

St Mark's Parish Magazine

March 2021

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In this month's issue

Letter from the Vicar	Page 2
Setbacks	Page 3
United Nations' World Happiness Day	Page 5
Fundraising	Page 8
News from the Church of England	Page 10
Environmental News	Page 11
Fast Patrol Boats 1956	Page 16
Spring	Page 20
Off the Cuff	Page 21
Book review	Page 24
Reader Recipes	Page 25
Puzzles	Page 26

Your Views & Contributions

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LETTER FROM THE VICAR

Dear Friends,

I try to do a crossword and a Soduku most days to keep the little grey cells working. The process is enlightening. Some answers come easily. Others need a bit more work. And then there are always ones that we need help with. And it's the same with life generally. But I think I see something else at work. It's about "getting the brain in gear". It's the sort of momentum that is gradually achieved after a slow start.

I am sure you have watched some of David Attenborough's marvellous television programmes. I remember one in which a goose took off from a reservoir; the goose started by flapping its wings without making much forward progress. Then it ran on the water for what seemed an eternity and just when we thought it might give up and not take off at all, it rose into the air and soared upwards.

I'm sure we all find that if something doesn't come easily, it's easier not to do anything. Have you ever sat around (physically or on Zoom) in a small group and had a discussion such as in our Lent Groups? It can be hard to start a discussion as the question hangs awkwardly in the air. Then we make the jump into "brain-engaged" space as someone says something interesting or stirring, and we get up and running. Sometimes even flying.

There's a real momentum now as we come out of "lockdown", with the vaccines in particular enabling the roadmap out of the current grave restrictions. But it's a momentum that needs constant nudging towards positive change, not a return to old ways that have been found wanting. This extraordinary momentum has allowed and caused drastic change in so many areas of life, not least in the general acceptance of previously unimaginable restrictions on private and public life, and in our appreciation for the NHS, carers, teachers and so on. And there's huge momentum in the readiness to address key questions: How do we look after the most vulnerable; or treasure the world we live in; or recognise how interdependent we all are on this small planet; or think again about who and what we most value; or face our own prejudices; or address the massive inequality at home and internationally and so on.

So many issues require urgent action now, we can be overwhelmed into inertia – doing nothing. Whereas we simply need to do what we can, building on and generating further momentum. You never can tell whether something will fly or crash until you try! Never have so many people of good will on our planet been so united in knowing what needs to be done. God is surely speaking loud and clear to all who will listen. But it is costly, requiring sacrifice. And the forces ranged in opposition are many and powerful, turning up in every quarter, not least in our own hearts. And so each of us grapples with what we are called to do, and how we are called to live, as part of God's



missional loving of the world. God's model for bringing in his kingdom is sacrificial love.

And what of the Church? Where do you see the momentum in the Church and in St Mark's in particular? As we emerge from this phase of the pandemic, what have we learned? What are we being asked to do differently? What do we need to hold on to and what do we need to let go of? These are questions I am posing to the PCC, but do discuss these questions amongst yourselves and share widely. I'd love to hear your conclusions.

It's been a very difficult time, but a time of great opportunity is coming for which we need to be ready. I wish you a very blessed Lent, and joy in the journey.

Best Wishes



Setbacks

I expect all of us in one way or another have to accept reduced opportunities in life at some time or another and it must have happened to all other than tiny babies during this pandemic. In old age, if one survives that long, most have to suffer the loss or reduction in what we can attempt or achieve. The object, perhaps, is to accept these set-backs with good grace.

We can see the set-backs for children and young people at present with the amount being missed by them at such important ages. But this isn't just for them during this time of Covid-19 but at any age, through illness or accident, circumstances can change dramatically for all of us.

A friend I have known for about 86 years was, with his vivid personality, always great fun to be with, good at sports, music and outdoor activities and seeming to have a great future ahead of him. Like me he had to do National Service and he got a Commission in the Buffs regiment and was sent out by the army to Nigeria. There, at the age of about 20 he caught TB Meningitis and was flown home to a hospital in England. There he was given drugs to cure his disease but sadly those drugs destroyed the nerves of his ears so that for over 60 years he has been profoundly deaf. At first he hoped to regain his hearing but this was not possible so he put all his efforts into lip-reading at which he became proficient, especially with the help of his lovely wife whom he married soon after he was deaf. He had a good career as a printer and gave a lot of his time organising national events for the deaf and lobbying for more subtitles and help for the deaf and hard of hearing. For this he was awarded the British Empire Medal and to this day he is the life

and soul of any parties we might hold. Happily his speech is still clear and he is called upon to read lessons in his church.

Then a very good friend with whom I went to Uganda in 1989 to help in a diocese there, and who had travelled in Nepal and other wild areas, was reduced to living in a Nursing Home in Redhill. He was then disabled and we used to meet every week on a Friday morning and walk to the Plough pub for half a pint of bitter and then walk back, he pushing his three wheeler. We always passed a garden that he could see over the fence and he always wanted to count the lovely rose blossoms in that garden. Although his horizons had narrowed he was still able to enjoy what we might think of as a reduced life, to the full.

Dear David Barrell who flew on and off aircraft carriers in the war has lived a very secluded existence in his nursing home during the pandemic having difficulty in walking and using his hands, but still seeming to think positive and keep smiling through it all when we ring him up.

Then Jenny's mother, who was a widow for over 30 years, seemed content as her horizons narrowed. Having been the matriarch of the large family in a large house she was always content when circumstances changed over the years. She lived in 3 rooms next to us for 18 of those years and then, when she was over 90, she had to be cared for in a care home. We visited her in the nursing home and when Jenny asked her what she had been doing, "My housework, dear" was the answer. This was tidying up the items on her bed table.

Finally I think of my dear wife Jenny. Alzheimer's had reduced her horizon, but she was always delighted to have a glimpse of the sky and trees in the garden. She kept to the family rule always quoted by my son, Andrew, to "think positive" and was content to reside in the Beaumont Home, only regretting that I could not be with her for those last 3 months because of the pandemic.

So I, too, must "think positive" and take joy in my smaller horizons that I can still appreciate and may you be able to enjoy the situation you are in as days go by, however reduced they may be.

