

## HOLYDAYS AND HOLIDAYS 2023

This is a calendar of some religious days, some national days and some commemorative days. It is curated by Archivist Brian Murphy.

‘History alerts the present’  
– Elizabeth Borne  
Prime Minister of France

### January

1 January 2023. International New Year’s Day. There are many particular national ways of celebrating this day. It is common at midnight as the new year ticks over to sing the Scottish-language song *Old Lang Syne*. It was written by Robert Burns in 1788, based on a much earlier folk song.

3 January 2023/10 Tevet 5783. A Jewish day, Asarah B’Tevet. On this day in 3336/425BC, the Babylonian emperor Nubachadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem. A day of fasting, mourning and repentance.

5 January 2023. A Sikh festival, the Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh, the 10<sup>th</sup> and final human Guru, spiritual master, worrier, poet, and philosopher, at the time of Maghal rulers. He was a benevolent man who preached justice, peace and equality.

6 January 2023 Epiphany in the Western Christian Church. The Baptism of Jesus/The visit of the Magi, the Wise Men of the East, The Three Kings. They likely came from Persia and were probably astrologers who interpreted dream and messages. They bought gifts to the Christ Child of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Epiphany Eve is known as Twelfth Night, and it is traditionally the time when Christmas decorations came down.

7 January 2023 The Nativity of Jesus – Christmas in the Orthodox and Coptic Churches. They follow the Julian Calendar.

7 January 2023 Mahayana. Buddhist New Year.

13 January 2023 St Hillary of Poitiers. A fourth century bishop and ‘Doctor of the Church’ because of his extensive surviving writings, also many schools are named after him in England and Ireland. The beginning of the January term in September is often called Hillary Term.

13 January 2023 St Kentigern Mungo (Mungo is a nickname meaning ‘dear-one’) Kentigern was a Christian missionary in the Brittonic Kingdom of the Strathclyde in the late sixth century. He became Archbishop of Glasgow. He is mentioned here as a school in Auckland is named for him.

15 January 2023 World Religion Day. This was initially a Baha'i observance. It was inspired by the Baha'i principles of the oneness of religion and of the progressive revelation which describes religion as evolving continuously throughout the history of humanity... the idea has taken on a life of its own.

16 January 2023 Martin Luther King Day. A US Federal Holiday. It is the birthday of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. He was a leader of the non-violent civil rights movement and was awarded the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize. He was assassinated by a white supremacist on 14 April 1968. The National Holiday was instated by President Ronald Regan in 1986.

17 January 2023 St Anthony of Egypt. He was a fourth century monk and a hermit. He spoke only Coptic and led a very ascetic life. He had many followers who saw him as a special holy man. His letters still exist. He is mentioned here as he was an inspiration to ascetic monasteries in both the east and the west for many centuries. He is venerated in the Coptic, Orthodox, Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran Churches.

19 January 2023 Epiphany in the Orthodox Churches in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church it is called Timkat and is one of the holiest days of the year. People wear traditional clothes. Young men who have trained for many years for the priesthood do not know until the last minute if the local bishop will ordain them that year or not. There is music and dancing and festivities. It is said to be aesthetically beautiful to watch. The last three of days commemorates St Michael the Archangel.

20 January 2023 Masik Shivaratri for Auckland. The first of monthly Festivals for Hindus.

22 January 2023 Chinese New Year, the year of the Rabbit. It is a time for Chinese people to return home and celebrate with family. In Vietnam, it is the year of the Cat.

22 January 2023 Unification of Ukraine, on this date in 1919 it was soon incorporated into a newly formed USSR after being freed from Austria-Hungary.

26 January 2023 Australia Day. On this day in 1935 all Australian States and Territories first used the name Australia Day. It was the day when Captain Arthur Phillips landed at Sydney Cove and declared New South Wales a British Colony, beginning a long and brutal colonization of peoples and land.

26 January 2023 Proclamation of the Republic of India Day. The Constitution of India came into effect on 26 January 1950.

28 January 2023 Saint Thomas Aquinas, 13<sup>th</sup> Century Dominican Priest. He was the foremost philosopher and theologian of his age. His writings on ethics and political theory are referred to in modern times.

29 January 2023 Auckland Anniversary Day is celebrated throughout the area of the original Auckland Province, one of four in the North Island. It was established by Governor William Hobson over Willoughby Shortland's signature on this day in 1842. It was a Sunday and the day was 'Saturdayised' This year it is also Sunday and the day is 'Mondayised'.

## February

1 February 2023 St Brigid of Kildare, the Mother Saint of Ireland. There was a pagan pre-Christian Goddess called Brigid. Ancient Irish folklore believed in a Saint Brigid. Stories appeared about her. There are many schools named for her, and there is an Order of Nuns named for her. It is a popular girls name. From 2023 it is established as a public holiday in Ireland.

1 February 2023 The Wheel of the Year. Celebrate the eight sabbats of Wicca. (Neo-Pagan) The first is Imbolc. Its Christian equivalent is Candlemas.

2 February 2023 Candlemas Day. This is an annual Christian holiday commemorating the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. It occurs 40 days after Christmas. It is a day for blessing candles at Mass. In some English Public Schools the second term starting in January is called Candlemas Term.

2 February 2023 Groundhog Day grew out of Candlemas in German and was taken to the United States by German settlers in 1887. It began in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. There, the Groundhog, *Marmota monax*, is a hibernating rodent. It is said that on this day if Groundhogs shadow can be seen then early Spring, it not six more weeks of Winter. He is not very accurate. Many other animals are used in other places. A local whimsical notion has taken a life of its own. There is *Groundhog Day the Musical*, a movie and international metaphorical references.

3 February 2023 Four Chaplains' Day. On this day in 1943 USAT Troopship Dorchester was sailing across the Atlantic and she was torpedoed by a German UBoat. The chaplains were distributing life jackets. There were not enough, they stripped off their own life jackets and gave them to the next four men. The US Army Chaplains; Methodist Minister Rev George L Fox, Reformed Church of American Minister Clark V Poling, Rabbi Dr Alexander B Good and Catholic Priest Father John P Washington were last seen linked arm-in-arm shouting out prayers and singing hymns as they went down with the ship. Their courage is remembered each year.

5 February 2023 Lantern Festival/Shauguan Festival is a Chinese celebration of the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the first month of the Chinese lunisolar calendar. It marks the end of Chinese New Year. The celebration goes back 2000 years to the Emperor King of the Han Dynasty who knew that Buddhist Monks lit lanterns on this day.

6 February 2023 Waitangi Day, New Zealand's National Day. In 1973 Prime Minister Norman Kirk announced that there would be a national holiday of this day called New Zealand Day, commemorating the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, between the Crown and Māori chiefs. The incoming National Government changed the name to Waitangi Day.

11 February 2023/22 Barman 1401, making the victory of Islamic Republic of Iran and the end of the reign of the last Shah (King) of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi and the rise of the

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini as Supreme Leader. He had been exiled in France and returned to Iran on the collapse of the Monarchy.

14 February St Cyril and St Methodius were brothers born in Thessalonica in the ninth century. Cyril became professor of Philosophy at the University of Constantinople and Methodius became Abbot of a Monastery. They both travelled as missionaries to the Slavic peoples and developed the Glagolitic alphabet used in Church Slavonic. It developed into modern alphabet named for St Cyril which is used in Russian, Ukrainian, Bulgarian and some other modern languages.

14 February 2023 St Valentines Day. There were numerous Christian martyrs call Valentine, two stand out, both bishop, Valentine of Rome and Valentine Terni. There is a legend that Valentine of Rome gave sight to the blind daughter of his jailer. It is said that he sent a card to her signed 'Your Valentine' Also as a bishop he could have worn an amethyst ring with an image of cupid. He became associated with Courtly Love. Late February is early springtime and the connection to Romantic Love is easy to see and appeal to everyone. It's a short step to a commercial advantage for greeting card manufactures and florists. It is now a well-established custom in western countries.

21 February 2023 Shrove Tuesday. The end of the Shrovetide also called Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday). It was a day of festivities, parades with highly decorated floats and associated goings on. It is huge in New Orleans, Louisiana and in many other US cities. It is enormous in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and in many European cities, especially in Germany. In England it is called Pancake Day where eggs and fats are used up before the Lenten fast begins. 'Shrove' is an old term for a day to confess sins. "Short Shrift" was a quick confession to a priest, minutes before a prisoner was executed.

21 February 2023. On this day in 1848 *The Communist Manifesto* was written by the German philosophers Karl Marx and Friedrich Engles. It was originally published in London. The work remains one of the influential political documents. It begins with the famous line: "A spectre is haunting Europe, the spectre of communism." In 2013 *The Communist Manifesto* was registered to UNESCO memory of the world programme.

22 February 2023 After the excesses of Mardi Gras, comes Ash Wednesday, a holy day of prayer and fasting, self-sacrifice and arms-giving, the first day of 40 days of Lent. Ashes are used to make crosses on the foreheads of the faithful with the words; 'Remember that you are dust and unto dust you shall return'; A reminder of one's own mortality.

23 February 2023. Japan National Day. The birthday of His Majesty the Emperor.

## **March**

2 March 2023 St Chad of Mercia was a seventh century peripatic monk who followed a very strict lifestyle. He became Bishop of Mercia. The kingdom of Mercia was an Angelic Kingdom corresponding to the English Midland. He is mentioned here as there are many Anglican Churches named for him, including one in Auckland.

7 March 2023 Perpetua and Felicity lived in the third century. They were imprisoned together for refusing to give up their Christian faith. They were both about 20 years old. Perpetua was a noble woman who was well educated. She kept a diary which she gave to her brother, not a Christian. That's how we know of them. She was nursing her baby son. Felicity was a slave girl, and she was pregnant. These two social opposites were dragged out into the Arena at Cartage and butchered to 'celebrate' the birthday of Emperor Septimius Severus. They are regarded as Saints by several different churches.

7 March 2023/14 Adar 5783 Purim, the Festival of Lots, tells how the Jewish people were saved from annihilation in Persia as told in the Book of Ester.

8 March 2023 International Woman's Day began in 1911 and is now celebrated under the auspices of the United Nations. It celebrates the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of woman. This year's special theme is: "Innovation and technological change and education for achieving gender equality and empowerment for all woman and girls". There is much to do. In democratic societies there is a growing awareness of the importance of woman's team sports.

8 March 2023 Holi: is both an ancient and popular Hindu festival. It celebrates the eternal and divine love of Radha Krishna. It is a day of festivals, to meet each other. To laugh and play. To forgive and forget and to mend broken relationships.

13 March 2023 Julian of Norwich, also known as Mother Julian, was an English mystic of the Middle Ages. She lived as an anchoress in a cell outside the church of St Julian, Norwich, though she did have access to the church and to extent the world beyond. Julian was a common girls name at the time and it may have been her name too. She was well educated and her book *Revelations of Divine Love* was written in English and attracted people from across Europe. It is the most important medieval work by a woman. She lived in turbulent times, an outbreak of the Black Death was raging in England, the Peasants Revolt of 1391 was in full swing and the Lollards a proto-Protestant group were regarded as heretics and 'suppressed.'

13 March 2023 The election of the Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio as Pope Francis in 2013. He was the first South American and the first member of the Jesuit order to be elected Pope. The office also comes with the titles Bishop of Rome and the Head of State title of the Pope of the Holy See. He was a qualification in Chemistry and worked in a laboratory and became Professor of Theology in Buenos Aires. He speaks Spanish and fluent Italian as well as good German, French, Portuguese and English. He understands Piedmontese and Genoese.

17 March 2023 St Patrick's Day. Patrick was a fifth century Romano-British Christian. He was taken as a boy by Irish slave-traders and sold. He would have learnt Gaelic. He later managed to escape back to Britain, became a priest and a Bishop and returned to Ireland and converted many pagan Irish to Christianity. The date is the day of his death. He is the foremost saint of the Republic of Ireland, and it is a public holiday there.

19 March 2023 St Joseph's Day. He was the husband of Mary. When he learnt that she was pregnant he decided to divorce her informally so as not to bring shame on her and on her

house. He had a strange dream and 'was told by an angel that Mary had conceived by the Holy Spirit and that he was to take Mary to his house as his wife. Because of his love for Mary, he wanted to believe the dream. And he did.

21 March 2023 Noruz is a Zoroastrian International holiday celebrating the beginning of Spring by over 300 million people. It promoted values of peace, harmony, friendship. Also NawRuz it is the Bahais New Year.

21 March 2023 Oestra is the second of the wiccan sabbats. It is named for the Anglo-Saxon goddess Eostre. It corresponds to the Christian easter.

23 March 2023 Pakistan Resolution Day is a national holiday commemorating the Constitution of Pakistan, during the transition from the Dominion of Pakistan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on 23 March 1956.

24 March 2023/ 1 Ramadan 1444. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic Calendar. It is a month of fasting from dawn to dusk, and a time of prayer, reflection, and community.

25 March 2023 The Annunciation. An announcement of the Angel Gabriel to Mary that she would conceive and bear a son by virgin birth and that she was to name him Immanuel (Jesus) meaning ' God is with us again' Two different churches about a mile apart, both in Nazareth are venerated at the site of the event. The Catholic Basilica of the Annunciation, and the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation. The event is described in Luke 1:26-38

25 March 2023 St Margaret Clitherow was a 16<sup>th</sup> century woman, clever and good-hearted. She was imprisoned for not going to Church she had become a Roman Catholic, a capital offence in Tudor England. She refused to plea to protect her children from torture. She was pressed to death, a stone was put under her spine, her own front door was placed over her and heavy weights placed on it. They were kept there for six hours. Even the no nonsense Queen Elizabeth was shocked by the cruelty of her death. She was canonized as a saint by pope Paul VI in 1970.

26 March 2023 The birthday of the Prophet Zarathustray (Persian), known as Zoroaster (Greek) It is uncertain when he lived. The latest possible time was in reign of Darius the Great, sixth century BC, but according to linguistic and archaeological evidence it could have been between 1,500 and 1,200 BC. He was, without doubt, a great religious teacher. His followers celebrate his birthday on this day.

## **April**

1 April 2023. April Fools Day. There are many supposed origins of this day, it had many names in other languages and places, universally it is a day of pranks of limitless invention. A famous one occurred in 1957 when the BBC Panorama programme, given to serious matters, reported to show Swiss farmers picking freshly grown spaghetti in the annual Swiss spaghetti harvest. The BBC was flooded with requests for spaghetti trees. Again in 1980 the BBC claimed that the faces of Big Ben's clock would become digital to keep up with modern times. A mob of enraged callers complained.

4 April 2023. Mahavia Janati, the birthday of Lord Mahavira, the 24<sup>th</sup> and last tirthankara of Jainism. Unlike some of the earlier leaders, Mahavira is a real historical person. He was born into a royal family and was a prince, in the sixth century BC. He left his gilded life to pursue a spiritual awakening, becoming an ascetic, teaching non-violence, chastity, non-attachment and many-sided reality.

5 April 2023. Yazidi New Year, the first Wednesday in April. Festive garments are worn, eggs are boiled and colored, a festival bread is baked and family graves are visited.

5-13 April 2023/14-22 Nisan 5783. Passover (Pesach). The deliverance of the Jewish people from the slavery of Egypt.

7 April 2023. Good Friday, a Christian holy day commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus at Calvary. It is observed during Holy Week as part of the Pascal Triduum. 'Good' comes from the sense of pious or holy. It is the most solemn day of the Christian Year. In the Orthodox Churches which follow the Julian Calendar, Good Friday is sometimes the same date or more frequently not. It is a day of fast.

7 April 2023. St Hugh Walpole, was born in Dorking, Norfolk in 1888. He was educated at Peterhouse Cambridge and studied Law at Gray's Inn. He was present at the execution of Edmund Campion, a Jesuit priest. He gave up his law practice to follow in Campion's footsteps. He was very well educated and spoke fluent Latin, French, Italian and Spanish. He escaped to France and became a Jesuit priest and returned to England, he was betrayed, captured and tortured. He could have had his father's huge estate, but it went to the Crown. He was hanged on the 7 April 1595. He was canonized in 1970 by Pope Paul VI. This year Good Friday trumps his commemoration.

8 April 2023/17 Ramadan 1444. An Islamic holy day commemorating the first reading of the Qur'an to the Prophet Muhammad by the Angel Jibrail.

9 April 2023. Easter. A Christian holiday commemorating the Resurrection of Jesus. Easter is on the first Sunday of the full moon after the Equinox. It lasts for seven weeks. There are several non-religious traditions associated with Easter such as the eating of chocolate eggs and chocolate figure in the shape of "the Easter Bunny". Easter Parades go back to the so-called Dark Ages. In modern times the most famous Easter Parade is in New York City. People dress in their finest, girls wear Easter Bonnets, bedecked with flowers. Irving Berlin wrote a song called *Easter Parade*, about a young man taking his girl to the Parade. The whole thing is a frolic. The Orthodox Church follow the Julian Calendar. This year Easter is on this date. Often it is not.

14 April 2023. Vaisaki marks the first day of the month of Vaisak. The first day of Spring and New Year's day, it is a major Sikh festival marking the birth of the Khalsa Order by Guru Gobind Singh on this day in 1699. It is a day for community fairs, socializing and sharing festival food. Some Hindus also celebrate this day.

16 April 2023. Dr Rosalind Franklin dies this day in 1958. She was an English physical chemist and x-ray crystallographer whose work was central to the working out the structure of DNA, the single foremost biological research of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Before the Nobel Prizes for this work were awarded, she had died of ovarian cancer as a result of her work, over exposure to x-rays. She was probably the first to realize that DNA had a helical structure.

20 April 2023. The Festival of Ridvan is a 12-day festival of the Baha'i faith. It ends on 2 May 2023. It is the time when the Prophet Baha'u'llah declared that he was a messenger of God, the promised one of the Bab, the messianic founder of Babism, a central figure in the Baha'i faith. He fills a similar role to Elijah and John the Baptist. The Shrine of Bab is in Haifa, Israel on the slopes of Mount Carmel.

