

Lost money on your investment?

William Thornley from Bolton got back **£21,400** from Halifax
AS SEEN ON TV

David Mitchell from Dumbarton got back **£14,400** from Lloyds

Sandra Hall from Glossop got back **£23,000** from HSBC

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CHAS'S ROCK'N' ROLL ALLOTMENT

LAST SUNDAY all the kids and grandkids were round for dinner. Lovely! Roast lamb and fresh mint sauce. Bowles mint (it's got the best taste but it can take over your plot), and also spinach beet and beetroot from the allotment.

The corner of my patch at the moment is a mint forest. I will thin it out tomorrow. (Just swatted a gnat that was biting my arm. Astonished by the amount of red blood he had. Then realised it was *my* blood!)

Grandson Harry, six, declared at dinner he ain't gonna get married, he's gonna be a widow. After granddaughter Charlie taught me how to set up this folder I'm using, it was getting on for nine so time I was on me bike and round the allotment to water.

The lettuce I'm growing this year is one I grew a few years ago and sort of forgot how good it

'I don't grow carrots, they get annihilated'

was. Salad Bowl. Great taste and you just grab bunches of it as you need it. Grows well on my allotment.

The soil is great. Loamy. Just like the dark soil back in Broxbourne where I started growing my own in 1972. Only, at the moment, I don't grow carrots on it. They get annihilated by carrot fly. I wrote in my Rock 'n' Roll Allotment book that you can just cut the black bits out and eat the rest but there is no "rest" to the carrots on this plot; just a mass of black bits. So, at the moment, I grow no carrots.

I asked a pal whose plot is by the gates how he deals with carrot fly (my plot is in the opposite corner). His looked well healthy last year. Turns out he don't do nothing! Just keeps 'em nicely watered.

Now my next plot neighbour in the opposite corner gets the same carrot fly problem. So is it anything to do with the soil or just the position? We are in the



Picture: LUKE SANTILLI

eastern part of the allotment. Do the flies fly in from the east? If so, as me and my neighbour are not growing carrots this year, will they carry on flying until they reach the gates and have a go at his by the gates this year? I don't

wish it upon him but it will answer a question. If he does end up with carrot fly, I might try sowing some decoy carrot seed along the eastern fence next year. In theory they should all stop at them and be

happy. Leaving mine, and in fact everybody else's, alone. I shall enquire as to the health of the carrots of him by the gates at the end of this season and go from there.

This week, me and my wife Joan went fishing in my friend Harvey Hinsley's (the lead guitarist from Hot Chocolate) lake near Uckfield, East Sussex. He bought it last year. We used to go fishing in other people's ponds years ago, sometimes uninvited, but we can't run as fast as we used to.

We had some good days fishing last summer. Joan does the fry-ups on a little gas stove by the lake. (What a romantic title for a song? "On a Little Gas Stove by the Lake.") The lake didn't have any tench so I treated Harvey to some.

I love tench. I caught my first one in the River Lea when I was 12. Took it home and Tony

'Caught a tench today. Boy are they tough fish'

Webster's mum cooked it and we ate it.

Caught a few since, but never took them home to eat. Caught one today, one of the newly-stocked ones! About a three-pounder.

Boy, are they tough, muscular fish. Sort of fish I could imagine doing well in the boxing ring. Looked like it came from Hackney, too.

Always have a great day at Lake Harvo! Bought our usual three pounds of Kent cherries by the roadside and went to bed with the belly ache. Bliss!

● Chas's Rock 'n' Roll Allotment Facebook page at facebook.com/chashodgesrockandroll allotment, where you can ask Chas a gardening question. Chas & Dave are playing the following gigs: Shanklin Theatre, Isle of Wight, August 15; Princess Theatre, Clacton, August 23; Orchard Theatre, Dartford, September 6. (Chasndave.net)



Did you know?
by Mitchell Symons

MEL BLANC, THE VOICE OF A THOUSAND CARTOON CHARACTERS, DIED 25 YEARS AGO ON THURSDAY. HIS EPITAPH WAS "THAT'S ALL, FOLKS!". HERE ARE OTHER PEOPLE'S...

I Never Met A Man I Didn't Like (Will Rogers)

Jack Lemmon In... (Jack Lemmon)

The best is yet to come (Frank Sinatra)

Go Away - I'm Asleep (Joan Hackett)

Quoth The Raven "Nevermore" (Edgar Allan Poe)

OK, I Gotta Go Now (Dee Dee Ramone)

I am ready to meet my Maker. Whether my Maker is prepared for the great ordeal of meeting me is another matter (Sir Winston Churchill)

I'll Never Get Out of This World Alive

(Hank Williams)

Free at last. Free at last. Thank God Almighty I'm Free At Last. (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

Called Back (Emily Dickinson)

I'm A Writer/But then/Nobody's Perfect (Billy Wilder)

And Away We Go (Jackie Gleason)

He could have given us a few more laughs, but nooooo (John Belushi)

Here lies one whose name was writ in water.

(John Keats)

The Entertainer? He Did It All (Sammy Davis Jr)

She did it the hard way

(Bette Davis), right



THIS WEEK'S PONDERABLES...

● In experiments, the colour red was found to promote the hunger reflex (which is why so many fast-food outlets use red as their main colour).

● It was 125 years ago this Tuesday that the last bare-knuckle world boxing championship took place. John L Sullivan beat Jake Kilrain in the 75th round.

● That was extraordinary but a semi-final wrestling bout in the 1912 Olympics lasted 1.1 hours. The winner, Estonian Martin Klein, was so exhausted that he couldn't take part in the final match the next day.

● The only species of beetle to demonstrate any sort of parental care of its offspring is the (endangered) American Burying Beetle.

● Apparently, fidgeting is good for men's concentration but bad for women's.

● Vermouth was originally sold and consumed for medicinal purposes.

● When Ivan the Terrible discovered his wife was having an affair he had her boyfriend impaled on a spike outside her bedroom window.

● The remains of birds that hit aeroplanes when in flight are known as "snarge".

THIS WEEK'S IMPONDERABLE...

Why is the Army rank of Colonel pronounced "kernel"?

After all, it looks like it should be pronounced "co-lon-el". The word comes from the Old Italian word "colonello" (meaning commander of troops, which in turn derived from the Italian word for "column"). Like so many words, it came into English through the French. However, and this is where it gets more complicated, it came through as two words: colonel and coronel.

The word "coronel" was eventually pronounced as "kernel". Then someone decided that the word should be spelled the way it was originally and so it should be colonel. Are you still with me? Anyway, the word was now spelled as "colonel" but still pronounced as "coronel" or "kernel".

WISE WORDS...

In the End, we will remember not the words of our enemies but the silence of our friends.

(Martin Luther King Jr)

To travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive. (Robert Louis Stevenson)

If you're going to walk on thin ice you might as well dance. (Unknown)



"It comes," cries Sam, a map unfurled, "From just one island in the world!"

Rupert

And The Blue Star EPISODE 19

Rupert is astonished at his friend's excitement. "Is the blue starfish very rare?" he asks.

"Rare! Of course it's rare!" exclaims Sam. "It only lives in one place in the world." He unrolls the map of an island.

"There, that's one of Cap'n Morgan's smuggling haunts," he says. "It's far, far away and the Blue Star lives there. It could never have travelled all this way alone over the bed of the sea. That means that somebody has troubled to bring Blue Stars here."

Rupert tries hard to understand.



"It didn't swim this far, or fly! So someone shipped it here! But why?"

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