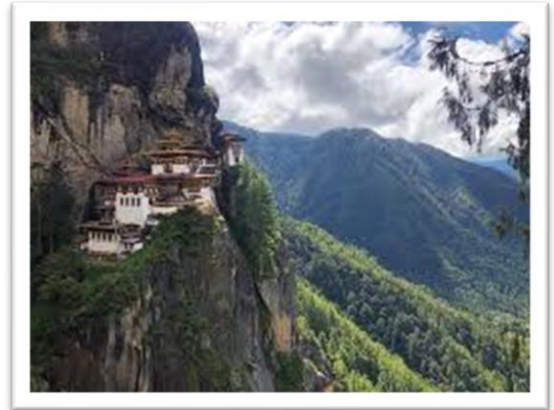
Ian Archer



The United Nations World Happiness Day

20 March is the UN's recognised World Happiness Day. It has been observed since 2013 to recognise the importance of being happy.

The event was initially suggested by Bhutan, a country which has been measuring and promoting the importance of happiness since the 1970s when it stopped reporting Gross Domestic Product and instead adopted the goal of Gross National Happiness. Looking at the breath-taking landscape it is hard to imagine being anything but happy there.



To celebrate this special day, after many difficult months, without our families and friends, here are a few suggested to help us to *'forget your troubles, come on get happy'*.

Thank God!



It might sound obvious but gratitude is a very simple way to make yourself happier; when you appreciate all you have life is better. What better way to be grateful than to thank God. Finish your day with a simple gratitude prayer and you'll wake up feeling lighter and with a smile on your face. If you are looking for inspiration, take a look at page 7.

Exercise

Get up and move, exercise can release endorphins and it is never too late to start. The world's oldest Marathon runner completed the Toronto marathon at 100 years-old after taking up running at 89. If that feels a little ambitious, Joe Wicks offers workouts for seniors on his YouTube channel.



Create something



It doesn't matter what you choose to make, a cake, painting a picture or writing a story, the sense of achievement will make you feel happier. Being creative gets the grey matter working but also gives us a sense of wellbeing.

Give

There is a saying by the neurosurgeon, politician and author, Ben Carson: "happiness does not result from what we get, but from what we give". If Jesus has taught us anything, it is the importance of giving and serving others and the bonus, icing on the cake is....it makes us happier. Perhaps you can even give something you have created (see above).

Have an adventure

This may sound scary or impossible in the backdrop of Covid-19 but trust me on this one. Get out of your comfort-zone and open your eyes and you'll be amazed what adventures you can have without travelling to distant lands. It can be as simple as discovering a new walking route. Researching and experiencing a new culture or new foods. It could even be making a new friend, someone you wouldn't usually get to know. When you open yourself up to new and unusual opportunities, you feel happier and more alive. It just takes a different mind-set and being a little bit brave.



If you do have an adventure on your doorstep; don't keep it to yourself, tell us about it. Just email me at: magazine@stmarksreigate.co.uk



Thank You, Lord.

TODAY I GIVE THANKS
FOR THE *blessings* YOU'VE GIVEN ME.
FOR THE KIND PEOPLE YOU'VE PLACED IN MY PATH,
THE BEAUTY THAT EXISTS ALL AROUND ME,
AND FOR THE MILLION GENTLE *mercies* AND *graces*
THAT ARE A PART OF EACH FRESH, NEW DAY,
I SING YOUR *praises*, LORD.

*So Very Grateful to
Have You in My Life.*

Fundraising

SMOAT

Supporting Small Businesses in Malawi

Over the last two years, Faith in Action have been working with a ministry that has been set up within a community living on the outskirts of a large rubbish dump in Blantyre, Malawi. The main source of income for the community has been based on adults and children scavenging from the dump. Wesley Msamange, the community representative in Malawi, reported back to Faith in Action after his first visit to the dump: "The first thing that hit me was the dreadful smell. Second, that mothers with babies on their backs were there and children were playing with the rubbish. Third, that they were eating bread, covered with mould, with relish."



Wesley on his first trip to the rubbish dump

However, with the help of Faith in Action, this proactive and motivated community has been able to set up small micro businesses to provide alternative sources of income.

In 2019, following the Helier Dreux Quiz, we sent £1,000 which funded the start-up of an Electrical business.

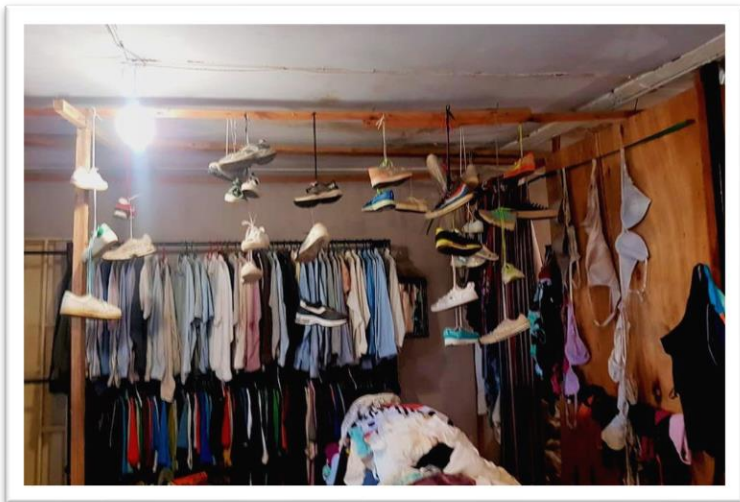


Wesley with the owner of the Electrical shop

Wesley wrote: "The electrical shop has started well. The team is very passionate about electronics. I was very encouraged to see how innovative the team is. Now apart from just selling items, they have started to charge people's phones for a fee. They have also started to sell laptops on behalf of people looking to sell them and in return they get a small commission. This will also help bring profits for the shop. Three members of the team hope to do

some electronic training in the future as there is also a demand for broken phones, irons and radios etc. to be repaired, and they could use the back part of the shop for repairing things. So, I appreciated them for thinking outside the box and I believe that they will slowly be able to meet their basic needs.”

In 2020, after the huge success of the SMOAT@Home afternoon tea, we were able to send £1,500 to fund the set-up of a trading centre, which runs a little like a charity shop in the UK. People who need to raise some funds or who have items that they no longer need, will be able to take them into this shop for them to be sold, and the shop will charge a commission of 20% for doing so. The donor will only receive the money when the items are sold. The goods for sale would include clothing, bedding and smaller household and kitchen items. There will also be a fitting room with a mirror where clothing can be tried on.