21 April 2023/1 Shawwal 1444. The Islamic Festival al Eid al Fitr, the end of the Ramadan fast.

22 April 2023. Earth Day, an annual event first held on 22 April 1970, demonstrating support for environmental protection, it includes a wide range of events and is coordinated by EarthDay.org. It involves a billion people in 193 countries, the basic theme is: Invest in Our Planet. For 2023 the themes are: Climate Literacy, End Plastics, Plant Trees, Vote Earth, Global Clean Up, Sustainable Fashion.

23 April 2023. St George's Day. This day is the day of his death in the Diocletian the last and most severe persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire. Which began in 303AD. George is the Patron Saint of England, and his cross forms the flag of England. He is widely commemorated in other countries. Georgia has a new flag with four St George's crosses.

25 April 2023. ANZAC Day. Originally it meant Australia and New Zealand Army Corps and remembers the landing at Gallipoli. They formed part of the Allied expedition during the First World War, to capture the Gallipoli Peninsula to open a way to the Black Sea for the Allied Navies. The object was to capture Constantinople, the capital of the Ottoman Empire, which was an ally of Germany. Allied deaths were 56,000 including 8,709 from Australia and 2,721 from New Zealand. These were huge numbers for two remote small countries. 25 April was the day of the first landing this day in 1915.

It is now the Remembrance Day for both Countries for all who served and died in all wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations and the contribution and suffering of all those who served. It is a national holiday in both countries.

27 April 2023. South Africa Freedom Day commemorated this day in 1994 when all South Africans, of whatever race, could vote in a new election. They elected Nelson Mandela, a former prisoner, as President of the Republic of South Africa. He said "...Wherever South Africans are across the Globe our hearts beat as one as we renew our common loyalty to our country and our commitment to its future".

28 April 2023. St Peter Chanel was born in Clet France in 1803. He had a simple piety and became a priest, joining the newly formed Society of Mary (Marists), a missionary Order. After teaching for a time, he and two non-marists were sent to the South Pacific Island of Fortuna. He learnt the language and began preaching. King Niliki could see that Peter could



undermine his authority and had him clubbed to death on this day in 1841. He was well liked by ordinary people because he had taken the time to learn their language and they could see that he had been a good man. Almost all people on the Island became Christians.

## May

1 May 2023. May Day is a European Festival with ancient origins. The Floralia was the Festival of Flora, the Roman Goddess of Flowers during the Roman Republic Era. May Eve in many places is Walpurgis Night. St Walpurgi's was an eight century abbess in Feancia and her Feast Day is 1 May. There are many other European Festivals, some national, most local. Commonly, but widespread in England where green branches and flowers are carried, a young girl is crowned Queen on the May, and there is dancing around the maypole. There is a beautiful painting by John Collier called *Queen Guinevere's Maying*. Some May events are celebrated as Baltane one of the four Greater Saddingts of Wiccans, neo-pagans. It marks the beginning of summer. The fertility of the land represents the God's true devotion to the Goddess. In Catholic Circles May Day is devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Another celebration of this day is International Worker's Day, which is Labour Day in some countries. It had fraught beginnings in favour of the Eight Hour Day.

3 May 2023. On this day in 1841 New Zealand was proclaimed a Colony independent of New South Wales.

3 May 2023. Poland Constitution Day is a national public holiday in Poland, celebrating the declaration of 3 May 1791. Festivities date back to the Duchy of Warsaw. It was brought into effect because of defects in the Polish-Lithuania Commonwealth. It was in effect just one year when the Russo-Polish war of 1792 broke out. It became an official holiday in 1919 in the second Polish Republic. It was delisted during the time of the Polish People's Republic. It was reestablished after the fall of Communism in modern Poland.

4 May 2023. St Robert Lawrence was one of the 40 martyrs of England and Wales. He was a graduate of Cambridge. After joining the Carthusian Order he succeeded John Houghton as Prior of the Beauvale Priory, Nottinghamshire when Houghton was appointed Proir of the Chaterhouse in London. Lawrence and Houghton went to see Thomas Cromwell who was Lord Chamberlain who had them arrested and placed in the Tower of London. When the refused to sign the Oath of Supremacy they were hanged, drawn and quartered at Tyburn on this day in 1535.

4 May 2023. May the Fourth be with you is a pun on the famous line from Star Wars, May the Force be with you. It was first said by Rebel General Jan Dodonna, who wanted to do something good for a greater cause. That anyone could be a hero no matter their present or past. The ideal and acts of heroism were characteristic of the monastic Jedi Order. This fictional organization has inspired a real word religion, Jedisum. Once any form of artwork is out there it creators have lost control as to how it will be interpreted by viewers or readers.

5 May 2023. Feast Day of Blessed Edmund Rice, born in Ireland in 1762. He inherited his uncles import/export business and was married at 25. His wife died two years later, and he

was left with the care of his sick daughter. He had done charitable work and had thoughts about a religious life. He visited the Bishop of Waterford, whose sister was present. A group of ragged children walked by, she said to Rice 'why would bury yourself in a cell on the continent when you could devote your wealth and life to the spiritual and material welfare for these poor youths?'

Rice sold his business, made arrangements for the care of his daughter and formed a Congregation of the Christian Brothers Schools. It took off and there are Christian Brothers Schools around the world including New Zealand. In Auckland there are two of their schools, St Peter's College in Epsom and Liston College in Henderson.

7 May 2023. Rabindranath Tagore was born this day in 1861. He was a Bengali polymath, poet, playwright, composer, social reformer and painter. He was the first non-European and the first lyricist to win the Nobel Prize for Literature. He left an enormous canon of work, paintings, sketches, novels, dance-dramas, essays and some two thousand songs. His compositions were chosen as the National Anthems of both India and Sri Lanka.

He traveled widely, there are busts of him in Dublin and in a town in Hungary. There is a Blue Plaque for him on a house in the London Borough of Camden where he stayed for some time.

He established a number of prizes and medals. The one for music was won by Albertian Ashley Lawrence, ballet conductor, in 1959. It was presented to him by H.M Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother.

There are many published quotes by him, including: "Don't limit a child to your own learning, for she was born in a different time."

12 May 2023. Florence Nightingale, the Lady with a Lamp was born this day in 1820. She was an English social reformer. She was born into a wealthy family. She was born in Florence and was named for the city. Her father believed that girls should be well educated. Florence was clever and did well in her study of history, mathematics, Italian and philosophy, she became a pioneer in statistics and one of the first to use infographics.

Her nursing work came to the fore in the Crimean War. She was a stickler for sanitation and brought the death rate of the wounded soldiers down from 42% to 2%. Her reports back to England were in clear and well-written English with statistical diagrams and infographics.

She made no bones about reporting on the dreadful conditions. Isambard Kingdom Brunel was commissioned to make a prefabricated hospital which was rebuilt in Crimea.

On her return to England, she wrote *Notes on Nursing* in 1859. She established her own nursing schools and her notes were used in other nursing schools. In the Crimea there was also an Order of Nursing Nuns and Nightingale had a life-time friendship with one of them. She spent the rest of her life promoting and organizing the nursing profession. She died peacefully in her sleep in 1910 at age 90. There was an offer of burial in Westminster Abbey which was declined by her family.

14 May 2023. Mother's Day in New Zealand is celebrated on this day in 2023, as it is our second Sunday in May. It celebrates the mother of a family as well as motherhood, maternal bonds and the influence of Mothers in society. Some other countries use this day, others have Mother's Day or Mothering Sunday on a different date.

18 May 2023. Ascension Thursday. This is the Solemnity of the Ascension of Jesus into Heaven. It is one of the ecumenical feasts in Western Churches. It is 40 days after Easter which in 2023 falls on this date.

19 May 2023. Malcolm X was born this day in 1925 in Omaha Nebraska. His name was Malcolm Little. He found out that Little was a name given by a Slave Master. He repudiated it. He did not know who his real African name was, so he took the name Malcolm X. His father died when he was a child and his mother was in hospital, he was shuffled from one foster home to another. He got involved in petty crime and, because he was black, he was sentenced to 10 years in prison, he was paroled in 1952 and became the spokesman for the Nation of Islam. After a brief visit to Africa, he founded the Pan-African Organization of Afro-American Unity. He was assassinated by gunshot in New York City on 21 February 1965. He was 39.

19 May 2023. Anne Boleyn, Queen of England, was executed this day in 1536. Anne became the second wife of King Henry VIII. She was a key figure in the political and religious upheaval of the English Reformation. Pope Clement VI would not annul Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon. Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury did annul the marriage. The Pope excommunicated both Henry and Cranmer.

Anne produced a daughter who became Queen Elizabeth I. Henry wanted a son. Anne had several miscarriages. By 1536 Henry was courting Jane Seymour.

Henry had Anne investigated for high treason and sent her to the Tower of London. At a trial she was found guilty by a jury of her peers. Henry brought an expert swordsman from France to execute her. On the day of her execution, she was surprisingly merry. She gave a wonderful speech from the scaffold which began:

"Good Christian people, I come hither to die, for according to the law and by the law I am judged to die and therefore I will say nothing against it..."

Many people wept, but she did not. Her head was severed with a single blow.

24 May 2023. The declaration of the Bab on this day in 1844. The Bab, the Herald of the Baha'i Faith announced in Shiraz, Persia (now Iran), that he was the announcer of a new messenger of God.

25 May 2023. The May Revolution was a week-long series of revolutionary events that started in Buenos Aires. It started the Argentina war of Independence. It ended this day in 1810. It is a national holiday.

26 May 2023. The venerable Bede was born at Jarrow in the Kingdom of Northumbria of the Angles. When he was three, he began to be educated by the Abbot of Saints Peter and Paul Monastery. He became a Monk at of 30, he lived there his entire life apart from brief visits elsewhere. He was the most learned man of his day. He wrote theological and scientific treatises, historical works and biographies. He was a careful scholar and distinguished stylist. He was a major influence on English literature, and he has been called the Father of English history. In 731 he completed the monumental *Historia Ecclesiastica*, a history of the English Church and people. He is the only Englishman declared a Doctor of the Church. He died this day in 735.

27 May 2023/7 Sivan 5783 Shavout, The Festival of Weeks. A Jewish day that both marks the wheat harvest in the Land of Irsael (Exodus 34:22) and the revelation of the Torah to Moses and the Israelites on Mount Sinai.

28 May 2023. Pentecost is a Christian holiday which take place the 50<sup>th</sup> day after Easter Sunday. It has its roots in the Greek word Pentecoste, it relates to Shavot, the 50<sup>th</sup> day after Passover. The Apostles and other follower of Jesus were celebrating the Festival of Weeks. They were in 'an Upper Room' when the Holy Spirit descended on them as 'tongues of fire' They went from being somewhat craven to courageous and went out proclaiming that Jesus was the promised messiah of the Jewish people, as noted in the Acts of the Apostles.

29 May 2023. Whit Monday/Pentecost Monday is a public holiday in many countries. In the Church it marks the resumption of Ordinary Time, that is Easter is officially over on this day.

29 May 2023. The Ascension of Baha'u'llah, the Prophet-Founder of the Bahal'i Faith, died this day in 1892. The Shire of Baha'u'llah is in present day Israel. It is the Point of Adoration which Baha'i turn to when reciting the Obligatory Prayer.

30 May 2023. Croatia Statehood Day is an annual public holiday and National Day celebrating the Constitution of the first modern multi-party Parliament in 1990. There are no special celebrations associated with the holiday through it is a time for family reunions, picnics, barbeques, flag-waving and national anthem singing.

## June

1 June 2023. Samoa Independence Day. The journey to independence began with the signing of Western Samoa Act in 1961. Samoa was under the rule of the German Empire from 1844 to 1915. A New Zealand Expedition arrived in Apia and ended the German rule at the time of World War 1. Samoa gained independence from New Zealand on 1 January 1962 but to avoid conflict with the New Year Samoa moved Independence Celebrations to this date. It is a National Holiday. In 1997 Western Samoa changed its name to Samoa. Eastern Samoa, American Samoa, remains under the control of the USA.

1 June 2023. Brigham Young was born this day in 1801 in Whittingham, Vermont. He was President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Young led his followers, the Mormon Pioneers west from Nauvoo, Illinois to the Salt Lake Valley. He founded Salt Lake City and was the first Governor of the Utah Territory. He led his Church in the Utah war against the United States. He established educational intuitions that became The University of Utah and Brigham Young University.

2 June 2023. On this day in 1896 Guglielmo Marconi registered a patent in the London Patent Office for his invention of a wireless based telegraph system. He was an Italian electrical engineer and is credited with the invention of Radio. He was also an entrepreneur and businessman and founder of the Wireless Telegraph and Signal Company in the United Kingdom in 1897. He shared the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1909. He was ennobled as Marchese by King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy in 1929.

3 June 2023. King Edward VIII abdicated and married the love of his life, American divorcee, Wallis Simpson, this day in 1937. Later that year the couple toured Nazi Germany that led to rumors that the now Duke of Windsor was a Nazi sympathizer. His only official duty was to become Governor of the Bahamas. He spent the rest of his life in France and died in 1972.

3 June 2023. On this day in 1869 Governor George Bowen gave his assent to the Otago Provincial Council's University of Otago Ordinance, enabling the establishment of New Zealand's first University. The Council set aside 100,000 acres (40,500ha) of 'pastoral land... of a quality not required for settlement.'

4 June 2023. Emancipation Day in the Kingdom of Tonga when Tonga became independent from Britain on this day in 1970 and joined the Commonwealth of Nations. 4 June is also a significant date as King George Tupou abolished the system of selfdom of the Island of Vana'u in 1852.

4 June 2023. Trinity Sunday is first Sunday after Pentecost in the Western Christian liturgical calendar. It celebrates the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, the three persons in one eternal God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

4 June 2023. The suppression of the Tiananmen Square Protests began this day in 1989. There may have been a million people in the Square. The government declared martial law and sent in the People's Liberation Army who used tanks and armed personnel carriers, in the early morning, to crush the students in their tents. Survivors were rounded up and the leaders were executed. China has erased all signs of it. It has become a non event. Young people have no knowledge of it.

4 June 2023. The Montgolfier Brothers, Joseph-Michael and Jacques-Etienne were observant young men which led them on this day in 1783 to demonstrate publicly their hot air balloon. Jacques was the first human to leave the earth in an ascending vehicle. A sensational event. The brothers had other gifts. The family were paper makers, Joseph invented a self-acting hydraulic ram and the brothers invented a press to manufacture transparent paper.

5 June 2023. King's Birthday in New Zealand. King Charles III's birthday is actually 14 November 1948 but it celebrated on various dates in Commonwealth Realms to fit in with each country's spread of public holidays. In New Zealand the Sovereign, on advice, makes appointments to the New Zealand Order of Merit, Knights and Dames, Companions, Officers and Members, as well as other awards.

5 June 2023. Two notable economists had birthdays on this day. First, is Adam Smith economist and philosopher was born this day in 1723 in Kirkcaldy, Scotland. He wrote *An Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. It describes the working of a market-economy. Second, John Maynard Keynes was born on this day in 1883 in Cambridge, England. His book, *General Theory of Employment, Interests and Money* Stated his ideas about government responsibility to maintain high employment. Both men have had a lasting influence on economics.

6 June 2023. St Norbert died this day in 1136. He was born in Xanten in the Rhineland into a wealthy family. He lived a life of pleasure, never going on any journey that might involve danger, risk or discomfort. He was out riding when a thunderstorm came up, the rain slashing at his fancy clothes, his horse bucked, and he was thrown to the ground. A voice in his head said "Turn away from evil and do good." His life turned around. He studied to become a priest became an itinerant preacher, facing danger, risk, and discomfort every day. He became bishop of Magdeburg. He died at the age of 53.

8 June 2023. Frank Lloyd Wright, the most influential architect of his time was born this day in Richland Center, Wisconsin in 1867. He influenced architects throughout the world. He designed more than 1,000 structures. His central idea was that his buildings should belong to the landscape.

8 June 2023. Sir Tim Berners-Lee OM, KBE, FRS etc was born this day in 1955. He is an English computer scientist, best known as the inventor of the World Wide Web. He designed and implemented the web browser and web server and the fundamental protocols and algorithms allowing the web to scale. He was knighted in 2004.

8 June 2023. Corpus Christi, a Roman Catholic Solemnity that marks the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. It is the name of a college in both Oxford and Cambridge Universities and the name of a city in Texas on the Gulf of Mexico.

11 June 2023. Undersea explorer Jacques Yves Cousteau was born on this day in 1910 in the Ste Andre-de-Cubzac, France. He was a naval officer and co-invented the first successful Aqua-Lung, open circuit SCUBA (Self Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus) His first book *The Silent World: A Story of Undersea Discovery and Adventure* he surmised the existence of echolocation in dolphins. His book was adapted to the documentary *Silent World* which won the Palme d'or at the Cannes Film Festival in 1956 and the Best Documentary in 1957.

12 June 2023. On this day in 1942 the first five ships of American troops from 37<sup>th</sup> US Army Division landed in Auckland. Many of them would later die in the war in the Pacific.

12 June 2023. Philippines Independence Day. After a long occupation by Spain and then the United States, on 12 June 1962 President Diosdado Macapagal issued a Proclamation which declared 12 June as a special public holiday throughout the Philippines "... in commemoration of our Peoples declaration of their inherent and inalienable right to freedom and independence." 12 June was named Independence Day and all citizens were enjoined to observe the Day with befitting rites.

13 June 2023. William Butler Yeats, Irish poet, dramatist and writer was born this day in 1865. He was one of the foremost figures of 20<sup>th</sup> century literature. He helped found the Abbey Theatre and served two terms as a senator in the Irish Free State. His poetry moved from slow-paced and lyrical to physical, realistic, and political. He won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1923.

