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for residents of shirley

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Marvellous May!

Welcome to the May edition

May's one of the best months of the year - we're firmly in the Spring, and have all the anticipation of a lovely Summer ahead, fingers crossed!

It's also a great time for getting your garden looking lovely and for selling your home. We've got a great range of local, reliable businesses in here who can help you get your garden ready and update any aspect of your home, from your roof to your kitchen, your bathroom to your décor, whether you're getting it ready to sell or just want to update it for your own benefit.

Wishing you a great month ahead. Until next month,



Zoe Reece

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No issues at any time. Good, responsive communication from the office, the various teams on site were polite, friendly and low maintenance, the site was left tidy after each day's work, and most importantly, the job looked great when complete. Thoroughly recommended.

AndyE-230 / 31 Jan 2024

community events

Great British Musicals

1 June 7.30pm, Knowle Village Hall

The Strolling Players invite you to join them as they present songs from great British musicals, such as "The Lion King", "Salad Days", "Chess" and "Pickwick" as well as music from Lloyd Webber, Ivor Novello and much more. Tickets £10 - please call 01564 777634.

Charity Craft Material Sale

4 June 10.30 - 1.30, Warwick Room at Shirley Institute, Shirley B90 2AX

Raising money for Alzheimer's Society. All types of crafts available.

Purchases - CASH ONLY.
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Girls Aloud

18 - 20 June, Resorts World Arena

The hugely anticipated shows will feature all of the band's historic pop hits including No.1 songs 'Sound Of The Underground', 'The Promise' and 'I'll Stand By You', alongside cast-iron classics such as 'Love Machine', 'Call The Shots', 'Biology', 'Something New' and 'The Show'. Tickets from www.resortsworldarena.co.uk

Pure Queen - Tribute to Queen

14 June, The Lake at Barston
Possibly one of the



greatest performers of all time is portrayed by Mark Lavell (Pure Magic) and his supporting Queen band, including hits such as Bohemian Rhapsody, Barcelona, Killer Queen and more. To book please call 01675 444890.

Northern Soul Night

13 July, Knowle British Legion

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Boot Bargains

Car boot sales are a quintessential British tradition where unpredictable British weather meets an equally unpredictable array of goods for sale. You can haggle over the price of a teapot with a missing lid on one stall and buy a questionable painting that may be a lost masterpiece (spoiler: it's not) at another.

Car boot sales are the adult equivalent of a treasure hunt, where X marks the spot, but 'X' is a muddy field somewhere between No-Idea-Where-That-Is and 'Didn't-Aunty-Sue-Get-Married-Somewhere-Near-There.

Jesting aside, if you're up for a bit of work a car boot sale is a great opportunity to clear out your attic, shed, or spare room while making some cash and enjoying the fresh air.

Begin with a Clear Out:

Sort through your items. Anything from vintage clothing to old records, books, toys, and kitchen gadgets can find a new home. Remember, one person's trash is another's treasure.

Price to Sell: Be realistic about pricing. Boot sale buyers are looking for bargains. A good rule of thumb is to ask yourself what you'd be willing to pay. Label items clearly.

Presentation is Key: A well-organized stall can make a world of difference to how much you earn. Arrange items so they're easy to browse. Group similar items together and make sure everything is clean. A little bit of preparation can significantly increase your sales.

Be Prepared: Bring plenty of change and bags for your customers. Arrive early to get a good spot. A folding table and chair, a flask of coffee and a sandwich can also make your day more comfortable.



Perfect Your Pitch: Friendly banter and a smile will attract more buyers. Be ready to haggle...it's an art. The seller starts with a price, the buyer counters with an offer so ridiculously low it's actually insulting, and eventually, you meet somewhere in the middle, each convinced you've outsmarted the other. Just remember that if YOU'RE the one decluttering and selling, the object of the exercise is to get rid of everything, not

Let the car boot sale season begin.

take it all back home with you for the sake of a few pence!

