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LIFE, LOVE & MEMORIES



MEMORY LANE

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Welcome to our June Newsletter. It's at this time of year that local churches held or still hold their Rose Queen festival. Do you remember being part of these celebrations, perhaps you had the honour of being the Queen or just part of her retinue. Are there any men out there that have memories of being a Page boy? Do you remember riding on a float in Oldham Carnival?



Picture of a Rose Queen and her retinue above and Rose Queen float below.
Pictures taken from the internet.



People of Oldham

QUENTIN SKINNER



PROFESSOR QUENTIN ROBERT DUTHIE SKINNER

Historian & political philosopher

BORN: 26 November 1940

PLACE: Oldham

SPOUSES: Patricia Law Skinner (div.)
Susan James (m. 1979)

CHILDREN: Daughter, Olivia 1979.
Son, Marcus 1982

Quentin was the second son of Alexander Skinner (died 1979) and Winifred Skinner, née Duthie (died 1982). Though his family background is Scottish, and his father spent his career in the civil service in West Africa, he was raised and educated in England. He was educated at Bedford School from the age of seven. **Bedford School** is a 7–18 boys public school in the county town of Bedford in England, founded in 1552.



Like his elder brother, he won an entrance scholarship to Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, from where he graduated with a double-starred first in history in 1962. Skinner was elected to a fellowship of his college on his examination results, but moved later in 1962 to a teaching fellowship at Christ's College, Cambridge, where he remained until moving to the University of London in 2008. He is now an Honorary Fellow of both Christ's College and Gonville and Caius College.



Skinner was appointed to a lectureship in the Faculty of History at the University of Cambridge in 1965. He spent a sabbatical year at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton in 1974-1975, where he was invited to stay, and where he remained until 1979 when he returned to Cambridge as Professor of Political Science. He was appointed to the post of Regius Professor of History in 1996, and in 1999 as pro-vice-chancellor of the university.

In 1979 Quentin married Susan James, Professor Emerita of Philosophy at Birkbeck College London. They have a daughter and a son, and four grandchildren. He was previously married to Patricia Law Skinner, who was later married to the philosopher Bernard Williams.



Susan James

Quentin Skinner Notable works: The Foundations of Modern Political Thought (1978) and Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Thomas Hobbes (1996).

Main Interests: Early modern history, Intellectual history, political philosophy, history of political thought, Reformation, Renaissance.

Skinner has been a Fellow of the British Academy since 1981, and is also a foreign member of a number of national academies.

He has been the recipient of Honorary Degrees from the University of Aberdeen, University of Athens, University of Chicago, University of Copenhagen, University of East Anglia, Harvard University, University of Helsinki, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, University of Kent, University of Oslo, University of Oxford, Adolfo Ibáñez University (Santiago), University of St Andrews and Uppsala University.

He was awarded the Wolfson History Prize in 1979, the Sir Isaiah Berlin Prize of the British Political Studies Association in 2006, the Benjamin Lippincott Award (2001), the David Easton Award (2007) of the American Political Science Association, the Bielefeld Science Award [de] (2008) and a Balzan Prize (2006). From 2009 until 2020, he was a member of the Balzan Prize Committee.

When Skinner was interviewed by Alan Macfarlane, as part of his series of online conversations with academics, Skinner admitted that he had been a member of the Cambridge Apostles, a secret debating society at Cambridge University. He also revealed that Amartya Sen (*Indian Economist*) was a member at the same time. Sen mentioned their membership of the Apostles in his memoir *Home in the World*. He commented that they had both been "outed" in a book published about the Apostles sometime before.

On 6 October 1995, Skinner's *Foundations of Modern Political Thought* was included in the list published by *The Times Literary Supplement* of 'The 100 Most Influential Books since World War II'.

Skinner is regarded as one of the founders of the 'Cambridge School' of the history of political thought,

On 14 May 2009, *Times Higher Education*, in an article about Skinner's move from Cambridge to the University of London, spoke of Skinner's republicanism, reporting that this led him to refuse a knighthood he was offered when he became Regius Professor of History at Cambridge.

The Balzan-Skinner Lectureship, renamed the "Quentin Skinner Fellowship in Intellectual History since 1500", was established in 2009 at the University of Cambridge. The Quentin Skinner fellow holds a visiting fellowship at the Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities for one term of the academic year, which culminates in the Quentin Skinner Lecture and an associated symposium.

This article is taken from the April 2025 issue of The Critic.