14 June 2023. German psychiatrist and pathologist Alois Alzheimer was born this day in 1864 in Markbreit, Kingdom of Bavaria, he first described the neuro-degenerate disease that bears his name.

16 June 2023. Youth Day in South Africa. On this day in 1976 a demonstration by high school students in Soweto was met with a violent crackdown by police. The Soweto Uprising was fueled by the compulsory introduction of Afrikaans in major school subjects. The death toll may have been as high as 176. An iconic photograph taken by newspaper photographer Sam Nzima became an international symbol of the brutality of apartheid. Youth Day is a celebration of all young people that they have rights to an education in a language they understand, and the fact that they have a voice in public affairs.

17 June 2023. On this day in 1843 The Wairau Affray was the first serious clash of arms between Maori and British Settlers. Twenty-two Europeans and 4 Maori were killed at Tuamarina, near the Wairau River in Marlborough, marking the start of the New Zealand Wars.

19 June 2023. Juneteenth is a Federal Public Holiday in the United States, commemorating the enslaved Afro-Americans. An order issued by Major General Gordon Grainger on 19 June 1865 abolished slavery in Texas. President Joe Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day into Law in June 2021.

19 June 2023. Lou Gehrig was born this day in 1903 in New York City. He was a major League Baseball player who played 17 seasons for the New York Yankees. He was such a powerful player that he was known as the Iron Horse. He is regarded as one of the best players of all time. He developed a disease that caused him to retire at age 36. He gave a farewell address to a packed Yankee Stadium entitled *The Luckiest Man on the Face of the Earth*. Two years later Motor Neurone Disease took his life. It is widely known as Lou Gehrig's Disease.

22 June 2023. Oddly, this is the feast day of Sir Thomas More. He had two marriages and four children. He became Member of Parliament for Great Yarmouth and was elected Speaker. He became Master of Requests, as diplomat to the Holy Roman Empire. He was High Stewart of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, he became Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and ruled much of the North of England on behalf of King Henry VIII. He became Lord Chancellor in 1529. He wrote a number of works, the best known is *Utopia*, published in 1516 which describes the political system of an imaginary island state. The word has gone into the language as a kind of everlasting Nania, or Shangri La. More did not attend Henry's marriage to Anne Boleyn and refused to sign a letter to the Pope annulling Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon. His fate was sealed. He was sent to the Tower of London, tried and found guilty of High Treason. Henry ordered that he be decapitated, a quicker death than the usual punishment of being hanged, drowned and quartered. He joked with his executioner asking him to help him up and that he would find his own way down. He said on the scaffold, 'I die the King's good servant and God's first.' He was canonized a Saint by Pope Pius XI on 1935. His feast day is celebrated this day in the Catholic Church and on other days in other Churches.

24 June 2023. Litha is one of the eight Sabbats on the pagan Wheel of Life. It celebrates midsummer. During each Solstice the battle between Light and Dark take place. The Oak King is at the Zenith and his power gradually give way to the Holly King whose power draws towards Yule. This day has been Christianised to the Feast of John the Baptist.

25 June 2023. Eric Blair better known by his pen name George Orwell born this day in Mothari, Bengal in 1903. He was a lucid writer and a novelist, journalist and critic, opposed to the totalitarianism. He joined the International Brigade and was wounded in the Spanish Civil War, During the Second World War he worked as a journalist at the BBC. The publication of *Animal Farm* led to fame in his lifetime. In his later years he worked on *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The adjective Orwellian has gone into the language as well as the neologism Big Brother, Thought Police and New Speak and many others. Millions of people have read these books as they have been required texts in many school systems.

26 June 2023. The United Nations Charter, the UN's founding document was signed this day in 1945 in San Francisco by 54 Nations including New Zealand. It is the world's largest international organization dedicated to cooperation, peace and security and harmonizing the actions of nations. Its headquarters are in New York City, and it has main offices in Geneva, Nairobi, Vienna and the Hague, home of The International Court of Justice one of many UN Organizations.

26 June 2023. The first day of the Haji. This day begins the annual Pilgrimage to Mecca, that all Muslims must undertake once in their lifetime.

28 June 2023. Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated this day in 1914 in Sarajevo. It was the most immediate cause of the First World War leading to 20 million military and civilians killed and another 20 million wounded including 18,000 New Zealand service personnel.

30 June 2023. The Tunguska Event took place on this day in 1908. A 12-megaton meteor airburst of a stony asteroid of some 50-60m over a sparsely settled area of the East Siberian Tiaga flattening an estimated 80 million trees. It is the largest impact on earth recorded in history.

## **July**

1 July 2023. Canada Day/Fete du Canada is the national day of Canada, it is a federal statutory holiday. It celebrates the anniversary of the Canadian Confederation on 1 July 1867 with the passing of the British North America Act when the three colonies of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and the United Canadas became one country. As for the United Canadas, Upper Canada became Ontario and Lower Canada became Quebec. Canada Day came from Dominion Day/Fete due Dominion, with the repatriation of the Canadian Constitution by the Canada Act of 1985. The Provinces and Territories joined the original Confederation in this order: Manitoba and Northwest Territories 1870, British Columbia 1871, Prince Edward Island 1873, Yukon Territory 1898, Alberta and Saskatchewan 1905, Newfoundland 1949 and Nunavut 1999.



1 July 2023. On 1 July 1858 there was a reading to the Linnean Society, London by the Secretary to the 30 or so members present. Why this was important as what was read was an excerpt of Charles Darwin's work on the theory of Evolution, together with a letter from Alfred Russell Wallace from the Malay Archipelago whose work was strikingly like Darwin's. Their work created a social, religious, and scientific storm on the general release.

2 July 2023. The American Civil Rights Act of 1964 is a landmark civil rights and labor law that outlaws discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex and national origin. It prohibits segregation in school, public accommodations, and employment. It was signed into Law by President Lyndon B Johnson on this day in 1964. It is one of the most significant legislative achievements in US History.

3 July 2023. On this day in 1884 the last two confirmed pair of Great Auks were killed off the coast of Iceland. The Great Auk; *Pinuinu impennis*, as the generic name indicates it resembled a large penguin, but it was not related to them. These heavy birds bred for life and nested on remote islands close to the sea. The last ones were killed by three fishermen out of superstition.

4 July 2023. On this day in 1776 the Declaration of Independence was ratified, thus establishing the United States of America. "The Fourth of July" is a national public holiday. There are patriotic parades and all manner of celebration. By remarkable coincidence two of the original signatories of the Declaration, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams both served as Presidents. They both died on the same day, July 4 1825, it was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Declaration.

4 July 2023. On this day two giants of American arts were born, Nathaniel Hawthorne was born this day in 1804 in Salem, Massachusetts. His short stories in various periodicals were collected into *Twice Told Tales*. His two great novels were *The Scarlet Letter* 1850 and *The House of The Seven Gables* 1851. They are both darkly romantic. Hawthorne was made US Consul for Liverpool, a major post. He was buried in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery in Concord, Massachusetts along with many other famous people. Born on this day in 1826 was composer Stephen Foster in Lawrenceville, Pennsylvania. He was known as the Father of American Music. He wrote more than 200 Songs, some known all over the English-speaking world. They include *Oh! Susanna*, *Hard Times Come Again No More*, *Campton Roces*, *My Old Kentucky Home*, and for his wife, *Jeannie with The Light Brown Hair*. *Beautiful Dreamer* was released after his death. He died in New York City with just 37 cents to his name. He is buried in the Allegheny Cemetery, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania.

4 July 2023. On this day in 1054 SN1054 a supernova was first observed by Chinese and Arab astronomers and many other peoples who would not be able to date it or record it. It would have been visible during the day. It can be seen to this day. It is the Crab Nebula at the center of which is a pulsar. It is one of the most studied astronomical objects, outside of our own Solar System.

4 July 2023. Marie Sklodowska-Curie died this day in 1934. She conducted pioneer research on radioactivity, a term she coined. Born in Warsaw she became a naturalized French Citizen married to Pierre Curie. She was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize, in physics along with

Pierre and Henri Berquerel in 1903. In 1911 she won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for her discovery of Polonium (named for her native Poland) and Radium. During the First World War she developed mobile x-ray machines for use in field hospitals. She was the first woman to become a Professor at the University of Paris. She died from aplastic anemia as a result of her work. She was the first woman to be entombed in her own right in the Paris Pantheon. Poland declared 2011 to be the year of Marie Curie during the International Year of Chemistry. She is the subject of numerous biographical works. She was widely known simply as Madame Curie.

5 July 2023. Cecil Rhodes was born this day in 1853 in Bishop's Cleeve, Hertfordshire, England. He became a mining magnate and politician in Southern Africa serving as Prime Minister of the Cape Colony. He and his British South African Company found the South African territory of Rhodesia (named after him). It is now Zimbabwe and Zambia. He developed Rhodes University. He devoted much of his efforts to build the Cape to Cairo railway, through British Territory. His Rhodes scholarships to the University of Oxford are the oldest graduate scholarships in the world and the most prestigious. Prime Ministers of Malta, Australia and Canada and US Presidents Bill Clinton are among the recipients. He famously said, "To be born British is to win first prize in the lottery of Life." This would have a widely held view at the time of Queen Victoria when the British Empire ruled a large chunk of the world and India was the Jewel in the Crown. There is a statue of him at Oxford and a modern movement, "Rhodes Must Fall" wants to remove the statue because of his imperialist views.

5 July 2023. On this day in 1687 Sir Isaac Newton published *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, established classical mechanics. His mathematics described Kepler's Laws of planetary motion accounting for tides, the trajectory of comets, the procession of the equinox and eradicated doubt about the solar system's heliocentricity. He demonstrated the motion of objects on Earth and on celestial bodies. He inferred that the Earth was an oblate spheroid. He built the world's first reflection telescope and developed a sophisticated theory of colour, all collected in his book *Opticks*. He developed an empirical Law of cooling, made the first calculation of the Speed of Sound and on and on. He was a Fellow of Trinity College and the second Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge. He was a devout but unorthodox Christian. He was knighted by Queen Anne; he became Master of the Royal Mint and President of The Royal Society.

6 July 2023. On this day in 1885 Louis Pasteur vaccinated 9-year-old Joseph Meister who had been bitten by a rabid dog. That would have meant death. While Pasteur had developed the Rabies vaccine, he was not a trained medical man so he was taking a personal risk using it. Over 11 days the boy received 13 treatments. Three months later Pasteur exclaimed the boy had found him in good health.

9 July 2023. St Mary Hermina Grivot was a French nun and a Mother Superior. She and six other nuns had gone to China to create a small hospital and orphanage. They were martyred this day in 1900 during the Boxer Rebellion. She and her nuns are representative of all the martyrs of China. In the Catholic Church there were 120 "Martyr saints of China" In the Eastern Orthodox Church there were 222 "Holy Martyrs of China" In the Protestant Churches there are at least 189 missionaries and 500 Chinese Protestants in 1900 alone. Among those

killed for their faith were Baptists, Evangelicals, Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians and Plymouth Brethren. They are the “China Martyrs of 1500”.

9 July 2023. The Martyrdom of the Bab. Members of the Bahai Faith remember the execution of the Bab on this day in 1850. He had been charged with the crimes of apostasy by Muslim officials of the Persian Empire.

10 July 2023. Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin has been Chairman of the Soviet of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. On this day in 1991 he took the Oath of Office on the new position as President of Russia. He was the first democratic leader in the thousand-year history of Russia. He transformed Russia’s command economy into a capital market economy, implementing economic shock therapy, market exchange rate of the ruble, nationwide privatization and lifting of price control. A small number of oligarchs obtained a majority of the national property and wealth, while international monopolies came to dominate the market. After growing internal pressure he resigned at the end of 1999 and was followed by his chosen successor Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, who turned out to be a very different President.

10 July 2023. On this day in 1509 French theologian, pastor and reformer, John Calvin was born in Noyon, Picardy. He was a principal figure in the development of the Christian theology later called Calvinism, which taught God’s absolute sovereignty in the salvation of the human soul from death and damnation, His teaching rests upon the Augustinian and other Christian traditions. Various reformed Churches took Calvin as the expositor of their beliefs, which have spread throughout the world.

10 July 2023. On this day in 1967 New Zealand changed its Currency. A momentous event which affected every person in the country. “Pounds, shilling and pence were replaced with dollars and cents”. Decimalisation had been discussed since 1900. Both National and Labour Parties agreed by 1960 that a change had to be made. A decision in 1963 set the date for 10 July 1967. There was much publicity, on the day 27 million new banknotes and 165 million new coins were circulated. The new coins were 1c, 2c, 5c, 10c, 20c, 50c and the new notes \$1, \$2, \$5, \$20 and \$100. Changes were made over the years, the introduction of a \$50 note, the changing of the \$1 and \$2 into coins, the demonitising of the 1c, 2c and 5c, and the introduction of smaller coins. Different series of notes have been issued. Australia changed its currency on 14 February 1966 and the United Kingdom changed on 15 February 1971.

10 July 2023. Telstar 1 was a communication satellite launched by NASA this day in 1962. It allowed the first live broadcast of live television images between the United States and Europe. It has since been replaced but it remains in Earth’s orbit.

11 July 2023. There are many saints named Benedict, but this is Benedict of Nursua, who is the main man. His feast day is on this day. He was an Italian monk born in 480. He was a writer and a theologian who established the Benedictian rule for his monks. It has a unique spirit of balance, moderation and reasonableness which persuaded many other religious communities in the Middle Ages to follow it. Benedict is often regarded as the founder of the Western Christian Monasticism, St Benedict’s Church in Newton, Auckland was

founded by Benedictine monks from Ramsgate Abbey in England. Benedictine liqueur is believed to have first been formulated in 1510 by Dom Bernardo Vincelli, a keen botanist and Benedictine monk at Abbey of Fecamp on the Normandy coast France. The Holy Trinity Abbey is still there as a Benedictine foundation. The liqueur is now in commercial hands. Martini and Rossi sold it to Bacardi.

12 July 2023. The Battle of Kursk was a major World War 2 Eastern Front encounter between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. The German advance stalled and the Soviet offensive began on this day in 1943. It is mentioned here as it was the largest tank battle in history. Result: Soviet Union 1, Nazi Germany 0.

12 July 2023. Henry David Thoreau was born on this day in 1817. He was an American naturalist, essayist, poet, and philosopher. He was a leading transcendentalist, its core belief is the inherent goodness of people and nature, people are at their best when they are self-reliant and independent. He attended Harvard where he studied rhetoric, classics, philosophy, mathematics, and science. He is best known for his book *Walden*, a reflection upon simple living in natural surroundings. He is known, too, for his essay *On Civil Disobedience*, which later influenced Leo Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi and Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr. He is buried, along with many other luminaries, in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, Concord, Massachusetts.

14 July 2023. Bastille Day/Fete national francais. This is the national day of France and it is the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille (a prison) on this day in 1785. It celebrated the unity of the French people. Among the many celebrations is the oldest and largest military parade in Europe held on this day along the Champs-Elysees in front of the President of the Republic along with other French officials and foreign guests. The English poet William Wordsworth poem on the start of the French Revolution includes:

“Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive. But to be young was very heaven.”

Yes. But it didn't turn out like that, like most revolution it turned into the Reign of Terror/la Terreur, a series of massacres and public executions – a settling of grudges.

14 July 2023 Matariki, the start of Māori New Year. In Māori culture Matariki is the name of a cluster of stars known to western astronomers as the Pleiades or Seven Sisters. Matariki is both the name of start cluster and of the one of the stars in it. Other terms for the cluster as a whole are Tatari-nui- o-Matariki (Matariki fixed in the heavens) and Huihu o Matariki (The assembly of Matariki).

Matariki has become a National Holiday. It received the Royal Assent and became Law on 11 April 2022 and the first public Holiday was 22 June 2022. The day varies for year to year.

16 July 2023. This day is the feast day of St Helier who died in 555, he was a hermit. He has given his name to both the capital of Jersey and a seaside suburb in Auckland. His name is usually given with one letter l but Jersey and the Auckland suburb have a double l.

17 July 2023. On this night in 1918 the Russian Imperial Family: Nicholas II of Russia, his wife Alexandria Feodorovna and their five children Olga, Tatiana, Maria, Anastasia and Alexei were shot and bayoneted to death by Bolshevik revolutionaries under Yakov Yurosky on the orders of the Ural Regional Soviet in Yekaterinburg. Also murdered that night were

members of the Romanov Imperial entourage who had accompanied them; Court Physician, Eugene Botkin, lady in waiting, Anna Demidova, footman Alexie Trupp and head cook Ivan Kharitonov.

18 July 2023. Nelson Mandela was born on this day in 1918. He was a Xhosa. He studied law at the University of Hare and at the University of Witwatersrand and worked as a lawyer in Johannesburg. He joined the ANC and became politically active and was repeatedly arrested and was finally imprisoned for life for conspiring to overturn the state. He served 27 years and was released by President FW de Klerk in 1990. Mandela and de Klerk led efforts to negotiate an end to apartheid. A 1994 multiracial general election saw Mandela elected President. He emphasized reconciliation between the country's racial groups. Among his many honours was the Nobel Peace Prize. He was often referred to by his clan name, Madiba. He is described as the Father of the Nation.

18 July 2023. Robert Hooke FRS was born on this day in 1635. He was an English polymath active as a scientist, architect and natural philosopher. He was one of two scientists credited with finding microorganisms in 1665 using a compound microscope he built himself. He coined the word 'cell.' He found wealth and esteem by performing over half of the architectural surveys after London's Great Fire in 1666. He was curator of Experiment for the Royal Society. He built the vacuum pumps used by Robert Boyle to investigate. *Micrographia* written by Hooke spurred microscopic investigations. Hooke inferred the wave theory of light and his is the first recorded hypothesis of heat expanding matter. He built the first Gregorian Telescope and observed the rotation of the planets Mars and Jupiter. In geology and paleontology he originated the theory of the terraqueous globe. He argued that fossils are found on a hill because of land elevation. His pioneered work on land surveying and map making aided the development of the modern plan-form map. He has been called 'England's Leonardo.'