The trading centre

These are hard-working entrepreneurial families, who are keen to make a living but have no access to finance. These grants will allow them to build their own businesses and reduce their dependency on the dump.

Barbara Perkins

News from the Church of England

Bishop of Norwich, appointed to lead environmental programme

The Bishop of Norwich, Graham Usher, has accepted the invitation of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to lead the Church of England's Environment Programme with a charge to lead bold, deliberate, collaborative action across the Church to tackle the grave existential crises of climate change and biodiversity loss.

Bishop Graham will work with the Mission and Public Affairs department to lead the Church of England's Environment Programme, including the commitment to net-zero carbon impacts across the Church by 2030 set by General Synod in February 2020.

Making the announcement, The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said: "The crises of climate change and biodiversity loss are the most grave and existential we face: as human beings, as a Church and as a global community. We welcome Bishop Graham and his long expertise as he steps into the role of Lead Bishop for the Environment. May we pray for him, and the vital work of the Environment Programme."

Bishop Graham's first degree was in ecological science from Edinburgh University. He has written two books about Spirituality and landscape. He is a keen beekeeper and is undertaking work to enhance the biodiversity of the historic Bishop's Gardens in Norwich.

Commenting on his appointment, Bishop Graham Usher, said: "The care of creation is at the heart of the Anglican Communion's marks of mission and I hope it will also play a key part in the life of every church community and every disciple of Jesus Christ."

The Church of England's Environment Programme is working to develop tools and resources to enable churches, schools, and dioceses to rise to the challenge of reaching net-zero carbon emissions by 2030. Beyond numbers and targets, it promotes a care for creation that is deep rooted in Christian faith and discipleship.

The UK will host the UN climate conference COP26 in November this year. Churches are being encouraged to raise their voice to speak up about the need to tackle climate change across the whole of society through the Climate Sunday initiative, starting by holding their own climate focused service.

Bishop Graham will take over the role in June.

See the full story and more information at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/news-and-media/news-and-statements/new-bishop-environment-appointed-archbishops>

Environmental News

How to achieve Climate Change and Real Prosperity



This Year's Reith lectures were on the subject of "How We Get What We Value", and was given by Dr Mark Carney, previously head of the Central Bank in Canada and then until recently, Chairman of the Bank of England. Dr Carney is an economist by education and an expert banker by career, leading to what is the top banking post in the world. He is both an academic and a skilled, very experienced operator. He knows what he is talking about and I recommend a read of those Reith lectures.

In his first lectures he distinguishes between monetary value and what he calls intrinsic value, and asserts that we really have to value something if we want it to happen. Intrinsic value comprehends ethical and other social values which market value does not. However, he says, when dominant, market values can change and corrode the other values present in society, which may wither with disuse. He shows that whereas early economists and philosophers understood the difference between market and real intrinsic value, in recent decades we have forgotten this and placed our interest more and more in values derived from the market, and used 'market' values to value social ones.

The second lecture is from Credit Crisis to Resilience which underscores his first period in charge of The Bank, and the third "From Covid Crisis to Renaissance", the economic aspects of the pandemic and the lessons and changes it entails. The final lecture is what I wish to dwell on here and is "From Climate Change to Real Prosperity". The use of the word 'real' distinguishes economic growth from the Industrial Revolution which was at the expense of the environment, to real or environmental sustainable growth. The first three lectures really lead up to the last. Dr Carney is now the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy on Climate Finance, and Financial Advisor to the PM on the finance of Climate Change. He is at the cutting edge.

In dealing with the Climate Crisis we need to re-prioritise; to recover human values which have been subjugated to money and finance. He gives an extended evaluation of the worst of climate changes, both what we have already experienced and what is to come. Scientists have concluded that the pace of climate change is roughly proportional to the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. To stabilise this we

have to achieve net zero carbon emission by 2050. "Net zero is NOT a slogan but an imperative of climate physics."

However, although he recognises that most large countries have signed up to net zero by 2050, relatively little has yet been done to counter current emissions. He sees pollution pricing as an essential tool to curb carbon use but comments that currently world tax on carbon is \$3 a tonne but it needs to be \$75 a tonne.

So what is his solution? It is formidable to attempt a summary of his thesis. Firstly, we as individuals and governments must decide what we want principally with regard to the future of the planet. Next, we must organise our legislation and business practices to comply with those wishes. In this respect he sees finance as a principle driver of the opportunities for business success. There is great scope for profit. He sets out more fully in his thesis how this can be done.

He sees companies, communities and governments coming together to set clear goals, sanctions and incentives so that it "becomes profitable to be part of the revised system and costly to remain part of the problem." Businesses should be able to see a change to sustainability as an enormous business opportunity. It will be capital and labour intensive.

He sees three challenges.

- 1.) Engineering. He sees the direction of investment in producing green energy (as yet mainly electricity e.g. from wind farms and solar) as a way of driving transport and much of industry. Existing technology can, he says, reduce 60% of current carbon emissions. We need innovation to cut 25% of greenhouse gasses. Speed and scale are essential but he is clearly optimistic.
- 2.) He considers legislation is necessary to require companies to change reporting criteria to include reports on their plans and progress towards eliminating the use of carbon. This should be supported by pressure from investors and employees to ensure companies comply with climate change requirements. Investment organisations should ensure development plans provide for the phasing out of carbon use. He says Central Banks from 29 countries, responsible for 75% of emissions, are already working to this end. The government also now has plans to change company reporting criteria to include climate change policies.
- 3.) The transition to green economies can be the greatest commercial opportunity of our times. So besides carbon reduction he sees consequent profitability as a driver. Voters should ensure that policies are devised to achieve this. Investors and Financial Institutions should be mobilised to ensure investment has this result.

So is the problem cracked? Dr Carney is clearly a realist, optimist and constructively forward looking, but he has the humility to quote the reaction of Greta Thunberg to the proposals put forward by himself and his colleagues at the UN.

He quotes Greta:

"You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words and yet I am one of the lucky ones. People are suffering, people are dying, entire ecosystems are collapsing, we are in the beginning of a mass extinction and all you can talk about is money and fairy tales of eternal economic growth. How dare you. We will not let you get away with this, right here, right now is where we draw the line. The world's waking up and change is coming whether you like it or not!"