And it's not just about the buying and selling. Car boot sales are essentially a social event, places where you overhear phrases like, "Remember when we nearly set the house on fire with this fondue set?"* or "Do you think anyone will notice this shoe is missing a heel?" *

As the day ends, you head back to your car, hopefully cutter-free and cash-rich if you're a seller, or arms laden with goodies if you were a treasure seeker. And if you're lucky you might overhear a puzzled wife say to her husband, "Why did you buy a unicycle when you can barely ride a bike without stabilisers..." **

Whether you are looking to declutter or in search of a bargain, the car boot sale is great British tradition so check out a local one this month. There may or may not be a woman surreptitiously selling a unicycle. ***

**Actual overheard snippets of conversation from other sellers when we held a car boot sale last year!*

***I may or may not have been that puzzled wife.*

****That woman may or may not be me...*

a good read

By Natasha Donovan

The Memory Police

by Yoko Ogawa

This is a hauntingly beautiful and dystopian novel that delves into the fragility of memory and the essence of loss. Set on an unnamed island, the story unfolds in a world where objects and concepts are systematically disappearing, erased from existence and memory by the enigmatic Memory Police. The narrative is centred around a young novelist who struggles to preserve her memories and those of the island's inhabitants. Ogawa's writing is elegantly simple yet profoundly deep, weaving a tale that is as much a melancholic meditation on memory as it is a compelling story of resistance and survival. The island's inhabitants, resigned to the relentless loss of their surroundings, adapt to each disappearance with a troubling nonchalance. This eerie acceptance of loss is one of the novel's most chilling aspects, highlighting the insidious nature of the Memory Police's power. The novelist (who is also unnamed), with the help of an old man and a risk-taking editor who is immune to the forgetfulness, attempts to defy the Memory Police by hiding her editor in a secret room. Their struggle against the inevitable tide of forgetfulness forms the heart of the story, illustrating the human capacity for resilience in the face of oppressive forces. The atmosphere of subtle suspense and creeping dread imbues the story with a quiet intensity. The characters are sketched with a delicate touch, yet they are profoundly relatable in their quest to hold onto their memories and identities. This struggle against the erasure of memory becomes a powerful metaphor for the larger human experience of loss and the effort to preserve our own pasts. The Memory Police is not just a story about



an authoritarian regime's control over personal memories; it is also a reflection on the impermanence of existence. Ogawa explores the idea that what makes us human is not just our ability to remember but also our capacity for empathy and connection.

Clem and Crab

This is a lovely story about cleaning up our beaches. The story is a simple one: Clem loves to search the beach for things to put in her bucket. After a fun day at the seaside, Clem finds a Crab with its claw tangled in a plastic bag. She wants to take him home and keep him safe, but reluctantly lets him go back to the sea after her sister explains it's where he belongs. On her way home on the bus, Clem finds Crab tucked away in her trouser leg, and Crab ends up going on an adventure to Clem's school and inspires Clem to want to help clear the beaches of horrible plastic junk. The story is fun and easy to follow, and the illustrations are charming. The environmental message is there but it's never preachy. It's a nice gentle introduction for children about the importance of taking care of our planet.





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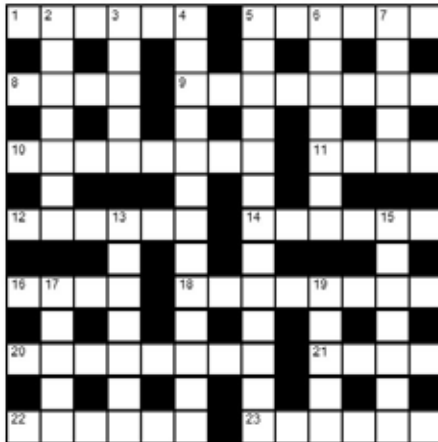
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crossword



clues

Across

- 1 Pleasantly occupied (6)
- 5 Douse, drench (6)
- 8 Wide smile (4)
- 9 Party game (8)
- 10 Not damaged (8)
- 11 Valueless (4)
- 12 Rush-hour shortcut (informal) (6)
- 14 Fall asleep (informal) (6)
- 16 Minor confrontation (4)
- 18 Ratifying, embracing (8)
- 20 Appeased (8)
- 21 Three squared (4)
- 22 Causes hay fever (6)
- 23 Win back, pay off (6)

Down

- 2 English actress _____ Hart (7)
- 3 Father Christmas (5)
- 4 Evidence, proof (13)
- 5 Automated payment (8,5)
- 6 Educated (7)
- 7 Metal alloy (5)
- 13 Hear the same legal case again (7)
- 15 Economic affairs (7)
- 17 Keyboard instrument (5)
- 19 Fit, sleek (5)

answer on page 14

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Crossword Solution
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