20 July 2023. Neil Armstrong, aeronautical engineer, naval aviator, test pilot and University Professor, landed on the surface of the moon, this day in 1969. Apollo 11 and the Lunar Module Eagle pilot Buzz Aldrin landed on the surface of the moon. The next day they spent two and a half hours outside walking on the surface of the moon. Armstrong was first out. They got back into the Lander and Aldrin piloted them back to rejoin the Apollo Command Module Columbia piloted by Michael Collins and all three returned safely to Earth. Given the technology of the day this was a feat of great courage. At any point something could have gone wrong.

20 July 2023. Edmund Hillary KG, ONZ, KGE, mountaineer, explorer and philanthropist was born this day in 1919. He was part of the ninth British expedition to Everest led by John Hunt. Hillary and the sherpa Tenzing Norgay became the first climbers to reach Everest in 1953 as a member of the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition to the South Pole. He later reached the North Pole also. He served from 1985-1988, as the High Commissioner to India and Bangladesh and as the Ambassador to Nepal. Beginning in 1960 he devoted himself to assisting the sherpa people of Nepal through his Himalayan Trust, constructing many schools and hospitals. He had numerous honors conferred on him, including Knight of the Garter, His image is on the New Zealand \$5 banknote. He died in 2008 and was given a state funeral in New Zealand.

21 July 2023. Marshall McLuhan was born this day in 1911 in Edmonton, Alberta, He attended the University of Manitoba and Trinity College, Cambridge, England. In 1946 he moved to the university of Toronto as a Professor of Philosophy. He joined the Catholic Church after reading GK Chesterton. He was the first to study popular culture, a term he coined. His Cambridge doctorate dissertation became *The Mechanical Bride: Folklore of the Industrial Man* where he expanded his views on Popular Culture. His second book, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The making of Typographic Man*, is another pioneer study from oral culture, Print Culture, Cultural Studies and Media Studies (terms he coined). He most widely known book is *Understanding Media: The Extension of Man*, is a seminal study on media theory. In it he used two famous term which he coined: 'global village and the medium is the message' in which he argues that it is the media themselves rather than the content they cover that should be the subject of the study. Just as a light bulb illuminates a room but does not have 'content' (Benjamin Franklin did not care who invented the light bulb. He invented the electrical distribution system). McLuhen predicted a portable telephone and the world wide web. Neither came to pass until many years after his death.

23 July 2023. Haile Salessie was born this day in 1892 as Tafari Makonnen. He was Emperor of Ethiopia. Haili Salessie is a reginal name. In English it means 'The Power of the Trinity' He was a member of the European Orthodox Church and his Dynasty was the House of Solomon. His titles included "Elert of God". He attempted to modernize the country through a series of political and social reforms including the introduction of the 1931 Constitution and the abolition of slavery. He was overthrown in a military coup by a Marxist – Leninist junta and he was assassinated on 27 August 1975. His legacy lives on, prior to becoming Emperor, he was known as Ras Tafari, Ras is equivalent to the title 'Duke; in English. It is this name that gave rise to Rastafarianism, a religious movement started in Jamaica. The Ethiopian Royal Standard with the Lion of Judah and the colours green, yellow and red. There are several denominations in the Mansions of Rastafari, but all believe in a particular interpretation of *The Bible*, the monotheistic God, known as Jah resides in every person. Some see Ras Tafari as a Prophet others see him as the Second Coming of Jesus. It fundamentally an Afrocentric Religion. The West is Babylon and Africa is the Promised Land or Zion.

24 July 2023. Simon Bolivar was born on day in 1783 in Caracas, Captaincy General of Venezuela into a wealthy criollo family. He lived for a time in Spain and embarked on a grand tour. He returned to Venezuela and talked to other wealthy creoles. Spain was weakened by Napoleon's Peninsular War, Bolivar began his military career fighting the Royalists in Venezuela and the united Provinces of New Grenada. Forced into exile in Jamaica he sought help from Haiti. He founded a republic in Venezuela in 1817, liberated New Grenada in 1819, Panama in 1821, Ecuador in 1822, Peru in 1842 and Bolivia in 1825. Bolivia and the Bolivian Republic of Venezuela and their currencies are named for him. His legacy is far-reaching in Latin America and beyond.

27 July 2023/9AV 5783. Tisha B'Av. This day remembers the destruction on both the Temple of Solomon by the Neo-Babalonian Empire and the Second Temple by the Roman Empire. It is a day of fasting, mourning and prayer for the Jewish people.

30 July 2023. Henry Ford was born this day in 1863 on a farm in Springwell's Township, Michigan. He was an American industrialist and business magnate. He founded the Ford Motor Company and was chief developer of the assembly line technique of mass production. In 1908 Model T automobiles revolutionised both transportation and American Industry. As the sole owner of the Ford Motor Company, he invented 'Fordism', the mass production of goods. Coupled with high wages and the 8-hour day and 5 day week. Ford had a vision that consumerism was the key to peace. (Bread and Circuses). He established the franchise system and put dealerships around the world. In the early stages of the First World War he was a pacifist. He was a promotor of anti-semitism both through his newspaper *The Dearborn independent* and his book *The International Jew*.

## August

1 August 2023. Francis Scott Key was born this day in 1776 in Fredrick County, Maryland. He was a lawyer, writer and amateur poet. He was a devout Episcopalian. He observed the British naval bombardment of Fort McHenry at Locus Point, Maryland in 1814 during the War of 1812. The bombardment lasted throughout the night. There was an American storm flag over the Fort. In the early morning it was replaced by an American Garrison flag. Key was so inspired by the sight of the flag that he wrote a poem called *The Defence of Fort M'Henry*. It was later set to the tune of a popular British song, *To Anacreon in Heaven*, from a London's men's club. The first two lines of Key's poem are:

Oh say can see by the dawns early light

What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?

It was renamed *The Star Spangled Banner* and was sung by the US Navy. It was signed into Law as the National Anthem of the United States of America by President Herbert Hoover in 1931. Fort McHenry is now a National Monument and Historic Shrine in modern Baltimore,

3 August 2023. On this day in 1492 Christopher Columbus set sail from Polos, Spain with three ships, Nina, Pinto and Santa Maria. He was seeking a new route to the Far East. He landed in the Bahamas thinking it was an outlying Island of Japan. He was an accidental 'discoverer' of North America. Not even the first Europeans. The Vikings had landed in what became Canada and there may have been others. First Nation People had been there for hundreds of years. "In fourteen hundred and eighty two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue" is an *aide-memoire* for American Children.

Columbia is the female personification of the United States (Like Britannia, Hibernia, Hispania etc.) There is a Columbia University in New York City. Columbia is the Capital of South Carolina and Columbus is the Capital of Ohio.

4 August 2023. On this day in 1944 Anne Frank and family were arrested by the Gestapo. The family, being Jewish left Germany when Anne was 4 and moved to the Netherlands. Ann had been given an autograph book for her 13<sup>th</sup> Birthday and began using it as a diary. When the Germans conquered the Netherlands the family went into hiding in an upstairs area of the house where her father worked. Anne continued with her diary. The last entry was 1 August 1944. The family were taken to Auschwitz and Anne and her sister Margot were transferred to Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp where she died of typhus, aged 15. Her father survived the camps and at the end of the war he returned to his old work and found that his secretaries had saved the diary. He decided to fulfil Anne's greatest wish to

become a writer and published her Dairy. When it was translated from Dutch into English in 1952, it was known as *The Dairy of a Young Girl*, which later became *The Diary of Anne Frank*. It has since been translated into over 70 languages.

4 August 2023. Louis Armstrong was born this day in 1901, New Orleans, Louisiana he was an American trumpeter and vocalist, and one of the influential figures in jazz. By 1950 he was a national musical icon appearing on radio and television and films as well as his concerts. He became an international phenomenon. His best-known songs include *What a Wonderful World*, *La Vie en Rose*, *Hello Dolly*, *On the Sunny Side of the Street*, *When You're Smiling*, and *When the Saints go Marching In*. He produced three albums with Ella Fitzgerald. Armstrong played himself, as did the members of his band in *High Society* with Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, Grace Kelly and Celeste Holm. Armstrong sang *High Society* as a calypso.

5 August 2023. Film star Marilyn Monroe died this day in 1962, she had a dreadful childhood being in 12 foster homes and an orphanage. She was famous for playing comic 'blonde bombshell' characters. She had a huge public image and made a huge sum of money. She was very popular in *As Young as You Feel* and *Monkey Business*. She was a memorable star in the dramas *Class By Night* and *Don't Bother to Knock*, but for critical acclaim there was *Bus Stop*, where she sang *That Old Black Magic*. Despite all her success and beauty there was still a sad little girl inside. She died of an overdose of sleeping pills.

6 August 2023. Alexander Fleming was born this day in 1881 on a farm in Ayrshire. He was a clever boy. He studied medicine at St Mary's Hospital Medical School and graduated MBBS with distinction in 1890. He then did a BSc in bacteriology and graduated in 1908 with gold medal. He was a medical officer in the First World War and saw many soldiers die from sepsis they were treated with antiseptic which made things worse. Fleming guessed that their anaerobic bacteria were deeper down. Back in England he made many agar plates of bacteria which he inoculated with such as nasal mucus. There was always a dead zone of bacteria. He called the effect lysosome. No medical people were very interested. He prepared other plates and then went a family holiday. Dead zone again, though a fungus was different. He found out it was a species of *Penicillium* he called it mould juice before he decided on penicillin. He needed others to work out the molecular structure and produce it bulk. They were Howard Walter Foley and Ernst Boris Chain. All three received the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1945. Penicillin, the world's first antibiotic would conquer such diseases as syphilis, gangrene and tuberculosis. Even so, Sir Alexander Fleming warned against overuse, and in that he was ahead of his time again.

6 August 2023. The first Atomic Bomb was dropped on the Japanese City of Hiroshima on this day in 1945 at 8.30am by the American B-29 super fortress Enola Gay. The bomb was detonated about 18,000 feet above ground killing over 105,000 persons and destroying the city. Another 100,000 died later of radiation. The Japanese High Command were told that the Americans had this weapon and they were asked to surrender. They ignored the advice. The Enola Gay lives on. It has been restored and is on display at a Smithsonian Museum in Virginia.



7 August 2023. Margaret Gertrude Zella was born this day in 1876 in Leeuwarden, Netherlands. She is much better known by her 'stage name' Mata Hari. She was a beautiful exotic dancer who was convicted of being a spy for Germany during the First World War and was sentenced to face a firing squad. She refused a blindfold and in a final gesture she threw a kiss to her executioners.

9 August 2023. Edith Stein died this day in 1942. She was born in Poland into an observant Jewish Family. In her teenage years she became an agnostic. She was a clever girl and finished a doctorate at the University of Feilburg. She was a philosopher. She read a biography of Teresa of Avila and it changed her life. She was drawn to the Christian Faith and became a Carmelite nun and took the name Teresa Benedicta of the Cross. Her Sister Rose became a Carmelite extern. They were in Cologne. For their safety they were sent to a monastery in Ethc, Netherlands, when the Germans invaded the Netherlands there no escaping the Gestapo, they knew of all the Jews who had become Christians and picked up Edith and Rose. They were sent to Auschwitz and died in the gas chamber. Edith was canonised a Saint by Pope John Paul II in 1987.

12 August 2023. Cecil B DeMille was born in Ashfield, Massachusetts this day in 1881. He was a film director, actor, and producer. He made 70 feature films in both silent and in sound. He is known as a founding father of the American cinema and the most commercially successful producer in film history. His films were distinguished by their epic scale and his cinematic showmanship. His early film, *The Squawman* (1914) was the first full length feature film to be shot in Hollywood and made it the home of the US film industry. Most of DeMille's films were box-office blockbusters and some were award winners. They include *King of Kings*, *The Sign of the Cross*, *The Ten Commandments*, *Cleopatra*, *Sampson and Delihar* and *The Greatest Show on Earth*. He received an Honorary Academic Award for his contribution to the Motion Picture industry. There is a Golden Globe Cecil B DeMille award in his honor.

13 August 2023. On this day in 1961 the Communist Government of the German Democratic Republic aka East German began to build a barbed wire and concrete antifascist bulwark between East and West Berlin. It grew to be a guarded concrete barrier 4.2m high and 115m around West Berlin which was an 'island' inside East Germany. President John F Kennedy visited the Wall in 1963 and gave his 'Ich bin ein Berliner' speech, and in 1987 President Ronald Regan visited the Wall and gave his 'Mr Gorbachev, tear down this Wall' speech. The wall came down on 9 November 1989. There is a preserved section 1.3km long. It has been painted with messages from 118 artists from 21 countries.

13 August 2023. Annie Oakley (Phoebe Ann Moses) was born this day in 1860. She was an American sharpshooter with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. Oakley developed hunting skills as a girl to provide for her impoverished Quaker family. She won a shooting contest against an experienced marksman, Frank Butler. They were later married. She was an early feminist and taught woman how to shoot in self-defense. There has been a Broadway musical about her called *Annie Get Your Gun* (1948) and a film of the same name (1950).

15 August 2023. The Assumption of Mary, Mother of Jesus into Heaven. It is one of the four Marian dogmas of the Catholic Church. It is also celebrated in the Anglican Communion and

the Lutheran Church. In Orthodox Churches, on the same day, the Assumption is called The Dormition of the Theotokos, our most Holy Lady. And of her being taken up to Heaven.

15 August 2023. On this day in 1968 Woodstock began in a field in Bethel, New York. It is the most storied of all rock festivals. 5,000 young people were expected over the four days, there may as many as half a million coming and going over time. There were downpours, the field was a sea of mud. The lineup was the greatest get together of rock stars ever assembled, They included: Ravi Shankar/Arlo Guthrie/John Baez/Canned Head/The Grateful Dead/Creedence Clearwater Revival/The Who/Jefferson Airplane/Joe Cocker/Country Joe and The Fish/Janis Joplin/Sly and the Family Stone/Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young and to end, a two hour set by the greatest rock guitarist of all time; Jimi Hendrix.

16 August 2023. On this day in 1896 gold was found in Rabbit Creek, a tributary of the Klondike River, Alaska, resulting in the Great Klondike Gold Rush.

16 August 2023. On this day in 1888 Thomas Edward Lawrence was born in Treadog, Wales. T.E. Lawrence CB, DSO was a British army officer, archeologist, diplomat and writer. He became renowned for his role in the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. His ability to describe these events and other exploits with his vivid writing earned him international fame as Lawrence of Arabia. After the war Lawrence joined the British Foreign Office in 1922 he retired from public life and spent some years with the RAF. During that time he wrote *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* an autobiographical account of his participation with the Arab Revolt. He translated books into English, wrote *The Mint* detailing his life in the RAF. He corresponded extensively and was friendly with well-known artists, writers and politicians. On 19 May 1935 Lawrence died after a motorcycle accident in Dorset. He was 46. A full life.

17 August 2023. On this day in 1786 David (Davy) Crocket, farmer, scout and politician was born. *Davy Crocket: King of the Wild Frontier* (1955) Was a Disneyfied version of his actual life. As a politician he was an honourable man before his time. A natural leader. That leadership was put to the test in the Battle of the Alamo. The commander, Colonel William Travis, the second in Command James Bowie and Crocket were all killed. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna won the day and all the defenders of the Alamo were killed and Texas remained part of Mexico. General Sam Hudson led the Texas Army against Santa Anna and there was a resounding victory for the Texans after only 18 minutes. The republic of Texas was born. 'The Alamo' is etched into the memory not only of Texans, but in memory of everyone who has visited The Alamo.

17 August 2023. On this day in 1945 Indonesia proclaimed its independence from the Dutch. Independence Day is now a Public Holiday since 1946. On 17 August at 10.00am Western Indonesian Time all national television networks broadcast the National Independence Day Ceremony from the Merdeka Palace in Jakarta. It is obligatory for all citizens to fly the national Flag in front of their houses on Independence Day.

18 August 2023. On this day in 1840 a French Colony was founded at Akaroa, Canterbury's oldest town. By the time the French settlers arrived, the Treaty of Waitangi had already

been signed and the arrival of the French speeded up Britain's decision to annex New Zealand.

20 August 2023. On this day in 1940 the New Zealand shipping company freighter *Turakina* was sunk off Cape Egmont by German raiders. Thirty-six members of its crew were killed, and Twenty-one survivors were taken from the sea and taken prisoner. Also at other times other vessels were sunk. The NZ shipping Company liner MV *Rangitana* was sunk off East Cape. The steamer *Holmwood* was sunk off the Chatham Islands. The RMS *Niagara* was sunk by German mines off Bream Head, Northland. All lives were saved by lifeboats.

24 August 2023. On this day in 1573 The Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre began during the French Wars of Religion. A wave of Catholic mob violence was directed at the Huguenots, Calvinist Protestants. Throughout Europe this event is printed on Protestant minds that Catholicism was a bloody and treacherous religion.

24 August 2023. On this day in 1991 Ukraine celebrated its current form of Independence Day. A referendum changed it to this day. Since the Russian invasion, wide-spread celebrations have been difficult. The day is celebrated among the Ukrainian diaspora. The largest is in Canada where there 1.4 million Ukrainians.