To his great credit Dr Carney acknowledges the underlying truth in Greta's short statement. We cannot settle for worthy statements followed by futile gestures. We cannot settle (he says) for plans in Paris five years ago for 2.8 degrees warming (when 1.5 is required) that they don't even meet. We cannot settle for companies that preach green but don't change their carbon footprints. (Remember the article in this magazine on the British air trade). He understands that there will be resistance from vested interests. He recalls the failure of investment organisations to respond to the 2008 financial crisis; putting their own interests first. There is a strong predisposition to go on as before.

So where are we? Steam ships were invented at the beginning of the nineteenth century but at the time of the First World War still over half of UK tonnage was carried by sail. Certainly the pace of innovation has changed with, say, the Internet, but thirty years in relation to the size of this problem is as of a breath of air. Little has been achieved in the last thirty years and we have still allowed carbon emissions to rise steeply and matters to get worse at an even faster rate. If Dr Carney's ideas had been implemented thirty years ago we would by now be able to decide whether or not they might work. But now it is too late for those ideas alone. Even the European Commission recognises that targets for change should be achieved by 2035. They see a greater urgency. He admits "the market is not the answer to everything, but it can play a crucial role in solving many of humanity's greatest challenges."

So is this surveillance and market incentives the way forward? What does it overlook, if anything?

- 1.) He says nothing about the further growth in world population which is certainly a driver for the increased use of carbon. World population was 2 billion in 1945, by 2006 it was 6½ billion and is set to reach 9 billion by 2050. It is projected to reach 10 billion before the end of the century.
- 2.) Is the target of NET nil carbon use sufficient? It seems very challenging, but it offers only a life on a knife edge. Carbon release into the atmosphere does not go away. It is cumulative. Climate Change so far has exceeded predictions and may change unexpectedly by unseen tipping points where

natural change takes over from man-made growth of carbon in the atmosphere. We need to achieve ACTUAL nil carbon use and some reduction in what is already in the atmosphere which does not reduce of its own accord.

- 3.) Can his dream become reality sufficiently quickly and effectively? Well, in my view what he suggests is certainly necessary, but it does not appear nearly enough. This is a unique situation and as he says, looking back, as with Covid, is unlikely to supply a solution.

Nevertheless, the restructuring of society such as took place in the two World Wars did put society on a (war) footing very quickly to meet the need. It can be done. It then involved things like rationing, direction of labour, mobilisation, direction of industry (to armaments) and so on. This time probably not those specific actions will be required but unless populations are prepared to accept similar decisive action, which is likely in parts to be uncongenial, then their support for countering climate change will have been no more than hypocrisy.

Changes, such as bringing gas and electricity into public ownership may be necessary, not for political dogma, but as a means to the common end of reducing carbon use. Electricity is likely to produce high profits and gas to wither away, and both require management. Furthermore, this would do no more than bring us into line with many European countries and in some cases would be bringing the family silver back from Europe. A kind of Brexit extension, bringing "control" of public investment and dividends back home.

Notice too that putting the economy on a war footing did not do away with private enterprise. Indeed private enterprise during the war was very profitable; so much so that it was necessary to introduce Excess Profits Tax to deal with excess profits. Similarly, Post War Credits were invented to cream off the top of inflationary wages which otherwise would simply have resulted in high inflation without allowing more actual consumption. Such actions as above are no more than the reordering of priorities, which is what Dr Carney aims at in a different, time expensive way.

Now many of my readers may be appalled by such a suggestion but that is not the criterion. To be appalled may be a necessary step towards reality. To be appalled by radical change and to do insufficient, is to throw in the towel. What matters in a crisis is effectiveness for the circumstances actually prevailing.

Dr Carney does not overlook the capacity of the business world to avoid governmental decisions by actions such as they already do by, for example, taking their residence abroad to Tax Havens. The aircraft industry, if not pleased with government policy, could take its ball to an uncontrolled country. Yet in his model he seems to overlook that kind of self-interest. International co-operation is essential to prevent that and this needs to be a central part of the Glasgow conference this year.

War is a contest between two countries. This time, if there is sufficient understanding, it should be a co-operative enterprise between all countries towards mutual survival.

Already Dr Carney has got off the blocks with an agreement between 29 Central Banks, who have signed up to his suggestions on the place of finance in change. However, it is the countries who either do not co-operate or pay lip service and then allow evasion of the rules which are the problem, so international countervailing action will be required.

In that context the self-interest of countries which has always predominated, is very difficult to change. It involves such things as preventing Greece from opening coal mines when it really needs that income flow. Countries such as Brazil need to replace the Amazon forests (the lungs of the world) which they currently are destroying. Dr Carney has experience, for example, of seeing financial institutions continuing to seek short term profit against national and global interests. We have seen the UK air industry pretending to achieve nil net carbon by invoking innovation yet to be achieved and most uncertain and, at the same time, expecting the government to make good its substantial increased carbon use, whilst planning expansion of 70% of its trade by 2050.

Such problems underline the fragility of what is proposed and fully justify the cynicism of Greta Thunberg.

Physical governmental intervention on its own might well lead to high inflation and unemployment before necessary adjustments could be achieved. Avoiding that is the strength of Dr Carney's solution. Its weakness is that it is likely to be too little too late.

One action common to both physical and financial intervention is the raising of the price of carbon by taxation. Were that price raised to the required levels at one go, it would give rise to chaos and probably also high inflation and unemployment. That could be countered to an extent by using the tax taken to fund new green industries. The immediate need, however, is to incrementally increase carbon taxes over a relatively short and planned period, so as to reach high levels in short time. This would add a strong incentive to finding other sources of power. The financial and physical directions are easily combined, mutually supportive and may well be welcomed by those who intend to play by the new rules.

My conclusion is that the mechanics of change which Dr Carney outlines are certainly essential because it is vital that the economies of all countries should help overcome climate change. However, in themselves they are insufficient and will require physical control of activity through legislation and direct intervention, to both back up with effective incentives and, most important, heavy penalties which ensure compliance and a fair playing field for those who are co-operating. These are all necessary to bring about a lasting sustainable environment. The over-riding priority is that we realise the urgency for these actions and get to grips with this emergency now rather than wait till Dr Carney's solution is found to be insufficient. There is now only time for one internationally coordinated shot.

