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William Thornley
from Bolton got back
£21,400
from Halifax

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

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

AS SEEN ON TV

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CHAS'S ROCK'N' ROLL ALLOTMENT

A BEEHIVE has turned up on the allotment. Don't know how it got there but it sure suits it. Be nice to have some chickens turn up. Love chickens. But they will have to be properly looked after. A good fence to keep 'em in and the fox out. If they get out no plot is safe and if they ain't shut in at night no chicken is safe.

We've got a communal shed. It's a nice one, put up by the plot holders. I turned up one afternoon and there they were. Putting up a big shed. It made me think we were sort of like the Amish. Quite like this idea. They seem to live a good life.

Me and Joan were on a train across Florida a couple of years back and an Amish man and wife were sitting opposite. He had an old-fashioned mobile phone and was on it for the whole journey. Two hours. Didn't think they

'Gotta be the slimy old gits again, nagging'

were allowed to do this but I suppose he could argue that it was an old fashioned one.

It did look like it had been cleverly whittled out of an old piece of gnarled walnut wood or something.

Remember that butternut squash I planted on the top of that mound in place of the cucumber plants that the snails had away? Well, it's still looking a bit monkey. Don't seem to have grown much at all. It looks at me as if to say: "Why you gone and done this to me? What you put me up here for? I was better off in that little pot I turned up in!"

Gotta be honest, it did look better when it turned up. It's got the whole place to itself on that hill. I thought I was doing the best for it. Gotta be the old slimy gits again, nagging at it. Not enough to finish it off but enough to make it look ill.

But perhaps this tidy hill just ain't meant to have a trailing plant on the top. The long gone



Picture: LUKE SANTILLI

snail-snaffled cucumbers' original partner that I stuck randomly in a spare patch in the ground is bombing away.

Decided. I'm gonna move it tomorrow, before it's too late. Definitely one, if not two or three

of the Sluggo Brothers are responsible. Gonna replace the butternut squash with a deep tub of beer. They certainly don't deserve such a merry bleary-eyed exit from this world but I just want 'em off me desk now.

Celeriac is starting to bulb up. Love celeriac. Grated raw or cut into chips and baked in the oven basted with olive oil.

Bought them as little plants but if they end up doing well I'll grow some from seed next year.

Been pulling off the outer leaves that fall to the ground. Looking quite smart. Gonna liquid feed with seaweed tomorrow. Salad Bowl lettuce still giving it stick and beetroot is a regular on the table. Boil 'em up and keep 'em in a little pot in the fridge, cooking the leaves like spinach.

I pull a few not quite mature shallots for salads. Don't waste any of this. All is tasty. Shoots and roots. Want some more rain! Lovely soil but soon dries out.

This week 40 years ago my son Nik was born. He plays drums for me and Dave now after Micky Burt retired in 2009. The day he was born me and Dave had just left my place in Broxbourne

'My son Nik had a particularly windy pie...'

heading for a gig in Gravesend. Got to the top of the road and I said to Dave: "Turn back. I reckon he is going to be born tonight!" He was. That very night in that little house in Broxbourne.

The other night the three of us were travelling in the band car to a gig in Beverley. Stopping at a motorway cafe Nik partook of what turned out to be a particularly windy steak and kidney pie. After many hollers from me and Dave, and winding down of windows, I turned to Dave and said: "It's hard to believe that it's that little boy we turned back for all those years ago innit?"

Ahh! He's a darling!

● Chas's Facebook page is at facebook.com/chashodgesrockandrollallotment.

● Forthcoming Chas & Dave gigs: Shanklin Theatre Isle of Wight, August 15; Princess Theatre Clacton, August 23; Orchard Theatre, Dartford September 6.



Did you know?
by Mitchell Symons

WITH THE "WAYS WITH WORDS" FESTIVAL DRAWING TO A CLOSE, HERE ARE SOME (GENUINE) OBSOLETE WORDS WHICH ARE RIPE FOR A COMEBACK...

Scurryfunge: a hasty tidying of the house between the time you see a neighbour and the time she knocks on the door

Snudge: to stride around as though you are terribly busy, when in fact you are doing absolutely nothing

Condiddle: to make away (with something) secretly

Bouffage: a satisfying meal

Cockalorum: someone who has a high opinion of himself despite being very short

Illecebrous: alluring, enticing, attractive

Flippercanorous: elegant

Waggastie: rogue

Irrisory: addicted to laughing or sneezing

Bezontar: expletive expressing surprise or consternation

Purified: short-winded, especially in consequence of being too lusty

Squizzle: to fire a gun

Lunting: walking and smoking a pipe

Curglaff: when bathing, the shock felt when one first plunges into cold water

Jirging: the noise made by shoes that are too dry

THIS WEEK'S PONDERABLES...

- Mobile phone throwing is an international sport. Throws are judged by style and by distance achieved.
- When he was Prince of Wales, the future Edward VII and a lover once got stuck in a bath at the Ritz Hotel in Paris and this led to the baths there being enlarged.
- In terms of price and usage, the best-value consumer purchase is an electric kettle.
- If Britain's gas mains were laid end to end they would go round the world a dozen times.
- More than 90 per cent of plane crashes have survivors.
- The most common place to hide valuables is in the sock drawer; unfortunately it is also the first place burglars look.
- Snakes do not urinate. Instead, they secrete (and excrete) uric acid, which is a solid, chalky, usually white substance.
- The minimum driving age in Ethiopia is 14.
- In 1868, a banquet was held in London. The main course was horse, more than 280lbs of it.

THIS WEEK'S IMPONDERABLE...

What was the Common Wealth Party, and did it have anything to do with the Commonwealth?

The Common Wealth Party was a socialist party founded during the Second World War and it had nothing to do with the Commonwealth. It fielded candidates in by-elections against coalition candidates who would otherwise have been elected unopposed. Its last MP, Ernest Millington joined the Labour Party in 1946 but not before having a splendid exchange with a Tory MP. Millington served with the RAF Bomber Command where he rose to the rank of wing commander and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in 1945. Having been elected as MP for Chelmsford at a by-election in April 1945, Millington wore his DFC ribbon on his uniform when attending the House of Commons, as was customary at the time. As he recalled: "I was approached by a Tory MP dressed in civilian clothes and with a hand in his trouser pocket who said, "Your DFC ribbon is worn too wide." He was, I think, not expecting my reaction. "If you are talking to me as an RAF officer: stand to attention; take your hand out of your trouser pocket and address a senior officer as Sir. If you are talking to me as a fellow Member of Parliament, mind your business and b****r off."

WISE WORDS...

I am always doing that which I cannot do, in order that I may learn how to do it.

(Pablo Picasso)

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He lifts the box, a heavy thing. Then - snap! - the lid shuts, on a spring.

Rupert And The Blue Star EPISODE 26

Rupert looks at the little iron box. "I wonder if I can find the place where he hides that," he murmurs, "and whether it is too heavy for me to carry." He tugs it off the table but just as he gets it on to his arms the lid closes with a snap. "Oh dear, I must open it to put the old paper in," he thinks. "I didn't know the lid was on a spring. Now it won't open again! And Sam's taken the key." All at once he stops to listen. "What was that noise?" he whispers.



"Sam took the key! The lid's tight shut! What's that? Who's coming to the hut?"

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