26 August 2023. One of the most catastrophic Volcanic in recorded history occurred in Indonesia, on the island of Krakatoa. Explosions were heard 2000 miles away (3,200km). Tides were 120ft (36.6 meters) high killed 36,000 people on nearby islands five cubic miles (21 cubic km) of earth were blasted into the upper air to a height of 50 miles (80km)

26 August 2023. On this day in 1910 Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu was born in Uskum, Ottomon Empire. She is better known as Mother Theresa and her birthplace is now called Skopji, North Macedonia. Her family was of Albanian descent, hence her birth name. She felt a strong pull to the religious life and joined the Sisters of Loreto, an Irish Order of nuns with missions in India. After training in Dublin she was sent to India to teach in a school, but noticed the poor and destitute, she left and founded her own community, the Missionaries of Charity. They spread around the world, there are over 4,500 nuns in her Order. She received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 and many other worldly accolades. Saint Teresa of Calcutta was canonised by Pope Francis on 4 September 2016.

28 August 2023. St Augustine of Hippo died this day in 430. He is a theologian and philosopher of Berber origin and the Bishop of Hippo Regius in Numiclia, Roman North Africa. His writings influenced Western Philosophy and Western Christianity. He is the most important Church Father of the Latin Church in the Patristic Church. His most important works include *The City of God*, *On Christian Doctrine* and *Confessions* He is recognized by a number of churches and he is a preeminent Catholic Doctor of the Church. Protestants Consider him one of the theological fathers of the Protestant Reformation due to his teaching on Salvation and divine grace. He was always a lover of learning, and of a young woman who he lived with for fifteen years. He became Manichaeian, much to the chagrin of his mother. His son Adeodatus was also very bright. Augustan moved to Malan as Professor of Rhetoric. He had knowledge of many faiths. He met Ambrose, an older man. Augustine said this man received me as a father would. Augustine famously said "Grant me chastity

and continence but not yet.” He gave up his concubine and became Christian, at the age of 31. He opened the writings of Paul at random and read Romans 13: 13-14: ‘Not in rioting and drunkenness, nor in chambering and wantonness, not in striving and envy, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof.” In his *Confessions* he had much to write about. It is a key text in the history of autobiography. He and his son returned to Africa. His son died. Augustine sold his patrimony and gave the money to the poor. He became a priest and then a bishop which is why he is called Augustine of Hippo. Augustine has influenced many of today’s theologians and authors.

30 August 2023. On this day in 1797 Mary Wollstoncraft Shelly was born. She married the poet Percy Bysshe Shelly and they had three children, Percy, Clara and William. Her first book was her most famous, she took the name of Frankenstein Castle in Germany and used it in *Frankenstein or the Modern Promethens* (1818) it is regarded as an early science fiction. It tells how young scientist Victor Frankenstein created a sapient creature. The novel has spawned a complete genre of horror stories films and plays. In popular culture the word Frankenstein is used as the monster rather than his creator. Next came *Valperga or The Life and Adventure of Castruccio, Prince of Lucca* (1823) A historical novel. *The Last Man* (1826) is an apocalyptic, dystopian, science fiction novel. *The Fortunes of Perkin: A Romance* (1830) and historical novel. *The Dream* (1932) is a gothic short story and *The Mortal Immortal* (1933) is another short story that tells of a young man who drinks an elixir which makes him immortal which turns out to be a curse. *The Invisible Girl* (1933) is a gothic tale. *Lodore* (1835) also published under *The Beautiful Widow* focusing on the microcosm of the family. *Rambles in Italy and Germany* (1844) is a factual travel narrative. It is her last published work.

31 August 2023. On this day in 1980 Solidarity/Solidarnosc, a Polish Trade Union was founded in the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk. It was the first independent trade union to be recognized by the state. The Union’s membership peaked at 10 million members. Solidarity’s leader Lech Walesa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1983. The Union is widely recognized as having played a central role in the end of Communism rule in Poland.

## September

1 September 2023. On this day in 1939 Nazi Germany began an invasion of Poland, thus beginning the Second World War. Polish territory was divided among Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union and the client state of Slovakia. The free city of Danzig was annexed by Germany, Kresy was annexed by the Soviet Union. Vilnius was granted to Lithuania. Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union had full control over Poland.

2 September 2023. The Great Fire of London was a major conflagration that swept through London and began this day in 1666. The fire started in a bakery in Pudding Lane shortly after midnight. By the time the building could be demolished, the wind has fanned the fire into a firestorm. While there were few deaths more than 13,000 houses, 86 parish churches, St Paul’s Cathedral and many public buildings were in ruins. This catastrophic fire came one year after the Great Plague of London of 1665 officially killed 68,595 but the real figure may have been much higher.

3 September 2023. New Zealand declared war on Germany on this day in 1939. The same day as Britain, France and Australia. The seriously ill Prime Minister Michael Joseph Savage said, "Both with gratitude for the past and confidence in the future, we range ourselves without fear beside Britain, where she goes, we go, where she stands, we stand, we are only a small and young nation, but we are one and all a band of brothers with union in our hearts, and wills to a common destiny." Savage died six months later, on 27 March 1940, it was Peter Fraser who let the Government for the rest of the Second World War

5 September 2023. The Munich Massacre was carried out on this day in 1972 during the Summer Olympic Games in Munich, West Germany, by eight members of the Palestinian militant organization, Black September, who infiltrated the Olympic Village Killing two members of the Israeli Olympic team and took nine others hostage. Their leader demonstrated the release of 234 Palestinian prisoners. West German police ambushed the terrorists killing five of the eight, but the Israeli Nine were killed.

5 September 2023. Darryl Zanuck, American film producer was born this day in 1902. He played a major role the Hollywood studio system. He is best remembered for producing the *Jazz Singer*, the first 'Talkie'. It was the death of the silent film era. Al Jolson was the main star and he sung the famous songs *My Mammy* and the Irvine Berlin song *Blue Skies*.

7 September 2023. On this day in 1986 Bishop Desmond Tutu was installed as Archbishop of Cape Town, the Primate of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa. He was the first black African to hold that post. He is known for his work in anti-apartheid and as a human rights activist. When Nelson Mandela became President of South Africa, he asked the Archbishop to chair the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. He championed Gay Rights, he spoke out on a wide range of subjects and criticized Presidents Thabo Mbeki and Joseph Zuma. He won the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize. His books include *No Future Without Forgiveness*, *The Rainbow People of God*, *God Has a Dream: A Vision of Hope for Our Time*. He Co-authored a smash hit with The Dalai Lama: *The Book of Joy: lasting Happiness in a Changing World*.

7 September 2023. On this day in 1822 Brazil achieved its Independence from the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarves. It is a National Public Holiday. In Brasilia, the National Celebration takes place on the Ministries Esplanade with a Civil and military parade in the presence of the President of Brazil who is the Commander on Chief of the Armed Forces. This main parade is gigantic. Similar military and civil parades are held in State capitals.

7 September 2023. On this day in 439, St Isaac The Great died. His is also known as Isaac the Armenian. After the death of his wife, he became Catholicos (Spiritual Lead) of the Armenian Apostolic Church, which had the oldest Cathedral Church in the world/ The Etchmaidzic Cathedral was completed in 303AD. Isaac began the development of the Armenian alphabet and directed a group of scholars to translate the Greek and Syriac Bibles into Armenian.

8 September 2023. On this day in 2022 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II died at Balmoral Castle, Scotland, Queen of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and her other Realms and Territories. At the moment of her death, her heir became King Charles III.

Her other children are Andrew Duke of York, Anne Princess Royal and Edward Earl of Essex. She was the longest serving monarch in history, which began with Athelstan, First King of the English in 894. Edward has just been elevated, by his father, to his promised role of Duke of Edinburgh.

9 September 2023. On this day in 1776 the name United States of America became official. The second Congress adopted the new name from what had been The United Colonies.

11 September 2023. On this day in 2001 there were four coordinated Islamic suicide terrorist attacks by 19 people against the United States. It is commonly called 9/11. They crashed the first two planes into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City. A third plane smashed into the Pentagon in Arlington County, Virginia. The fourth crashed into a field as the passengers overwhelmed the hijackers. There were 2,996 deaths and at least 6,000 injured.

12 September 2023. This day is the New Year of the Coptic Orthodox Church. It is a day when Martyrs and Confessors are commemorated, on the first day of the month of Trout. It is also called 'the crown of the year.'

12 September 2023 Jesse Owens, American athlete was born on this day in 1913. At the 1936 Summer Olympics Games in Berlin, he won four gold medals, in 100m, 200m, long jump and 4x 100m relay. He was credited, as a black American man, with single-handedly crushing Hitler's myth of Aryan Supremacy.

13 September 2023. On this day in 1933 Elizabeth McCombs was the first woman to be elected to the New Zealand House of Representatives. She was Labour Member for Lyttleton. She became interested in socialism as her elder sisters were members of the Progressive Liberal Association. She was also closely involved in the Women's' Christian Temperance Union run by the suffragist Kate Shepherd, whose image is on the New Zealand \$10 banknote. Elizabeth's husband James McCombs was the MP for Lyttleton. He died in office and Elizabeth stood for the by election and won. She was succeeded by her son Sir Terrance McCombs MSc(Hons) Chemistry. Not only was he MP for Lyttleton, but he was also the first Headmaster of Cashmore High School and the High Commissioner for New Zealand to the United Kingdom. The first woman to be elected to any office in New Zealand was Elizabeth Yates who was elected Mayor of the Borough of Onehunga, Auckland in 1894. She was the first female Mayor in the British Empire.

14 September 2023. On this day in 1741 George Frederic Handel completed his famous oratorio, *Messiah*. It is one of the most frequently performed choral works in Western music.

14 September 2023. St John Chrysostom died this day in 407. His name means 'golden-mouthed' and denotes his celebrated eloquence. He said: "Happiness can only be achieved by looking inward and learning to enjoy whatever life has and this requires transforming greed into gratitude." And again: "If you cannot find Christ in the beggar at the Church door you will not find him in the Chalice." He is an important early Church and Bishop of Constantinople. He denounced abuse by authority, both Church and civil. He refused to host

lavish social gatherings as befitting his high office then, Bishop of Constantinople was the highest office in the Eastern Church. (As the Pope is the highest office in the Western Church). As well as being loved by the poor he not at all loved by the wealthy and powerful. Also he reformed the clergy, telling priests to get back to their local communities who they were supposed to be serving. Many of these writings, including some sermons, seem surprisingly modern even today.

14 September 2023. On this day in 1927 in Nice, France, the celebrated ballet dancer, Isadora Duncan was killed in a freak accident, as a long scarf she was wearing became caught in a wheel of the open car in which she was travelling and strangled her.

14 September 2023. Princess Grace of Monaco died this day in 1982 after her car plunged off a mountain road in Monte Carlo. His daughter Princess Stephanie survived. The Hollywood actress met Prince Ranier III during the filming of the Alfred Hitchcock film *To Catch a Thief*. She gave up her career and married the Prince in 1956.

15 September 2023. Jean Batten, aviatrix, was born this day in 1909 in Rotorua, New Zealand. She went to England to learn to fly. She is noted for achieving the first solo flight from England to New Zealand in 1936. This is a record that would stand for 44 years. Earlier in 1934, she had flown from England to Australia in 15 days in a Gypsy Moth biplane. After touring around Australia and New Zealand she flew the Gypsy Moth back to England. She flew across the South Atlantic to Brazil, the first woman to do so. Her awards include Commander of the British Empire, Chevalier de la Legion d'honneur (France), Order of the Southern Cross (Brazil). There is a bronze statue of her at Auckland International Airport. Jean Battern School is at Mangere East, Auckland.

15 September 2023. On this day in 1890 Agatha Christie, novelist, short story writer, poet and memoirist was born in Torquay, Devon, England. She wrote 66 detective novels and 14 short story collections particularly those round her famous detective creations, Belgium, Hercules Poirot and the very English elderly lady, Miss Marple of St Mary Mead. Her play *The Mousetrap* is the longest running West End play of all time. It is a murder mystery. It began in 1952 and is still going. Many of her novels and short stories have been adapted for television, radio, video games and graphic novels. 30 feature films have been based on her work. Perhaps the most famous adaptation is the best known film *Murder on the Orient Express*. According to UNESCO's Index Translatonum she remains the most translated individual author. She is also the best-selling fiction writer of all time. Her novels have sold more than two billion copies. In the 1971 New Year Honours she was created Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire, DBE. She said of herself: "My chief dislikes are crowds, loud noises, gramophones and cinemas. I dislike the taste of alcohol and do not like smoking. I *do* like sun, sea, flowers, traveling, strange foods, sports, concerts, theatre, pianos and doing embroidery." She was a devout member of the Church of England.

15 September 2023/1 Tisheri 5787 Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year begins this day at sunset. It is the first of the High Holy Days. It is celebrated with prayer, festival meals and joyful playing of the shofar, an ancient musical instrument made from a ram's horn. Like the

modern bugle it have not pitch-control devices, all pitch control on the shofar and the bugle is done by the player.

16 September 2023. On this day in 1810 an event took place that led to Mexico celebrating its Independence this day. Spain had ruled Mexico with an iron fist for 300 years. In the town of Delores the local Catholic Priest, Father Miguel Hidago rang his Church bell and delivered a speech now known as the El Grito de Dolores (The Cry of Delores). It demanded the end of the Spanish rule. That started the war of Independence. Mexico won. Now on the eve of Independence Day the President of Mexico rings Father Miguel's bell and recites the El Grito de Delores before a crowd of 500,000 and a television audience of millions. The day itself is filled with fiesta, colourful paraded mariachi concerts and plenty of food.

19 September 2023. On this day in 1893, the Governor of New Zealand, Lord Glasgow signed a new Electoral Act into Law. As a result of this landmark legislation New Zealand became the first self-governing nation in the world to give women the right to vote in parliamentary elections. New Zealand's leadership in this gave the country an image of trail-blazing social laboratory.

21 September 2023. On this day in 1937 JRR Tolkien's children's fantasy novel, *The Hobbit, or There and Back* was first published by George Allen and Unwin (London). It has become a classic of children's literature and has gone on to be one of the bestselling books of all time, with over 100 million copies sold.

21 September 2023. On this day in 1906 at a meeting in Wellington, Marianna Tasker and supporters established a domestic workers union hoping to use the Liberal Government's Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act to force improvements to improve pay and conditions. Central to their demands were a 68 hour week. From 1880 to the 1930s domestic service was the single largest form of paid work for women. They worked in 15,000 New Zealand homes for low wages and 16 hour days for 6 and a half days per week. The union came to nothing. So much for New Zealand's "social laboratory."

23 September 2023. On this day in 1862 Otto von Bismark was appointed Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Prussia by King Willheim I. Bismark went on to unify most German states into a powerful German Empire. He became the first Chancellor of the United Germany.

23 September 2023. On this day in 1887 Ngati Tuharetoa saw the heart of the mountainous area of the three volcanic area of the central North Island as sacrosanct. They wanted to preserve it for all iwi and all New Zealanders. Their farsight led to the establishment of the Tongariro National Park, the first in New Zealand and the fourth in the world. As well as the three volcanic cones there are forest trails, waterfalls and diverse ecosystems. In 1993 it was the first place to be inscribed under the UNESCO world Heritage list for cultural landscapes.

24 September 2023/ 10 Tishrei 5787 Yom Kippur, The Day of Atonement begins at sunset on this day. It is the holiest day in Judaism, the second High Holy Day, there is fasting, ascetic behaviour, prayer and sin confessions.



24 September 2023. F Scott Fitzgerald, American novelist was born this day in 1896. He is best known for his novels depicting the excesses of the jazz age, his most successful novels were *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender in the Night*. It is a novella, *The Diamond as Big as the Ritz* is wonderful and disturbing at the same time, it first appeared in *The Smart Set* magazine in 1922.

28 September 2023. On this day in 1066 William Duke of Normandy landed in England at Pevensey, Sussex with well upward of 7,000 men. Harold Godwinson was Anglo-Saxon King of England. At the Battle of Stamford Bridge Harold's army defected the invading forces led by the Norwegian King, Harald Hardrada. That King was killed, so the battle was over. The Norwegian Crown Prince was allowed to leave and sail back to Norway to become the new King. Harold forced marched south. It is unclear how he learnt of William's invasion but having seen off one invasion he was ready for another. At the Battle of Hastings Harold was killed and after some Anglo-Saxon hold-outs were dealt to, William, who became known as William the Conqueror and was Crowned on Christmas Day 1066 in Westminster Abbey. William was Crowned King of England by Aldred, Archbishop of York, according to the ancient English rite. English speaking Anglo-Saxons and French speaking Normans together shouted their approval.

29 September 2023/15 Tiseri 5787 Sukkot, the Feast of Booths is a Jewish holiday lasting seven days. This day is the first day this year. The days originate from the Book of Leviticus in which G-d instructs Moses: "You shall live in booths seven days." Today adherents celebrate by building temporary dwellings or sukkahs from wood, canvas or aluminium and praying inside them. The holy week also commemorates the flimsy dwellings that the Israelites were forced to live in during their 40 years in the wilderness following their exodus from Egypt.

29 September 2023. On this day in 1829 British 'Bobbies' made their first appearance. The Greater London Metropolitan Police Force was established by an Act of Parliament at the request of Sir Robert Peel after whom they were nicknamed. The 'Met' later became known as 'Scotland Yard'. The site of their first headquarters. They serve the Greater London's 32 boroughs. The square mile of the city of London is served by the City of London Police. The underground and the National Rail Network is the responsibility of the British Transport Police.

30 September 2023. On this day in 1938 the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom returned to Heston Aerodrome from the Munich Agreement with a piece of paper signed by Adolf Hitler and himself and others concerning no more war. He had to go to Buckingham Palace to report to the King and then to Downing Street. There was a huge crowd. He spoke to them from an upstairs window. He was urged to say 'Peace in our time'. He refused saying "I don't do that sort of thing" he did agree to quote his predecessor Benjamin Destalei upon his return from the Congress of Berlin. "My good friends, this is the second time I come to Downing Street peace with honour, I believe it is peace for our time..." Chamberlain did not know the depth of Hitler's perfidy, Churchill did. Chamberlain decided to stand for the House of Commons and in 1919 he was elected for the Birmingham Ladywood he did some good work as a backbencher and as a Minister, he was a humane

and hard working man. He saw his appointment as Prime Minister as a final glory for a career of domestic reform. When he told the House "Everything I have worked for has crashed into ruins", he resigned yielding to Winston Churchill. He died in 1940.