Harry Ingram

Fast Patrol Boats in 1956

I was so lucky in that because my National Service had been deferred until I was qualified as a Chartered Accountant, on promotion I held the rank of Sub-Lieutenant RNVR. You see I was then over 21 years of age and had I been younger I would have been merely a Midshipman and would have been offered less interesting tasks in National Service. Mind you, as National Servicemen we were treated as 2nd class citizens by the Royal Navy, being paid less than those with the same rank who had made the Navy their long term career and were tolerated rather than fully welcomed by those in the Royal Navy.

After a short break I was flown out to Malta by the Navy in a Viscount plane. I don't think this plane had proper air pressure within the fuselage as I arrived in Malta unable to hear properly. I know after any flight one's ears can take a while to clear but this lasted several days. As instructed I had to report to HMS St Angelo, a shore base in a large fort at the entrance to Grand Harbour. I asked them where I was being posted to. "Oh, you are Freddie Bircher's relief," meaning I was to take over whatever job he had been doing. "What is that job?" I asked.

"He has command of RCB 8204, a converted Motor Torpedo Boat now used as a target" was the reply. And so, with no training at all for the task I was given command of this 70 foot boat with a crew of 6; the coxswain, Petty Officer Mills, who was assisted by 2 able seamen and an ERA chief



in charge of the engines with 2 Stokers to assist him. Some 50 years later one of those stokers, Thomas Scott, found out that I was chairman of the local sea cadets and wrote to me with just the following address: "D.I. ARCHER, CHAIRMAN, REIGATE SEA CADETS, REIGATE, SURREY." He enclosed photocopies of photos he had taken all those years ago and including the copy of a request he had made to me as his Commanding Officer to discontinue shaving for 3 months – it shows I granted this for just a probationary period of 2 weeks, hardly enough to grow a respectable beard which he would need to have to go ashore. However it was kind of him to have taken all this trouble to send these photos to me after so much time.

In the day or two before Freddie Bircher was posted elsewhere, he tried to show me how to drive the boat and manage the crew, but this was difficult as the boat was being repaired on the slipway and, as I have said my hearing was not perfect for those days.

The 2nd Target Boat Squadron had 2 Vosper MTBs painted grey, and 2 British Power Boats, of which mine was one, painted red. Sometimes floating targets were towed by any of the 4 boats but at other times one of the red boats was the target, the crews jumping from the red target boat to one of the grey boats at sea and we could then change the speed and course of the boat making it a "live" target without us on board.

By the time these repairs had been completed the other 3 boats in the 2nd Target boat Squadron were on their way to Sicily. So without help from any other officers I had to take the boat off the slip on Manoel Island and drive it round to its usual mooring at Msida Creek. I had to give the orders to the engine room whereas the coxswain had to steer the boat. However, I believe he thought "I'm not going to let a new Sub-Lieutenant put my boat on the rocks." So he prompted me saying, politely, "Half-ahead starboard, Sir," and I repeated "Half-ahead starboard." "Half-astern port, Sir," he said, so I repeated "Half-astern port," and so parrot fashion we proceeded to our mooring. From then onwards I needed no prompting but that short journey was one of my most vivid experiences of being thrown in at the deep end.

We were a happy crew taking great pride in the smartness of the boat keeping everything spotlessly clean and brightly painted. We sometimes went to sea on "Independent Exercises" and when far from land in the purple-blue calm waters of the Mediterranean I allowed "Hands to bathe!" from the sides of the boat. I loved it when the boat was planing, the front half of it out of the water and once I was lying face down over the forecastle enjoying watching the bows cutting through the sea when the boat must have jerked up on a small wave bringing the bracket which supports the Jack staff in harbour into my chin. It needed a few stitches in due course which taught me a lesson not to attempt that again.

It was not normal to celebrate or go ashore with ratings but on one occasion I broke the rule and went ashore with the coxswain who had hired a car and we went to a bar on the other side of Malta. After some time it became apparent that PO Mills was getting too drunk to drive home safely and it took me some time to persuade him to let me have the keys to the car. I told him I needed the keys to park the car in a better place. Happily I was then able to drive him home safely.

Whilst appointed as Commanding Officer of RCB 8204 I was accommodated at HMS Phoenicia, a shore base on Manoel Island which was next to Sliema Creek. Only recently I saw the film "Hell Boats" which was filmed in those very buildings. This was a grand fortress opposite Valetta and in my time there the Officers' Mess included officers of the Army and RAF as they had equipment there for simulating battles. I shared a cabin with Sub-Lieutenant John Picton RNVR who was 1st Lieutenant of one of the Controlling boats in the Squadron. Years later I met him again in the coffee room of Kings Cross Station by which time he had been promoted to Commander in the Royal Naval Reserve in Dundee. Since then we've kept in touch but not met again although I do see his brother, Lt. Commander Jim Picton RNR in HMS President from time to time. Our cabin was at ground level and looked across a parade ground where a Royal Marine band played for the ceremony of Colours at 0800 and Evening Colours "at the going down

of the sun". This came back to me each week at Sea Cadets when the same bugle call is made, even though the timing is, of course, different.

The Wardroom Mess was underneath the parade ground down some steps and every evening for dinner we wore black bow ties and since then I have been able to tie a bow tie. The chapel, which was also adjacent to the parade ground, was used by the Anglican and Roman Catholic chaplains in turn on a Sunday, an early example of the sharing of churches by different denominations. Some years ago Jenny and I returned to Malta and found HMS Phoenicia in ruins but I expect by now the site will have been used for a massive hotel, just as Msida Creek, is now a luxury marina. Whitehall Mansions, where the Wrens were accommodated, was also on the shore of Manoel Island towards the entrance to Sliema Creek. However the chances of taking one of the Wrens out was very limited as there were so many men on the Island but very few eligible women.

During my time in command of RCB 8204 we rarely slept on board but when we did we had a few pence extra pay for those days called "Hard lyers" a description which speaks for itself. However during those three months as C.O. I had a few pence each day as Command Allowance.

We had one night exercise which might have been disastrous. We were off Gozo, the small Island adjacent to Malta when I smelt burning. It was a hot evening and someone had plugged in an AC fan (which can be used in harbour with AC leads) into a DC plug. Happily we recognised it quickly and unplugged it before fire broke out in our boat which used high octane fuel.

