.com/SedgleyEYETG



THE NEXT PARISH PUMP WILL
BE IN THE **OCTOBER 2026**
EDITION AND THE COPY
DEADLINE IS

Friday, 18th September 2026.

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IT'S WRITE HERE

It's Write Here is a writing group who meet at Coseley Library, Castle Street, Coseley WV14 9DW on the 4th Thursday of every month at 11.00am-1.00pm. Pens, paper and complimentary tea and coffee (courtesy of the Library) are provided.

If you are interested in creative writing, expression or discussion of books, individual and collaborative works and ideas then we would love to have you join our group.

For further information please telephone the Library on 01384 812775 or email them at coseley.library@gll.org



Sedgley Townswomen's Guild

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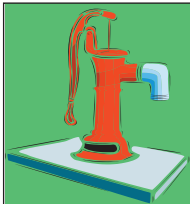
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Saturday 19th September 2026

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Sedgley DY3 3UA 10am onwards



The Sedgley, Gornal, Coseley & Tipton PARISH PUMP



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Cooper

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HALESOWEN
TOWN HALL
Friday 23rd
October 2026
7:30pm

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Renowned theatre magazine "The Stage" describes Phil's portrayal as "a carbon copy in looks, voice and humour" and "as near to the genuine article as you can get"! He's got the height, the laugh and the Fez - all we need is you! Come along and join us for a trip down memory lane, a jolly good laugh and an evening of belly-aching nostalgia.

Tommy Cooper is coming to the Halesowen Town Hall on Friday 23rd October 2026 and we are also supporting The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust from the proceeds. This show is being produced by Cattle Productions Ltd who have a distinguished reputation in the revival and recreation of classic comedy, ensuring that these true icons are never forgotten. Don't forget they brought you Steptoe & Son not too long ago!

For tickets please visit: www.brandnewtommycooper.co.uk or go to the Halesowen Town Hall Box Office either online or in person.

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For more information contact: 07473885197
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PROMS in the CHURCH



SATURDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER

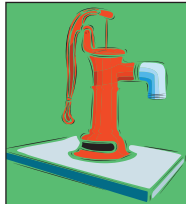
7.30pm START

ST CHAD'S CHURCH, COSELEY

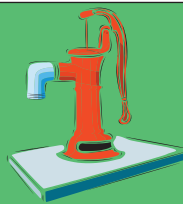
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LADIES
CHOIR

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The Sedgley, Gornal, Coseley & Tipton **PARISH PUMP**



TIPTON TOWN LIBRARIES LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

are pleased to announce their annual Local History Day at Tipton Library on Saturday 3rd October at 10.30am

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