## October

1 October 2023. Nigeria Independence Day is a national holiday. It marks the independence from Britain on 1 October 1960. The Union Flag came down and the new green, white, green flag was raised at midnight. Each year the President gives an address that is broadcast over the radio and television. There is an annual civil-military parade in Eagle Square, the main square of Abuja, the capital of the federal Republic of Nigeria. The event is brought to a close with a 21-gun salute. Other countries celebrating Independence on this day are: PRChina, Cyprus, Guinea, Palau and Tuvalu.

2 October 2023. The siege of Jerusalem ended this day in 1187 when Sultan Saladin of Egypt and Syria took the city with very little bloodshed. He restored Muslim holy sites, he allowed Orthodox and Eastern Christians free movement but Franks, Catholics, had to pay a fee. The control of Christian affairs he handed over to the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople.

2 October 2023. On this day in 1908 Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* was published by Warne and Co, London.

2 October 2023. On this day in 1869 Mohandas Ghandhi was born. He was an Indian lawyer, anti-colonial nationalist and political ethicist. He applied non-violent resistance to lead a successful campaign for India's independence from British rule. The honorific Mahatma (Sanskrit for Great Soul) is how he is now remembered. He was raised in a Hindu family in coastal Gujarat and trained in law at the Inner Temple, London and called to the bar at age 22 in June 1891. He knew England well and knew how the game was played. He has been an inspiration around the world to non-violent resisters.

3 October 2023. St Francis of Assisi died this day in 1228. He was baptised Giovanni but his father, a wealthy merchant, took to calling him Francesco. He led the life of a wealthy man who was handsome, witty, gallant and fancied fine clothes. It was a beggar asking for alms that started Francis on a new path. He renounced his patrimony, became a Catholic friar and led a life of poverty as an itinerant preacher. He founded the men's Order of Friars Minor, the Franciscans, in 1209. He also founded the women's Order of St Clare (the Poor Clares), a Contemplative Order of Nuns. The Third Order, also founded by Francis, is for lay men and women who try to emulate the way of St Francis. Francis was canonised by Pope Gregory IX in 1228. Franciscans to this day wear the same brown habit Francis wore. Pope Francis, when he took the papal name Francis made it clear that he was taking an option for the poor. So it was Francis of Assisi who inspired him, not Francis Xavier, who was the founder of his own Jesuit Order.

6 October 2023. On this day in 1889 Thomas Edison played his first motion film, He realised that if a camera took a quick succession of images they could be projected to appear as if

they were moving. He depended on George Eastman's invention of celluloid film before his demonstration was possible. The motion picture industry was born.

6 October 2023. On this day in 1917 Canadian troops of the 27<sup>th</sup> (City of Winnipeg) Battalion took the ruined village of Passchendaele. There were shocking losses in the Battle of Passchendaele. There were 300,000 British Empire casualties, including 843 New Zealanders. The Germans lost 260,000 men.

7 October 2023. On this day in 1884 Niels Bohr, Danish physicist was born, He made foundation contributions to atomic structure and quantum theory and was awarded the Noble Prize for Physics in 1922. He was also a philosopher. During the 1930s he helped refugees from Nazism. When the Germans overran Denmark he fled to Britain. He predicted the existence of the metal Hafnium (Latin for Copenhagen). He also discovered an element that was named for him, Bohrium.

7 October 2023. On this day in 1571 The Battle of Lepanto was joined, between the Holy League and the Ottoman Empire. The Holy League was arranged by Pope Pius V. The main players were the Spanish Empire who largely bankrolled it and the Republic of Venice who provided most of the ships. In the history of naval warfare this marks the last great battle fought by rowing vessels. There were 400 war ships. The Holy League won. That is of great importance to the history of Europe. It would be the turning point of the Ottoman expansion into the Mediterranean. G.K. Chesterton's poem *Lepanto* has alliterative like this: "Dim drums throbbing in the hills half heard" and "Strong gongs groaning as the guns boom far".

7 October 2023. On this day in 1769 the outline of New Zealand was first sighted by a small boy in the masthead of James Cook's *Endeavour* who called "Land Ahoy!" Sir Joseph Banks reported: "At half-past one a small boy called out Land. I was luckily upon deck and well I was entertained. Within a few minutes the cry circulated and up come all hands... at sunset, myself at the masthead... Land appeared to be like an island or islands but seemed to be large." The boy was described as Nicholas Young, Cook later referred to the sighting as 'Young Nick's Head'. Cook landed at Poverty Bay. He used that name, which persists to this day, as he was unable to get many of the provisions his crew needed. He found all the provisions he needed at the Bay of Plenty, which he also named.

8 October 2023. On this day in 1200 the 12-year-old Isabella of Angouleme was crowned Queen of England as wife to King John. It was an elaborate ceremony in Westminster Abbey. John was besotted with his beautiful blonde-haired, blue-eyed, child bride. She gave birth to the future King Henry III of England, then she gave birth to Richard and three daughters, Joan, Isabella, and Elenor. John died in 1216. As his crown was lost, she provided a golden circlet for the coronation of her 9-year-old son. As the Queen Dowager she would have been given a pension of 3,000 pounds per year, an enormous amount at the time. Instead she left her son in the care of his regent William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, she flouted tradition and left for France. She married Hugh of Lusignan, Count of La Mancha. Isabella had nine more children by Hugh.

10 October 2023. John Wesley Hyatt invented a composite material which he called nitrocellulose and on this day in 1865 he patented the first composite billiard ball. Earlier balls had to be made from elephant ivory.

10 October 2023. On this day in 1935 George Gershwin's opera *Porgy and Bess* premiered on Broadway.

12 October 2023. On this day in 539 BC Cyrus the Great of Persia captured the New Babylonian Empire. He returned the Israelites to the Land of Israel. He is the only non-Jew to be honoured in the Book of Isaiah. Cyrus is recognised for his achievements in human rights, politics and military strategy. He had influenced both Eastern and Western civilisation.

12 October 2023. On this day in 1935 Luciano Pavarotti was born in Modena, Italy. He became one of the most acclaimed tenors of all time, with the nickname "King of the high Cs". He had sold over one million records. Along with Placido Domingo and Jose Carreras they performed as the Three Tenors at the 1990 FIFA World Cup. He performed *Nessun Dorma* at the 2006 Winter Olympic Games in Turin. Pavarotti was at his best in bel canto operas. He was also noted for his charity work with refugees and the Red Cross. He died of pancreatic cancer in 2007.

13 October 2023. On this day in 1847 Greenwich Mean Time was established. It is the mean solar time at the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, London. The 0 line of longitude passes through here.

13 October 2023. Field Marshall Erwin Rommel, The Desert Fox died this day in 1944. He led the German and Italian forces in the North African Campaign. He was highly regarded by his troops. Among his British and Empire troops he had a reputation for chivalry and his phrase "war without hate" has been used to describe the whole North African Campaign. Rommel was implicated in the 20 July plot to kill Hitler. Rommel was given the chance of committing suicide and have his reputation or disgrace and execution. He took a cyanide pill and was given a state funeral. The largest base of the modern German Army named the Field Marshall Rommel Barracks Augustdorf.

14 October 2023. On this day in 1892 Arthur Conon Doyle published *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. They are a collection of 12 short stories that first appeared in *The Strand Magazine*, in 12 issues. The first was called *A scandal in Bohemia*. They were told in first-person narrative from Dr Watson's point of view.

14 October 2023. On this day in 1893 Lillian Gish was born. She was an American actress. Known as The First Lady of American Cinema. Her career spanned 75 years from 1910. She had the leading role in the highest grossing film of the silent age; *The Birth of a Nation* (1915). She pioneered fundamental film performance techniques. At the beginning of the sound era, she returned to the stage, where she was accomplished and was inducted into the American Theatre Hall of Fame in 1972. The previous year she was awarded an Academy Honorary Award for her career achievements. She did television work into the 1980s. Her last film was with Bettie Davis; *The Whales of August* (1987). She died in February 1993.

15 October 2023. Catherine de' Medici, was, among many things, a patron of the arts and on this day in 1581 she Commissioned the world's first ballet, *Ballet Comique de la Reine*, which was staged in Paris.

15 October 2023. On this day in 1761 Edward Gibbon observed a group of friars singing Vespers in the ruined Temple of Jupiter, and it gave him an idea to write a history of Rome's decline as a great empire. He had had several works published. After a long struggle his life's major achievement; *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* in six weighty volumes. Adam Smith told Gibbon, "that by the universal assent of every man of taste and learning... it sets you at the very head of the whole literary tribe at present existing in Europe."

16 October 2023. On this day in 1813 the four-day Battle of Leipzig began, it was the largest battle prior to World War One. Napoleon's forces were defeated by Prussia, Austria, Russia and Sweden.

16 October 2023. In 1950, the first book of the *Narnia* series, *The Lion, Witch and the Wardrobe*, by CS Lewis was published on this day by Geoffrey Bliss (London).

19 October 2023. On this day in 1867 the United States purchased the large and sparsely populated territory of Alaska from Russia for \$7.2 million. Many Americans saw it as a waste of taxpayers' money.

19 October 2023. On this day two significant books were published in London. In 1847 Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* first appeared and in 1851, Herman Melville's *The Whale* when it was published in his native USA it was called *Moby Dick*.

19 October 2023. On this day in 1968 at the Summer Olympic Games in Mexico City, New Zealand won the Rowing Coxed 4 from the savoured East Germans. It was New Zealand's first Olympic Gold Medal in Rowing.

19 October 2023. On this day in 1974 Niue became self-governing in free association with New Zealand. It remains part of the Realm of New Zealand and we share the same currency and Governor General.

20 October 2023. On this day in 1964 Queen Elizabeth II opened the Sydney Opera House.

21 October 2023. On this day in 1964 at the Tokyo Summer Olympic Games Abele Bikila of Ethiopia ran a world record to win the men's marathon in 2:12:11.2. He ran barefoot.

21 October 2023. On this day in 1966 a catastrophic collapse of the colliery spoil above the village of Aberfan, Glenmorgan, Wales. The main building hit was the local junior school, 109 children and five teachers were killed.

21 October 2023. On this day in 1805 the Battle of Trafalgar took place. Napoleon commanded French and Spanish ships that outnumbered Nelson's English fleet. HMS Victory hoisted the famous signal "England Expects Every Man Will Do His Duty." Nelson

pierced the enemy lines, a masterly piece of seamanship. At the time of his greatest victory, Horatio Nelson died of his wounds. The poignancy of that victory resonates in England to this day.

22 October 2023. On this day in 1877 in Blantyre, Scotland there was a mining disaster in which 207 miners died. The youngest was a boy of 11. The accident left 92 widows and 250 fatherless children. They lived in tied cottages owned by the mining company. They were evicted.

22 October 2023. On this day in 1893 the world's first car dealership opened in London. It was a revolutionary idea for it meant that people no longer had to travel to a manufacture in person to inquire about buying a motor car.

23 October 2023. On this day in 1958 the Nobel Prize for Literature was awarded to Boris Pasternak "for his important achievement both in contemporary lyrical poetry and in the field of the great Russian epic tradition." He first accepted the award but was forced by the Soviet government to decline the Prize. In 1989 his son Yevgeny accepted the award on behalf of his father.

24 October 2023. On this day in 1649 The Peace of Wesphalia was signed. These two treaties ended the Thirty-Year War and bought Peace to the Holy Roman Empire closing a calamitous period of European history which killed around eight million people. It created a framework for modern international relations, the concepts of state sovereignty, mediation among nations and diplomacy all find their origins in the Peace.

24 October 2023. On this day in 1932 Gangster Al Capone was sentenced to eleven years in prison for tax evasion. He had committed many crimes including the murder of seven members of the rival North Side Gang by Capone's Chicago Outfit in the St. Valentine's Day massacre, but it took the Tax Man to get him.

24 October 2023. On this day in 1917 Albert Einstein wrote his Theory of Happiness' note to a bellboy instead of a tip. The note read: 'A calm and modest life brings more happiness than the pursuit of success combined with constant restlessness.' He told the boy to hang onto the note as it might be valuable someday. In 2017 it sold for \$1.56 million dollars.

25 October 2023. This day is the Feast day of the brothers Crispin and Crispinian who died in 268. They preached Christianity to the Gauls, this attracted the vexation of Rictus Varus who had them killed. In Shakespeare's Henry V there is a take on the speech on the eve of the Battle of Agincourt:

"That he has no stomach for the fight

Let him depart, his passport shall be made...

We would not die in that man's company...

This day is called the feast of Crispin

He that outlives that day and comes safe home will stand on tip-toe when this day is nam'd and to use him at the name of Crispin...

We few, we happy few, we band of brothers

For today who shed his blood with me shall be my brother...

Against all odds, the English won.

27 October 2023. On this day in 1930 Gladys May West (Nee Brown) was born in Sutherland, Virginia. As a girl she was from a sharecropper family, and she worked long hours in the fields. As an Afro-American child she realised that the way out of poverty was education. She did rather well, she finished high school as one of the two top scholars. This gave her a Scholarship to Virginia State College, she had done well in all her subjects, but she chose mathematics because it was hard. She graduated and finished a PHD. Dr West worked on developing a mathematical model on the shape of the Earth. This led to her work on Satellite geodesy. She then developed the computational techniques for others to develop the Global Positioning System, GPS. Gladys May West has been inducted into the US Air Force Hall of Fame.

28 October 2023. On this day in 1726 Jonathan Swift, Anglo-Irish writer and clergyman published his satirical work known as *Gulliver's Travels*, full title: *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World by Lemuel Gulliver First Surgeon and then Captain of Several Ships*. It was an unmitigated success. It was regarded as a satirical masterpiece.

31 October 2023. This day is All Hallows Eve. Hallow means holy or consecrated, as in the Lord's Prayer "Hallowed be thy Name..." Halloween has its roots in the pagan Gaelic festival of Samhain. Halloween was celebrated in Gaelic Britain for centuries before it was taken to North America and became a secular celebration of dressing up and going trick-or-treating. It is children who do this so it is always a treat.

## **November**

1 November 2023. This day is the feast of All Saints or All Hallows. It is a day for remembering all canonised saints. There are 23 named saints for this day. They include the nineteenth century Spanish Dominican Priest St Valentine Berrío-Ochoa, who was sent to Vietnam as a missionary where he was tortured and beheaded. He was canonised in 1988 by Pope John Paul II. St Mary the Slave was a fourth century slave to Tertullus a Roman patrician. The local Prefect took her to be tortured. Spectators demanded her release. Tertullus tried to save her, but she was handed over to the custody of a soldier who aided her escape. She died a natural death, but because of the intensity of her suffering she is venerated as a martyr and was canonised by pre-Congregation, probably by a local bishop.

1 November 2023. On this day in 1922 Mehmed VI, the last Sultan of the Ottoman Empire left his palace in Constantinople, saluted by uniformed military men. He went into exile. He was clever and preceptive, but his time had run out. He boarded a British warship and fled to Malta. The birth of modern Turkey began the next year on 29 October 2023 with Mustafa Kamel Attaturk as its first President.

2 November 2023. On this day in 1930 Ras ('Duke') Tafari Makonnen was crowned Emperor of Ethiopia and took the regnal name Haile Selassie, that name means 'Power of the Trinity'. He was of the Solomonic Dynasty. He attempted to modernise the country through a series of political and social reforms. He was a devout follower of the tenets and liturgy of

the Epiopian Orthodox Church. He had an internationalist outlook which led Ethiopia to become a Charter member of the United Nations and in 1963 he presided over the formation of the Organisation of African Unity. He introduced the 1931 constitution, the first written constitution. He abolished slavery. During the Italian Occupation, he went into exile in England. In 1947 he was overthrown by a Marxist – Leninist junta and he was assassinated. He is buried in the Holy Trinity Cathedral, Addis Ababa. Rastafari is a religion developed in Jamaica during the 1930s, there is a belief in a single God, Jah, Many regards Haile Selassie as the second coming of Jesus. There are several denominations in the Mansions of Rastafari. It is largely influenced by Judeo-Christianity are Africa is Zion and Rastas living in the west are “Exiles in Babylon”.

4 November 2023. On this day in 1918 New Zealand troops captured the walled northern French town of Le Quesnoy it was a bold feat of arms. German troops held the town. The 4<sup>th</sup> Rifle Battalion placed a ladder against the wall and Second Lieutenant Leslie Averill was first up. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Rifle Battalion went in through the Valenciennes Gate and the German Garrison surrender. There were nearly 2000 prisoners and 60 field guns captured. There is a painting, by George Edmund Butler, of the ladder, Leslie Averill above and troops below, called *Capture of the Walls of Le Quesnoy*.

4 November 2023. On this day in 1819 Hongi Heka and Rewa sold 13,000 acres at Kerikeri to the Church Missionary Society for 48 felling axes.

5 November 2023. On this day in 1881 about 1600 troops invaded the Taranaki Settlement of Parihaka which had come to symbolise peaceful resistance to the confiscation of Māori land. The main leaders were Tohu Kakahi and Te Whiti-O-Rongomai. When in May 1897 the Government moved to occupy the fertile Waimate Plains. It had been declared confiscated in the 1860s. Ploughmen from Parihaka were fanned out to assert Māori ownership. Several hundred ploughmen were imprisoned without trial. When the troops arrived several thousand Māori sat quietly on the marae as signing children greeted the force led by Native Minister John Bryce who ordered the arrest of the leader, the destruction of much of the village and the dispersal of most of its inhabitants.