I now come to the saddest day of my time in the Royal Navy. This was in the waiting time for the Suez conflict when several Royal Naval ships wanted to have a chance of firing at a live target, either my RCB 8204 or its sister boat RCB 8205. This fateful day started well in that the remote control equipment was working. It had taken the boffins some months to achieve this. That morning when we were offshore and had my boat and the controlling boat alongside at speed, my crew and I jumped from one boat to the other and off went my boat with no one on board, ready to be fired at with large calibre non- explosive shells. The destroyer, HMS Daring, was firing in the morning and when we jumped back on board at lunch time the shooting had been so good that there was coloured dye on the deck indicating which mounting had been so close and one of the stays had been cut.

We ate our sandwiches and thought there would be no shoot in the afternoon as the sea was rougher, making it more dangerous to jump from one boat to another. But the Admiral was on board the cruiser, HMS Jamaica, and wanted to see how good their gunnery was. So we jumped once more and from a distance we saw the splashes of the shells which were not getting even near my boat. We thought the shoot had finished but suddenly we saw our RCB had been hit and smoke was billowing out of the boat. There was a chance of explosion with the fuel we carried but we called on Jamaica to try to put the fire out with their foam hoses. They tried and the smoke lessened so the controlling boat came alongside RCB 8204 and all my crew and I volunteered to re-join our boat to try to use our own fire-fighting equipment. Despite



these valiant efforts the smoke reappeared and we were ordered to abandon ship, clambering up nets to reach the deck of HMS Jamaica.

Deciding that my boat might otherwise become a danger to shipping Jamaica opened up with small calibre weapons but even that took them one and a half hours to sink her as she was lined with porous materials which were designed to keep her afloat.

I would have liked to have thought that the shot that set my boat on fire was an example of superb naval gunnery, but I learned later from the National Serviceman in charge of the mounting that there had been one shot "up the spout" so he fired it off at random!

Sadly at the end of that day I was not, of course, the only Sub-Lieutenant RNVR to command an RCB but I must have been the only one to have lost my command at sea from gunfire.

As a sequel to this the 2nd Target Boat Squadron soon had to be disbanded as to have two controlling boats and only one target boat was not viable.

Throughout my time in the Target Boat Squadron the Senior Officer was Lieutenant Mitford RN and I was happy to serve under him. He was kind enough to write of me in December 1956 when I left the squadron: "This is to certify that Sub-Lieutenant D.I. Archer, R.N.V.R. has served as Commanding Officer of H.M. R.C.B.8204 in the Second Target Boat Squadron under my command from the 17th day of May 1956, to the 29th day of December 1956, during which period he has conducted himself to my satisfaction – a zealous and loyal officer with plenty of initiative."

Ian Archer

Spring



On 21 March, UNESCO will celebrate World Poetry Day, in which it recognises the unique ability of poetry to capture the creative spirit of the human mind. To recognise this and also the beautiful turning to Spring, we have a beautiful poem by Gerard Manley Hopkins.

Spring

Nothing is so beautiful as Spring –

When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush;
Thrush's eggs look little low heavens, and thrush
Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring
The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing;
The glassy pear tree leaves and blooms, they brush
The descending blue; that blue is all in a rush
With richness; the racing lambs too have fair their fling.

What is all this juice and all this joy?

A strain of the earth's sweet being in the beginning
In Eden garden. – Have, get, before it cloy,
Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning,
Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,
Most, O maid's child, thy choice and worthy the winning.



Off the Cuff

Some people seem to revel in making impromptu speeches. Others flounder delivering prepared ones. But sometimes there comes the occasion when even the most nervous have to say what is then in their mind.

The following short sketch is one such situation. The reader needs to put him or herself in the shoes of the speaker, faced by a sea of well-dressed faces with the very top of his profession gathered before him and under the eye of his ultimate masters drawn up with their critical eyes. Once set on his course his tongue runs away from him and.....

Each year one hundred and fifty middle managers of a national concern gathered together usually in a seaside hotel. This was the high point of the management year. The Chief Executive and his platoon of top brass descended to mix with the middle managers who ran the organisation. Their concern seemed to be that we should be united and also see them as "good chaps". The conference lasted three days; assessed the past year's performance, revisited perennial problems and outlined the plan and its administration for the year to come. This year, on the afternoon of day two, the assembly broke up into working groups to devise solutions to a very serious problem concerning the performance of the whole organisation. Groups were charged to produce at least five ideas. Many of my readers will have no doubt, received similar "indoctrination" exercises.

Each workshop was allocated someone from the top brass to act as chairman and in Bill's group he was nominated to make the report to the plenary session on the following morning. In fact, guided by nods from the chair, he produced a list of ten suggestions. The assembly was mainly comprised of men but there was a leavening of several mature ladies. One voluble lady had combined her very successful career with raising five children. She drew attention to herself not only by the power of her interjections but also because she smoked a small pipe and kept pace with the best of the men when downing pints. Other ladies disguised sharp intellect by dressing to catch the eye. After the workshops and a good dinner on day two they all repaired to the many hostelryes of the town to relax and make new friends and acquaintances.

Next morning after, for some, a frugal breakfast, they assembled to "pool the corporate ignorance" derived from the workshops. The top brass occupied the platform drawn up in a line with the Chairman of the Board in the centre. As successive reports were made Bill ticked, cross ticked and starred his list of points as other groups made similar reports. He now understood why all the chairmen came from the top brass. Then it was Bill's turn. Now Bill was not the sort to seek attention. If called on he could ask penetrating questions or read mainly from a prepared paper. But speech making was

not his art. Today his list of points to put forward was, in his opinion, a complete waste of time.

As he mounted the stage he came face to face with the top brass dressed in stony faces with flint eyes which seemed to bore right through him. At the lectern to the left of the stage he turned to face his audience. These were his friends and acquaintances but the impression he got was not far from an emergency dressing station after a recent battle. There they sat, some heads directed at the floor, others with eyes shut, some with mouths open apparently napping, most nursing the results of too much good fellowship the night before.

Tentatively he read out the first point on his list. The sea of faces registered only exhaustion, inadequately screened by a thin coat of the emulsion of boredom. He could not go on. Slowly he raised his list to show it to his audience. "I have here ten suggestions which you have heard at least seven times each this morning. I have to tell you I have nothing new."

He looked at the assembly. There was no apparent interest. "So, I shall indicate how I believe we, as middle managers, should carry the news of these changes of policy to those in the field who must carry them out. We should arrange seminars to cascade the policy through the land. These new policies should be explained against the grave and imminent circumstances in which we find ourselves. Our staff need to be inspired. We must unite the country." Only one or two it seemed were moved to glance up puzzled. He began.