5 November 2023. The Gunpowder Plot had been devised by a group of provincial Catholics led by Robert Catesby. They planned to assassinate King James I and set up a Catholic Monarchy. The plan was to blow up the house of Lords this day in 1605. There were a dozen conspirators, including Guy Fawkes who was put in charge of 36 barrels of gunpowder. He had 10 years of military experience fighting in the Spanish Netherlands. The Plot was exposed, Fawkes was broken on the rack and confessed. Eight of the conspirators were caught and sentenced to be hanged drawn and quartered. Fawkes despite being weakened by torture, jumped from the scaffold, and broke his neck, thereby avoiding being taken to the quartering block. There is a nursery rhyme called *Remember, Remember, the 5<sup>th</sup> of November*. A British tradition of Bonfire Night is held on 5 November and fireworks are let off in some Commonwealth Realms. There are many paintings of the event. A modern one called *Bonfire Night* by Frederick Johnson (1975) hangs at Chederit School, Banbury, Oxfordshire. A fine painting by Charles Gauguin (c. 1870) called *Guy Fawkes* hangs in the York Art Gallery.



7 November 2023. On this day in 1888 Chandrasekhare Raman was born. He was an Indian physicist. Using a spectrograph that he had developed, he discovered that when light traversed a transparent material that deflected light changes its wavelength and frequency. This phenomenon was a hitherto unknown property of light scattering called the Raman Effect. He received the 1930 Nobel Prize in Physics, the first Indian Nobel laureate in any science. He was knighted in 1930 and received the Lenin Peace Prize in 1957. In 1948 he established the Raman Research Institute. He was Professor of Physics at the University of Calcutta as early as 1913. He also made a major contribution to acoustic. He worked out of theory of transferred vibration of bowed string instruments. He also worked out of the harmonic nature of the sounds of the tabla, the first scientific study of Indian percussion. He went on to do work on quantum mechanics and found out why the sea is blue. Raman Spectroscopy for planetary rover-based exploration is a primary tool for investigating *in situ* geological materials. NASA has sent two Raman spectrographs on the 2020 Perseverance rover to Mars. He said "Ask the right questions and nature will open the door to her secrets". CV Raman asked the right questions.

8 November 2023. On this day in 1895 German Physicist Wilhelm Rontgen produced and detected electromagnetic rays of a wavelength today known as x-rays. He received the Nobel Prize for physics in 1901.

8 November 2023. On this day in 1974 British peer the Earl of Lucan disappeared and was never seen again. His nanny was found dead in London.

8 November 2023. On this day in 1860 Abraham Lincoln was elected President of the United States of America. In 1861 on this day Jefferson Davis was elected President of the Confederate States of America. He was the first and only.

8 November 2023. On this day in 1991 Boris Yeltsin, President of Russia outlawed the Communist Party.

9 November 2023. On this day in 1807 the Cullinan Diamond in its rough form was the largest diamond ever discovered and weighed 3,106 Carat discovered at the Premier No 2 mine in Cullinan, South Africa. Is also called 'The Star of Africa' Nine numbered diamonds were cut from it. 97 small stones and some fragments were also created. The numbered stones all found their way into the Royal Collection, the largest of them was presented to King Edward VII on his 66<sup>th</sup> birthday. Two are in the Crown Jewels.

10 November 2023. On this day in 1871 in Ujiji, near Lake Tanganyika, Henry Morton Stanley encountered David Livingstone with the immortal words: "Dr Livingstone, I presume?"

11 November 2023. Feast of St Martin of Tours. He was born in 316 in Pannonia, now part of Hungary. He was baptised at 18 years of age, rejecting his parents' Roman religion. His father was a senior officer (Tribune) in the Roman army and Martin at the age 15 took the Military Oath and began his life as a soldier. He was posted to Amiens in France. Martin rode through the city gate and an almost naked beggar huddle against the stonework on a winter's night. Martin cut his cloak in two with his sword and gave half to the beggar. That

night, in a dream, Christ, in the form of the beggar, came to him to thank him. He managed to get himself out of the army and got baptised. There is an important painting called *St Martin and the Beggar*, by El Greco, it hangs in the National Art Gallery, Washington DC. Martin became a recluse on an Island near Milan where he founded a monastery for the disciples who came to him. When the bishop of Tours, France died, Martin had so charmed people by his demeanour, they tricked him to Tours and he was unable to resist them and became Bishop of Tours. He lived a simple life, rejecting the offer of a palace. On this day in 397 he was buried in the cemetery of the Poor in Tours. St Martin-in-the-Fields is a Church of England parish church in Trafalgar Square London. When it was built it was in the fields between London and Westminster. During the First World War its doors never closed so soldiers on their way to France could pray there. Its doors remain open. It is regarded as the 'Nations Parish Church'. The vicar during the 2020s, Dr Sam Wells is very known to BBC Radio 4 listeners. The Church's annual appeal raises 2 million pounds for charitable work all over the UK. They serve many hundreds of homeless people. Its architecture is beautiful, and its music is sublime. People buried in St Martin-in-the-Fields include: physicist Robert Boyle, Nell Gwyn, escaped and hanged prisoner Jack Shepherd and furniture maker Thomas Chippendale.

12 November 2023. Diwali, the Festival of Light, begins this date this year. It is one of the most important festivals in Indian religions. It symbolises the spiritual victory of light over darkness, good over evil and knowledge over ignorance. It is a post-harvest festival and it is celebrated by Hindus, Jains and Sikhs. It is a homecoming and a bonding with families but also in temples and workplaces. There are parades and fairs, music, dancing, and performances in parks. It is a time for sending greeting card and giving boxes of Indian confectionery. The main day is an official holiday in a dozen countries where there is a large Indian diaspora.

14 November 2023. On this day in 1687 Nell Gwyn died. She was praised by Samuel Pepys as "pretty, witty, Nell" she was a comic performer and one of the first actresses on the England stage. She became best known as the long-term mistress to King Charles II of England. She was the very embodiment of Restoration England after the long winter of Cromwellian rule. She had two children by Charles, one died young and the other lived to adulthood. Nell blagged a title for him. He became Earl of Burford and then the Duke of St Albans, she was very quick witted and well-liked by the general public. The Duchess of Plymouth was a noted Catholic, though sanctimonious and pharisaical and regarded Nell Gwyn a strumpet. Nell was riding in a carriage and some observers thought she was the Duchess of Plymouth. Nell smiled and said "Dear people you are mistaken. I am the *protestant* whore." Before her death she asked Thomas Tenison, who became Archbishop of Canterbury, to preach a sermon on Luke 15:7 "Just so, I tell you, there will be much joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine who need no repentance." She is buried in the Church of St Martins- in-the-Fields.

15 November 2023. On this day in 1837 Englishman Sir Isaac Pitman introduced his shorthand. He used similar symbols for phonetically related sounds. Shorthand was referred to as phonography in the nineteenth century. As there are thin strokes for 'light' sounds like p and t and thick strokes for 'heavy' sounds like b and d, a pencil is preferred.

15 November 2023. On this day in 1904 King C Gillett patented the Gillett razor blade. A blade that would stay sharp for a few days then would have to be replaced. He founded the Gillette Safety Razor Company. He understood the benefits to business of having a continuous market. His name is interesting. In Commonwealth countries it is illegal to give a child a name that is the same as royal title. There is no such prohibition in the United States of America.

15 November 2023. On this day in 655 the Battle of Windward was contested. The belligerents were King Penda of Mercia, King Aethelhere of East Anglia and some warlords. They fought King Oswie of the Northumbrian Kingdom of Bernicia. The strengths were: Mercia 1,400, East Anglia 800 and Bernicia 800. Pender had had many battle successes but on this day he had many battle-shirkers. Pender and Aethelhere and their warlords were all killed. Merica and East Anglia lost 450 killed and 500 drowned. Bernicia suffered 500 killed. The loss of Pender was the effective demise of Anglo-Saxon paganism. Oswie made monastic endowments to thank God for his victory.

16 November 2023. On this day in 1840 the New Zealand Legislative Council was established. It became the upper House of the General Assembly (Parliament). The Legislative Council was intended to act as a revisiting chamber, scrutinising and amending bills passed by the House of Representatives. The model was the House of Lords of the United Kingdom. By the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the National Government stacked the Council with a "suicide squad". On 1 December 1950, the Council members linked arms, sang the National Anthem and left Parliament for the last time. There have been some attempts to establish a senate, but so far it has come to nothing.

16 November 2023. On this day in 1938 Swiss Chemist Albert Hoffman was the first to synthesize, ingest and learn of the psychedelic effects of lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD). He authored more than 100 scientific articles, and several books including *LSD: My Problem Child*. LSD was misused by the counterculture of the 1960s and became a prohibited substance in many countries.

17 November 2023. On this day in 1588 Elizabeth I of England succeeded to the throne. She was the daughter of King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. When Henry died, Elizabeth's half-Brother, the sickly Edward VI ruled until his death and bequeathed the throne to his cousin, the teenage Lady Jane Gray. Edward's will was set aside, Mary, daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, had Lady Jane Gray executed. Mary, the Catholic Queen had Elizabeth, the Protestant, imprisoned. Mary became Queen on Scotland and Elizabeth Queen of England. Mary visited England, Elizabeth had her imprisoned for nineteen years and then executed. Elizabeth was a very clever girl, she had excellent tutors and could write English and speak French, Dutch, Italian and Spanish. From her teenage years and for the rest of her life, she translated Latin and Greek classical authors into English. She was very skilled in statecraft and she also learnt Welsh, Scottish, Cornish and Irish. She saw off the Spanish Armada, gave a Royal Charter to the East Indian Company. She had dealings with France, Russia, and the Barbara States. Sir Walter Raleigh named Virginia after her. She died on 24 March 1603 and was succeeded by James VI of Scotland and First of England.

17 November 2023. On this day in 1933 The Marx Brothers Film *Duck Shop* was released starring Groucho, Harpo, Chico and in his final film, Zeppo.

18 November 2023. On this day in 1947 a fire engulfed Ballentine's department store in Central Christchurch. It was the deadliest fire in New Zealand history. All customers escaped as did many of the 458 staff. Some were trapped, thirty-eight staff and two auditors perished, and one pregnant staff member jumped to her death. A civic funeral was held, the largest in Christchurch history. Despite the fire and the 2011 earthquake Ballantine's is still trading as a large department store.

19 November 2023. On this day in 1863 President Abraham Lincoln delivered *The Gettysburg Address* during the American Civil War at the dedication of the Soldiers National Cemetery at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The Address is one of the best known speeches, not just in the USA but around the English-speaking world where military personnel have fought and died for freedom.

20 November 2023. On this day in 1888 William Le Grand Bundy registered a patent for his time-recorded clock. It became widespread for workers to use individual named card to clock in and clock out.

20 November 2023. On this day in 1903 Henri Desgrange and George Lefevre developed a cycle race to help publicise their sports newspaper. The Tour de France was born. The first was over six stages and covered 2428km. It has become the foremost road cycle race in the world.

20 November 2023. On this day in 1945 the Nuremberg Trials began. They were held by the Allies against 24 high ranking representatives of Nazi Germany. Between 1939 and 1945 the Nazi regime invaded many countries, killing 27 million people in the Soviet Union alone as well 6 million Jews. The purpose of the trials was to assemble irrefutable evidence of Nazi crimes. Twelve were convicted and sentenced to death, nine were imprisoned and three acquitted.

21 November 2023. On this day in 1620 *Mayflower* dropped anchor near what is now the tip of Cape Cod. It had sailed from England to the unknown New World. There were 102 passengers, many of whom were families. There were about 30 crew. Today they are known as the Pilgrims. There are many paintings of *Mayflower*, a modern one *Mayflower at Sea* is by a Pilgrim descendent, Tom Stropshire, whose description of his work captures what it must have been really like: "... sailing in a wooden ship for 66 days through storms and treacherous sea to an unknown land. The passage was miserable with huge waves constantly crushing against the ship's topside deck. I wanted to capture the frightening immensity, of the Atlantic Ocean; the danger as well as emptiness and loneliness of the open sea". That was not all, five people died at sea. The survivors arrive at Plymouth, Massachusetts in late November, getting on for winter. Coming from England they would have had no idea of the bitter cold of the prolonged sub-zero temperatures of North American winter. 45 of the remaining 97 died in that first winter. Those hardy souls who set off from the British Isles to seek a new life in the US, Canada, South America, Australia and

New Zealand endured hardships that those of us who are their descendants cannot fully comprehend.

21 November 2023. On this day in 2017 Robert Mugabe was forced out of office after 37 years in power in Zimbabwe.

22 November 2023. On this day in 1963 John Fitzgerald Kennedy, the 35<sup>th</sup> President of the United States was assassinated in Dallas, Texas while riding in an open car in a presidential motorcade through Dealey Plaza.

22 November 2023. On this day in 2005 Angela Merkel assumed office as the Chancellor of Germany.

22 November 2023. On this day in 2017 the trial of Ratko Mladic, the 'Butcher of Bosnia' began in The Hague at the International Criminal Court. He was sentenced to life imprisonment for genocide, crimes against humanity, and violation of the laws and customs of war.

23 November 2023. On this day in 1654 French mathematician scientist and religious philosopher Blaise Pascal had a religious experience of such intensity that it changed the rest of his life. His scientific work was important. He laid the foundation for the modern ideas of probability, invented an early calculator, the Pascal is a unit of pressure, named for his ground-breaking work on atmospheric pressure.

25 November 2023. On this day in 1947 New Zealand was the last Dominion to ratify the Statute of Westminster of 1931. It gave Realms of the British Empire complete autonomy to establish relationships with other countries. Canada signed on the first day. Other members who signed were the Union of South Africa, the Irish Free State, the Commonwealth of Australia and the Dominion of Newfoundland. South Africa and Ireland became republics and Newfoundland became a province of the Dominion of Canada in 1948. The Constitution Act of New Zealand 1986 replaced the Statute.

26 November 2023. On this date in 1942 the film *Casablanca*, directed by Michael Curtis and starring Humphry Bogart and Ingrid Bergman premiered at the Hollywood Theatre in New York City. It won the Academy Award for Best Picture in 1943. Famous lines like 'Round up the usual suspects' and 'Here's looking at you kid' have gone into the language.

27 November 2023. On this day in 1895 Swedish Chemist Alfred Nobel established the Nobel Prizes. Nobel had converted his company Bofors, an iron and steel plant into making arms. The Bofors 40mm gun was one of the weapons that came to determine the outcome of the Second World War. Many regarded him as a merchant of death. He was a complex man. His prizes in the field of physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature, peace and economics are the most coveted and prestigious in the world.

28 November 2023. On this day in 1240 Batu Khan's Mongol Army laid siege to Kyiv and began assaulting the city walls with catapults. The city fell eight days later. The city was plundered as most of 50,000 inhabitants were killed. Only 2,000 survived.

29 November 2023. On this day in 1791 the Chatham Islands were sighted by William Broughton who sailed by the group on his way to Tahiti for a rendezvous with Captain George Vancouver, who himself landed on the main island in 1798.

29 November 2023. On this day in 1877 Thomas Edison demonstrated his hand-cranker phonograph for the first time.

29 November 2023. On this day in 1935 Michael Joseph Savage became the first Labour Prime Minister of New Zealand.

30 November 2023. St Andrew's Day. The Feast of Andrew the Apostle. He was born in Bethsaida in Gallilee. His name is not Hebrew or Aramaic, but Greek. Which shows a certain openness of his parents. He was brother of Simon Peter, so his father was Johah. He and Peter were fishermen and they were called by Jesus to be 'fishers of men'. According to the Chronicle of Nestor, an east Slavic document of Kievan Rus claimed that Andrew visited the region. He is the patron saint of Russia, Ukraine and Scotland. Andrew was crucified on an x-shaped cross, a saltair. The flag of Scotland is a white Saltier defacing a blue field, the saltair of St Andrew.

## **December**

1 December 2023. On this day in 1896 the first motion picture was shot in New Zealand, it was made by the photographer WH Bartlet for the entrepreneur Alfred Whitehouse, who had imported the colony's first 'Kinetoscope', a Thomas Edison invention that showed moving images. Bartlet filmed the opening of the Auckland Industrial and Mining Exhibition, including the Newton Brass Band playing and the arrival of the governor with a cavalry escort, and crowds entering the building. The film was screened for the public using a 'Cinematographice' at Bartlet's Queen Street Studio. Musical interludes were provided by another Edison invention, the phonograph.

1 December 2023. On this day in 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama, Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to move to the back of the bus and give up her seat to a white passenger. She became widely known as the 'Mother of the freedom movement.'

1 December 2023. On this day in 1988 Benazir Bhutto was elected Prime Minister of Pakistan, the first female leader of a Muslim country. She had degrees from both Harvard and Oxford. She was later assassinated in Rawalpindi.

2 December 2023. On this day in 1804 General Napoleon Bonaparte was crowned Emperor of the French at the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris in a ceremony officiated by Pope Pius VII.

2 December 2023. On this day in 1697 St Paul's Cathedral, London, designed by Sir Christopher Wren was consecrated for use. The previous cathedral was destroyed in the Great Fire of London.

3 December 2023. On this day in 1506 St Francis Xavier died. He was born in the Kingdom of Navarre. (Now part of Spain). He was a friend of Ignatius of Loyola, they became priests and co-founded the Society of Jesus, known as the Jesuits. Francis became a missionary in Portuguese India in Goa. He was very intelligent and industrious. He built 40 Churches in India. He was in Ceylon (Sri Lanka now), and travelled to Makassar on Celebes (in today's Indonesia). He learnt languages on his journeys. He moved to Japan and was on his way to Ming China when he died on a Chinese Island. His body was returned to Goa where he is buried in the Basilica of Bom Jesus. He was canonised at the same time as Ignatius Loyola, by Pope Gregory XV in 1662.

3 December 2023. On this day in 1689 the first recorded successful separation of conjoined twins, Elizabet and Catherina Meijrin was completed by Swiss surgeon, Johannes Fatio in Basel.

3 December 2023. On this day in 1967 cardiac surgeon Christian Barnard performed the first heart transplant on 54-year-old Louis Washkansky at Groote Schuur Hospital, Cape Town, South Africa.

4 December 2023. On this day in 1791 the English newspaper *The Observer* was first published. It is the oldest Sunday newspaper in the world.

4 December 2023. On this day in 1966 radio station *Radio Hauraki* broadcast its first scheduled transmission from beyond New Zealand's 3-mile territorial limit. The NZBC, a government monopoly had full control of all radio stations. Even the ZB Stations that were commercial had little appeal to young people. The first song played on *Radio Hauraki* was Matt Munroe's *Born Free*. Many other countries had pirate radio stations. In the UK *Radio Caroline* started broadcasting from a ship off the coast of Essex in 1964, in competition with the BBC.

5 December 2023. On this day in 1623 the first copies of William Shakespeare's First Folio, a collection of his plays published, posthumously, in one volume, brought by Edward Dering.

5 December 2023. On this day in 1033, there was a major earthquake in the Jordan Rift Valley. It was where the African and Arabian plates intersect. The part that erupted was a 110km long, from the Dead Sea to the Sea of Galilee. It destroyed multiple cities across the Levant, followed by a tsunami along the Mediterranean Coast. At least 70,000 people were killed.

5 December 2023. On this day in 1578 Sir Francis Drake sailed through the Strait of Magellan, a safe route from the Atlantic to the Pacific. He raided Valparaiso, plundering what he could find, valuable art and church chalices. There was a ship in the harbour full on wine, gold coins and charts of the South American Coast. Drake was brave, he had seen off the Spanish Armada, he had excellent seamanship qualities, and he was a pirate. The looted wine and gold coins would have kept his cut-throat crew happy.

6 December 2023. On this day in 1250 the Mongols led by Batu Khan occupied and destroyed Kyiv after an eight-day siege. Of 50,000 people in the city, only 2000 survived.

6 December 2023. On this day in 1735 the first recorded appendectomy was performed by Claudius Amyand at St George's Hospital, London. The patient was an 11-year-old boy who had swallowed a pin and his appendix became perforated. The boy recovered.

7 December 2023. On this day in 1941 The Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service with 353 aircraft attacked the US Fleet at Pearl Harbour Naval Base, killing 2,403 people and wounding 1,178. There had been no declaration of War. The only ship not raised was the USS Arizona. President Franklin D Roosevelt described 7 December 1941 as "a day that will live in infamy."

7 December 2023. On this day in 1909 Leo Bakeland patented the first thermo-setting plastic, Bakelite, thus sparking the birth of the plastics industry.

7 December 2023. This day is the first day of the eight-day celebration of Hanukkah remembering the victory of the Jews over the Syriac Greeks.

7 December 2023. On this day in 374 St Ambrose of Milan was consecrated Bishop by public acclamation. He had been Roman Governor of Aemillian-Liguria. He left a substantial collection of writings. His preaching, his literary works, in addition to his innovative musical hymnography made him one of the most influential ecclesiastical figures of the fourth century. He has been declared a saint and a Doctor of the Church.

8 December 2023. On this day in 1659 the Mexican town of Ciudad Juraraz, Chihuahua, was founded by Fray Garcia de San Francisco. It has grown to a city. It is across the border from the Texas city of El Paso. They are now connected by the Bridge of the Americas across the Rio Grande/Rio Bravo. There is no toll on this bridge from either end. A huge volume of traffic goes in both directions.

8 December 2023. This day is the Feast of Immaculate Conception, the belief that Mary, the Mother of Jesus was without sin. It is remembered on this day by the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church and on other days by the Byzantine and Alexandrian Rites and by the Ethiopian and Eritrean Orthodox Churches.

8 December 2023. On this day in 1932 the first issue of *The New Zealand Woman's Weekly* was published. It cost three pence (2c). 7,000 copies were printed. The magazine hoped to offer "usefulness, cheerfulness and happiness" to readers in the depth of the Great Depression. It is a miracle that it survived, given the dreadful times.

9 December 2023. On this day in 1884 Levant Richardson patented the first ball-bearing roller skates. This transformed the skates from a novelty item to a mass-production with more speed and less effort. The development of urethane wheels in the 1970s was another step-change over steel wheels. It was a boost to skate-boarding which is a new sport in the Summer Olympic Games.



9 December 2023. On this day in 1868 the first traffic lights were installed outside the Palace of Westminster in London. They resembled railway signals they used semaphore and were illuminated by red and green gas lamps.

10 December 2023. On this day in 1908 New Zealander Ernest Rutherford, later Lord Rutherford of Nelson, won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry. His image is on the New Zealand \$100 banknote. He had shown that heavy atoms decay into lighter atoms. The second great discovery of his career was to show that atoms consist of a tiny dense nucleus surrounded by oppositely charged electrons; a model that is still the basis of atomic theory. Albert Einstein called him a second Newton who had “tunnelled into the very material of God.” An amazing tribute from one of the greatest scientists who had ever lived.

11 December 2023. On this day in 1618 the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Tsardom of Russia agreed to the Truce of Deulino ending the 12-year-long Polish-Muscovite War.

11 December 2023. On this day in 1907 a major fire devastated the New Zealand Parliament building. Firewalls and a fire-door saved the library. Staff and members of the public removed important portraits and thousands of books. Parliamentarians were stunned by the conflagration. Parliament had to move into Government House for ten years while a new Parliament House was built.

12 December 2023. On this day in 1524 Pope Clement VII approved the organisation of a Jewish community in Rome.

12 December 2023. On this date in 1874 Hawaiian King David Kalakaua was the first King to visit United States as a guest of President Ulysses S. Grant at the first state dinner at the White House.

13 December 2023. On this day in 1355 Ibn Battuta of Tangier completed his work *The Travels* detailing his 29 years spent travelling the Islamic world and on to India, China and what became present day Indonesia. He was the greatest adventurer of his age.

13 December 2023. On this day in 1959 Archbishop Makarios was elected first President of Cyprus.

13 December 2023. This day is the Feast Day of St Elizabeth Rose. She was a twelfth century Benedictine nun who founded the convent of Sainte-Marie-du-Rosaye, in France. She served as its first abbess. Eventually she retired and went to live as an anchoress in a hollow oak tree. Sainte-Marie-du-Rosaye is a modern French town. There is large old Church but no sign of Elizabeth's convent.

13 December 2023. On this day in 1642 Dutch explorer Abel Tasman sighted the South Island of present day New Zealand. He named it Staten Island and changed it a year later to Nieuw Zeeland. Able Tasman National Park is named for him. His image appeared on a two pence New Zealand postage stamp as part of the 1940 Centennial issue.

14 December 2023. On this day in 1281 the St Lucia's Flood devastated Northwest Netherlands when the Zuiderzee seawall collapsed with the loss of 50,000 lives.

14 December 2023. On this day in 1751 the first Military Academy in the world was founded in Austria.

14 December 2023. On this day in 1896 The Glasgow Underground Railway was opened by the Glasgow District Subway Company. It is the third oldest in Europe, after the London Underground and the Budapest Metro.

15 December 2023. On this day in 1258 Helagu Khan captured and destroyed Hashsashin Stronghold at Alamut in present day Iran as part of a Mongol offensive on Islamic southwest Asia and North Africa. Early that year he and his army had sacked and destroyed a great prize, Baghdad, slaughtering the populace and destroying the Grand Library of Baghdad. He laid waste many other cities.

15 December 2023 On this day in 1488 Bartolomeu Diaz returned to Portugal. He was the first known European to sail around the Cape of Good Hope.

15 December 2023. On this day in 1937 *Gone with the Wind* starring Clark Gable and Vivian Leigh premiered in Atlanta. It was the highest grossing film of its day.

15 December 2023. On this day in 1944 the New Zealand Finance Act (No3) 1944 was enacted. It ended the Poll Tax on Chinese immigrants introduced in 1881 as anti-Chinese prejudice increased. Australia and Canada already had such laws. Here, organisations such as the Anti-Chinese League sprang up. It was the irrational fear of 'The Other'. In sweeping it all away, Finance Minister Walter Nash described it as a 'blot on our legislation'.

16 December 2023. On this day in 1653 Parliamentary General Oliver Cromwell was appointed Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland and Ireland. Earlier he had been a soldier and became MP for Cambridge, where he had been to university. He was a leader in the execution of King Charles I, and at the exile of his son. This led to the establishment of the Protectorate. He maintained the position of Lord Protector until his death. He was succeeded by his weak son, which led to a power vacuum and in 1660 to the Stuart Restoration with Charles II re-established the throne. Cromwell's body was removed from Westminster Abbey and his head was placed on a spike which was displayed outside the Tower of London for 30 years, before being buried at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, his old alma mater.

16 December 2023. On this day in 1918 in a Heavy weight Boxing title fight in the Louisiana Auditorium, New Orleans, Jack Dempsey knocked out Carl Morris in 14 seconds.

17 December 2023. On this day in 1398 Tamelane captured and sacked Delhi. He defeated sultan Nasir-u Din Mehmud's armies, by loading camels with hay, setting them alight and charging them at the sultan's armoured elephants.

17 December 2023. On this day in 1903 the first heavier-than-air sustained flight of a powered flying machine, the Wright Flyer was flown by Orville Wright with his brother Wilbur running at the Wingtip at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. In New Zealand, Richard Pearse had little formal education. He arrived at school one day with a device cut from a herring tin, shaped into a multi-blade shape, attached to a cotton reel base. He wound a string around the base and the object flew off, out of sight – a helicopter. He began dreaming of creating a flying machine. He claimed that if he had achieved powered flight before the Wright Brothers but there is no independent proof.

17 December 2023. On this day in 1989 *The Simpsons*, a fully animated series, created by Matt Groening, premiered on Fox TV. This first episode called *Simpsons Roasting on an Open Fire*.

18 December 2023. On this day in 1917 the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the US Constitution was approved by Congress and sent to States for ratification. Section one read: 'After one year of the ratification of this Article, the manufacture, sale, transportation of intoxicating liquors, within, the importation there into or the exportation there from the United States and all territory thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.' It was ratified by enough States and became law. It led to wide spread crime and development of 'Speakeasies' clubs that sold bootleg alcohol of varying quality. Whiskey from Canada could come down Lake Huron to Chicago, the haunt of Al Capone and like-minded gangsters could do well as the illegal whiskey business. They were up against special Agent Eliot Ness and team, nicknamed the Untouchables because they could not be corrupted. They were subject of a much-watched TV series that ran for 42 episodes and spawned a movie. The 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment was repealed on 5 December 1933.

18 December 2023. On this day fragments of a skull was discovered in the gravel pit at Piltdown by Charles Dawson, a lawyer and keen amateur palaeontologist. The skull of Piltdown man was reconstructed and went on display at the Geological Society of London. It was even given a scientific name after Dawson. The British Museum soon found that it was a hoax. The 'ape-like' jawbone was just that, the jawbone of an orangutan with filed-down teeth. The human bits were from different individuals. Dawson wanted fame and discovered disgrace.

19 December 2023. On this day in 1842 the first Auckland A and P Show was held. Agricultural and Pastoral Shows became annual events in many New Zealand Towns and Cities.

20 December 2023. On this day in 1812 *Children's and Household Tales* or *Grimm's Fairy Tales* by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, was first published.

20 December 2023. On this day in 1522 Suleiman the magnificent accepted the surrender of the Knights of Rhodes. They settled in Malta. They became the Knights of Malta. They still exist as a Sovereign Order of the Catholic Church. Pope Francis cleaned out the leadership and imposed a new Constitution. They have a multi-billion-dollar fund with nearly 100,000 volunteers and 52,000 medical staff running refugee camps, drug treatment centres, disaster relief programmes and clinics all around the world. They have been very active in

helping Ukrainian refugees and war victims. Their secular brothers and sisters are the order of St John who have the Maltese Cross on their Ambulances.

21 December 2023. On this day in 1929 Coco the Clown first appeared for Bertram Mills Circus in Manchester, England. He was one of the world's most popular and accomplished clowns. He was Nicolai Poliakov, born into a Jewish family in Latvia which was part of the Russian Empire. Getting to England was a long and complex journey. He probably took his stage name from the animated character, Koko, created by Max Fleischer. Koko first appeared as the main protagonist in *Out of the Inkwell*, a major animated series of the silent era.

21 December 2023. Yule is pre-Christian Celtic and Germanic festival of the winter Solstice. It is a time of feasting. Evergreens were brought into the house as a symbol of life. Holly represented the masculine spirit and mistletoe represented the female spirit. The Yule tree decorated with pinecones, berries and fruits and the Yule log were other symbols.

22 December 2023. On this day in 303 St Zeno was martyred. He was a soldier at Nicomedia (modern Turkey). He must have been a crypto-Christian. The Emperor Diocletian was offering sacrifice to the Roman Goddess Ceres, of agriculture and grain crops (hence cereal). There may have been a crop failure. Whatever, Zeno was laughing, his jaw was smashed, and he was beheaded. Dictators have no tolerance of mockery and derision.

23 December 2023. On this day in 1953 the young Queen Elizabeth II and her dashing husband, Prince Phillip arrived in New Zealand for their first ever Royal Tour. The reception was rapturous. They were here to the end of January. They visited dozens of towns for public welcomes and receptions. At each place there were reports of huge crowds from surrounding districts. They attended divine services and evensong, three race meetings, visits to factories and scenic places, civic receptions in larger centres and luncheons. There were Investitures and Garden Parties in Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. A State Dinner, an opening of Parliament, meeting of all MPs and members of Diplomatic Missions. They were met by thousands of worthies. There were uncountable photographs no doubt still with families. Many people have written their impression of the day the beautiful young Queen came to town. They had arrived the day before the Tangiwai disaster, and Her Majesty mentioned that in her Christmas Broadcast. Later the Duke flew to Wellington for the funeral for the victims and then flew back to Waitomo Caves which they were visiting. More than a month later the Queen gave a farewell speech at Invercargill and another at Bluff where she boarded the SS Gothic, the ship they arrived on. It had been a punishing tour, sometimes visiting four places in one day for civic receptions where there would have been speeches and endless floral arrangements and forced conversations. They would do it again and again here, in Australia, Canada, Africa, India and all over the Commonwealth.

24 December 2023. On Christmas Eve 1953 the worst railway disaster in New Zealand's history occurred when the Wellington to Auckland night express plunged into the flooded Whangaehu River just west of Tangiwai. There were 285 people aboard, 151 were killed. The cause of the tragedy was a volcanic lahar from Mt Ruapehu crater lake which sent a wave of water, silt, boulders, and debris surging down the river and smashing into the

railway bridge. The driver applied the brakes, but it takes a while for the train to stop, and it was too late. Most people on the train were heading home for Christmas.

25 December 2023. Christmas Day, the birth of Jesus in a stable in Bethlehem. 'There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night they were visited by an angel, and they were the first visitors to the newborn Christ child. Christmas has some of the toppings of Yule, gift giving, a tree, family get-together, food, Father Christmas/Santa Clause who is the gift-bringer.

26 December 2023. Boxing Day was originally a day when servants, who had to work on Christmas Day, were given Christmas Boxes by the Master of the House for attending on the Family. The boxes contained left over food, money and gifts for each servant to take home to his or her own family. In modern times Boxing Day is a shopping day for most stores have sales. The modern servants are shop-assistants. This day is also St Stephen's Day. Stephen is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. He was preaching in a synagogue about Jesus and was stoned to death for blasphemy. He is the protomartyr, the first Christian martyr. He is mentioned in the carol *Good King Wenceslas*, who on the Feast of Stephen gathered together a Christmas Box to take to a poor man's family.

26 December 2023. This is the first day of Kwanzaa, a seven-day celebration for African Americas and other African diaspora. There are seven letters in the word Kwanzaa and seven candles in a Kinaea symbolising the seven principles of Kwanzaa. It ends in a communal feast. It is based on harvest festivals in parts of Africa.

27 December 2023. On this day in 537 Hagia Sophia was inaugurated by Byzantine Emperor Justinian I, as an Eastern Orthodox Cathedral. It was the largest building in the world at the time.

28 December 2023. On this day in 1908 an earthquake in Messina, Italy killed nearly 80,000 people.

28 December 2023. On this day in 1065 a church dedicated to St Peter the Apostle was built by Edward the Confessor, the last King of England from the House of Wessex. It was rebuilt in the thirteenth century and called Westminster Abbey.

28 December 2023. On this day in 1612 Galileo Galilei first discovered the planet Neptune's "as a fixed star."

29 December 2023. In 1170 Thomas Beckett Archbishop of Canterbury was assassinated before the high altar by Four Knights, King Henry had said "Who will rid me of this troublesome priest". The knights took him at his word. Thomas himself had been a fighting knight, a great friend of the young King who wanted him as Archbishop, but Thomas was proud, strong-willed and irascible. He is regarded as a martyr of the Catholic Church and was canonised. Henry was ashamed that a chance remark had resulted in Thomas' death.

29 December 2023. On this day in 1911 Sun Yay-Sen was elected first president of the Republic of China.

30 December 2023. On this day in 1922 the creation of the USSR was formally proclaimed in Moscow from the Bolshoi Theatre.

30 December 2023. On this day in 1924 Edwin Hubble formally announced the existence of other galactic systems at a meeting of the American Astronomical Society.

31 December 2023. On this day in 1857 Queen Victoria chose Ottawa as the Capital of Canada.

31 December 2023. On this day in 1945 the Ratification of the United Nations Charter was Completed.

31 December 2023. New Year's Eve. The singing of *Old Lang Syne*.

Brian Murphy  
Archivist