"Never," (louder this time, index finger pointing to the ceiling), "NEVER, in the history of this aug.. aug.. AUGUST orgo... organisation, - has its existence, -- its VERY existence, been so threatened..... as now. If this mono, monotonous, er, monolithic and er, er, body should fall, then the very, VERY existence of our unity, this UNITED or, (pause) I may even say DISUNITED, - KINGDOM will be challenged."

Bill paused to look aside. The stony faces of the top brass registered some concern and lack of understanding. To his front the ranks of the middle managers began to stir. Later, some were to admit they had not understood what was going on, only that it was as if some primeval animal was stirring. But their eyes were open now. Some were high in their seats. He had their attention.

"My colleagues, and my, er, indeed my very MASTERS, and, also those who I have hitherto called my FRIENDS... we are now faced by a Hercule Poirot... a HERCULEAN task. And for this we have devised NEW POLICIES. No MORE can we lurk in our offices beset by paper and other bro....bro.....bromides, administered by our.... er... loyal secretaries." (Extended pause). "I say to you... AWAKE, ARISE OR, OR BE FOREVER FALLEN.....The evil that (A long pause). I say, ONCE MORE, ONCE MORE, DEAR FRIENDS, THRUST THOSE BELOW YOU INTO THE BEACH, I mean INTO THE BREACH. (More quietly) Now is the time for men, and I say indeed now is the time

(raising his voice) for our WOMEN also, to....um,... rise up and be COUNTED."... "What is that I hear you say?"

And a high pitched voice from the back shouted "THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH OF US!" Thinking quickly, Bill raised both his arms wide to reply; "CERTAINLY there are not nearly enough of you. There should be so many more of you. (muted cheers). MANY, MANY is the time I have said "We need more of them. We cannot do without more of them. But at times.. um.. on some occasions, (dropping his voice)...enough can be more than enough."

He could now clearly hear loud laughter coming from behind him. Then a voice spoke in his ear, "Bill, you've had your five minutes!" He was sure the voice had carried to the front of the hall. Facing back to the audience, some at the back now on their feet for a better view, Bill declaimed: "TimeINEXORABLE time... is..um.. er.. running out. Day by day.. er.. hour by hour..in the ice and snow, our loyal workers labour in the fields. They lay in the cold earth, hundreds of feet down, sweat, honest sweat.. er.. patiently chipping away at the black gold which has, which has made this country what it is: a NATION. (long pause) A NATION feared and.. um.. respected.. er.. throughout the Western World. Never! I SAY AGAIN, (as an aside) "What did I say?" Hoots of outright laughter now from the assembled managers. "I SAY.. NEVER have so FEW (a glance to his left) owed so much.. er.. to so MANY!"

By this time no one was asleep. They could be divided between those who were enjoying themselves unrestrainedly and some who were unsure how to respond to a situation beyond their imagining. "TOMORROW, no, I say, even TODAY, as if it were YESTERDAY, AND you will understand that ALL OUR YESTERDAYS have lighted fools the way to dusty DEATH. So, SO, we must join together in a VENTURE.. um.. which knows no restraint, I mean bounds, to.. to.. to.. open or rather,. um.. TO CLOSE.. er.. to put our collective fingers in the hole in the DAM through which I tell you, our very life blood is ebbing away. GO out, GO OUT, I say, AND um.....thank you." The audience actually stood up and applauded.

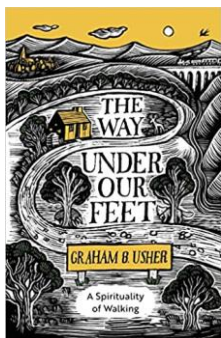
Modestly folding his small piece of paper, Bill walked the stage and as he descended the stairs his friend Lawrie, due to speak next, greeted him, "Where did that lot come from?" he said, "I shall certainly come to your leaving party." But Bill was too exhausted to reply. Sitting beside him, his immediate boss was not amused. No doubt he was wondering what the effect would be on his own career.

The Director of Operations was first to the lectern, "I think that is a good point at which to break for lunch. Be back at 2.00pm sharp!" Later, at lunch, he approached Bill, "That was an extended comment we shall all remember. I suppose you know it was video recorded. I shall circulate that to those at the House who were not able to be here."

Harry Ingram

Book Review

This month: *The Way Under Our Feet*



As the weather improves and we find ourselves out in the fresh air more often, this book review services as a perfect reminder of the joy of movement, the importance of exercise for our health and well-being and the value for our soul of experiencing God in nature.

In *The Way Under Our Feet*, Graham Usher, the Bishop of Norwich, conveys how exhilarating it is to walk into the depths of our humanity. We become more ready to recognise the needs as well as the joys of others; we sift our thoughts; we seek to heal our battered world, even as we glory in the beauty of nature; we find ourselves accompanying with our three mile an hour God.

The book is written over 11 chapters, from 'Starting', then 'Moving', 'Thinking', 'Seeing', 'Remembering', 'Fearing', 'Treading', 'Accompanying', 'Praying', 'Going' and finally, ending with 'Living'. The verbs used to name each chapter hints to the action which the author is inviting you to take as you review the religious and secular text which he quotes.

The author draws from his own experience also to reflect on the importance of walking in 'the way of God'. He covers examples over his time as a vicar and more recently Bishop. He also draws from the bible of when Jesus has walked in order to pray, teach and be closer to God. It gives examples of some of the key journeys Jesus has walked in his life; going to Jerusalem, walking on water and with the cross on his back.

In summary, from the many book reviews available on this book, the consensus is this is a lovely book, full of light, grace and meaning. Through it, we learn why walking is so unspeakably good for heart, soul and body.

Adapted from: <https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2020/17-july/books-arts/book-reviews/the-way-under-our-feet-a-spirituality-of-walking-by-graham-b-usher>

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Way-Under-Our-Feet-Spirituality/dp/0281084068>

Reader recipes

Lemon, Sultana Surprise Cake

Ingredients:-

- 5 oz butter/marg
- 5oz caster sugar
- 5oz self raising flour
- 3 eggs beaten, maybe a dash of milk.
- Grated peel of a lemon
- Up to 2 oz sultanas



Method:-

1. Cream margarine and sugar then add beaten eggs. If mixture looks stiff add a tbsp of milk.
2. Gently fold in flour then add lemon peel and sultanas according to how much you like them. I use only a handful! That's the surprise.
3. Transfer to a greased lined cake tin (3-4 inch deep & 7 inch diameter)
4. Bake at 180degrees C fan oven (or your oven's usual setting for cakes) for about 30-35minutes or until a skewer comes out clean.
5. The top will be a nice warm brown colour.
6. After 10 minutes cooling turn out onto a rack.

This recipe has come from Sarah Cousins who said: "This cake was a compromise when Bruce said how much he loves dried fruit which isn't my go to cake of choice. Very nice plain cake with a cup of tea. Happy baking!" Thank you to Sarah.

We would really like to hear from you with your favourite recipes. It really can be anything. Please email them to magazine@stmarksreigate.co.uk.

Puzzles

March Sudoku Puzzle

					7	9		8
			8	6	9			
	6	8	4			5	1	7
7			2	5			3	
5	1	6				2	7	4
	2			7	4			1
2	5	3			8	7	4	
			7	4	5			
8		7	3					

February Solution

1	5	8	9	4	6	7	2	3
2	6	4	3	8	7	9	1	5
9	3	7	5	1	2	4	6	8
4	1	6	8	5	9	3	7	2
5	9	3	2	7	4	6	8	1
8	7	2	6	3	1	5	9	4
6	4	5	1	9	8	2	3	7
7	2	1	4	6	3	8	5	9
3	8	9	7	2	5	1	4	6

Level Up Laptop Refurbishment

Do you have an old laptop sitting at home unused?

Voluntary Action Reigate and Banstead need your help. Level Up Reigate & Banstead is a project that provides refurbished laptops for children and young people who need them for home study. They are in need of 500 laptops.

Laptops are donated by the community, refurbished by volunteers and distributed to children and young people via local schools and charities.

Your laptop must be running Windows 7, 8 or 10 and have at least one USB port. Please note we are no longer accepting phones or laptops with Windows XP or Vista.

All laptops will be securely wiped or have hard discs removed and destroyed. They are then refurbished before distribution.

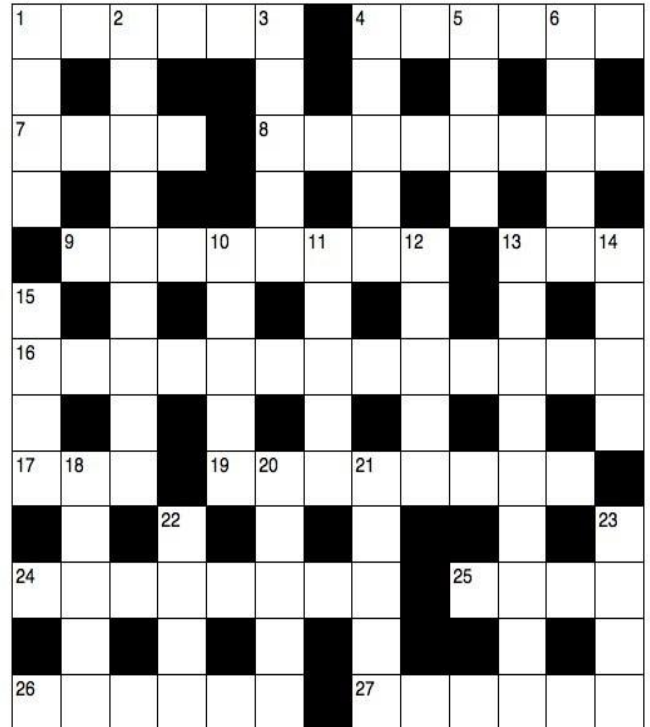
To find out how to give visit: <https://www.varb.org.uk/level-up/>

March Crossword

Biblical references are from the New International Version

Across

- 1 The earth is one (6)
- 4 'On a hill far away stood an old — cross' (6)
- 7 'I am the — vine and my Father is the gardener' (John 15:1) (4)
- 8 The Caesar who was Roman Emperor at the time of Jesus' birth (Luke 2:1) (8)
- 9 'Your — should be the same as that of Christ Jesus' (Philippians 2:5) (8)
- 13 Jesus said that no one would put a lighted lamp under this (Luke 8:16) (3)
- 16 Involvement (1 Corinthians 10:16) (13)
- 17 Armed conflict (2 Chronicles 15:19) (3)
- 19 Where the Gaderene pigs were feeding (Mark 5:11) (8)
- 24 What jeering youths called Elisha on the road to Bethel (2 Kings 2:23) (8)
- 25 The Venerable — , eighth-century Jarrow ecclesiastical scholar (4)
- 26 8 Across issued a decree that this should take place (Luke 2:1) (6)
- 27 Come into prominence (Deuteronomy 13:13) (6)



Down

- 1 Where some of the seed scattered by the sower fell (Matthew 13:4) (4)
- 2 Sexually immoral person whom God will judge (Hebrews 13:4) (9)
- 3 Gospel leaflet (5)
- 4 Physical state of the boy brought to Jesus for healing (Mark 9:18)
- 5 Tugs (anag.) (4)
- 6 To put forth (5)
- 10 Nationality associated with St Patrick (5)
- 11 Leader of the descendants of Kohath (1 Chronicles 15:5) (5)
- 12 'After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping — heel' (Genesis 25:26) (5)
- 13 At Dothan the Lord struck the Arameans with — at Elisha's request (2 Kings 6:18) (9)
- 14 'Peter, before the cock crows today, you will — three times that you know me' (Luke 22:34) (4)
- 15 Spit out (Psalm 59:7) (4)
- 18 'When I — , I am still with you' (Psalm 139:18) (5)
- 20 Concepts (Acts 17:20) (5)
- 21 Thyatira's dealer in purple cloth (Acts 16:14) (5)
- 22 Does (anag.) (4)
- 23 The second set of seven cows in Pharaoh's dream were this (Genesis 41:19) (4)

ANSWERS TO FEBRUARY'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS:

8 Cross-examined 9 Ash 10 Apocrypha 11 Sci-fi 13 Typical 16 Visited
19 Offer 22 No account 24 RAC 25 Sovereign Lord

DOWN:

1 Oceans 2 Hophni 3 Islamist 4 Exhort 5 Omar 6 On spec 7 Add all 12 CBI
14 Plotting 15 Awe 16 Vanish 17 Starve 18 Daub it 20 Furrow 21 Recede
23 Cure



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