It almost feels like an impertinence to review Quentin Skinner's latest book. The doyen of what is now known as the Cambridge School of the history of political thought, he is one of the few academics to become a legend in their own time. Not content to rest on his laurels, Skinner has now published *Liberty as Independence*, a book of fantastic depth and breadth, full of good learning and effortless erudition, which is sure to become an instant classic.

REMEMBER WHEN

Can you remember the days when you went to the doctor's with no appointment and no receptionist.

Everyone sorted themselves out and if there was more than one doctor the first thing you heard on arrival was...

"WHO ARE YOU FOR?"

The doctor's door would open and he/she would shout **"NEXT"**.

And woe betide anyone who tried to jump the queue!



NAME THE MALE SINGERS

1



2



3



4



5



6



Answers on next page

Answers to Male singers

1. Jim Reeves
2. Tom Jones
3. Ed Sheeran
4. George Michael
5. Chris De Burgh
6. Elvis Presley

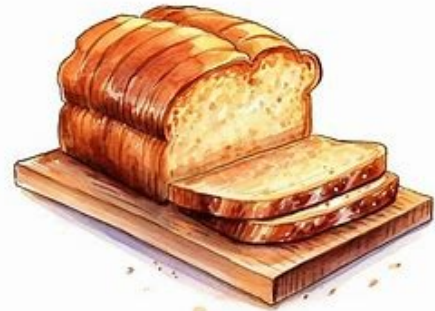
MALE SINGERS THROUGH THE YEARS



provided by Sue (from Facebook)

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

I remember corned beef of my childhood
And the bread that we cut with a knife
When the children helped with the housework
And the men went to work, not the wife
The cheese never needed a fridge
And the bread was so crusty and hot
The children were seldom unhappy
And the wife was content with her lot
I remember the milk from the bottle
With the yummy cream on the top
Our dinner came hot from the oven
And not from a freezer or shop
The kids were a lot more contented
They didn't need money for kicks
Just games in the street with their friends
And sometimes the Saturday 'flicks'
I remember the slap on my backside
And the taste of the soap if I swore
Anorexia and diets weren't heard of
And we hadn't much choice what we wore
Do you think that this bruised our ego?
Or our initiative was destroyed
We ate what was put on the table
And I think life was better enjoyed
I remember the shop on the corner
Where biscuits for pennies were sold
Do you think I'm a bit too nostalgic?
Or is it...I'm just getting old!?



QUIZ QUESTIONS —
The answers are easier than you think!

1. At which Battle did Napoleon die?
2. Where was the Declaration of Independence signed?
3. What is the main reason for divorce?
4. What can you never eat for breakfast?
5. What looks like half an apple?
6. If you throw a blue stone into the Red sea what will it become?
7. How can you lift an elephant with one hand?
8. If you were holding 3 apples and 4 oranges in your left hand and 4 apples and 3 oranges in your right hand what would you have?
9. How can you drop a raw egg onto a concrete floor without cracking it?
10. If it takes 8 men 10 hours to build a brick wall how long would it take 4 men to build it?
11. How can a man go 8 days without sleeping?

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. His last one.
2. At the bottom of the page.
3. Marriage.
4. Lunch or Dinner.
5. The other half.
6. A very wet stone.
7. You can never lift an elephant that has just one hand.
8. Very big hands.
9. Anyway you want - a concrete floor is really hard to crack.
10. No time at all because the wall has already been built by 8 men.
11. He sleeps at night.

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW? - UK TOWN/CITIES

1



Clue: Famous for its market

2



Clue: Famous for surfing

3



Clue: Famous for its castle and its connection to the game of Rugby

4



Clue: Castle & Medieval fortification

5



Clue: Children sing about the bridge

6



Clue: You might watch a play here

Answers on next page...

Answers to the Towns and Cities.

1 Bury, Lancashire



2 Newquay, Cornwall



3 Cardiff, Wales



(The home to Welsh Rugby)
Principality (Millennium) stadium

4 Ludlow, Shropshire



5 London



London Bridge is falling down

6 Stratford-upon-Avon



Shakespeare's Birthplace

A short story - A little kindness goes a long way!

"Ma'am, you don't have a ticket. Please get off the bus," the driver said sharply, staring at the weak old woman in her worn-out coat. She was barely holding onto the rail to stay standing. The bus was almost empty. Outside, light snow was falling slowly and the city was covered in a grey evening. The woman didn't say anything. She just held her old shopping bag tighter. "I said get off! This isn't a care home!" the driver yelled even louder. Everything went quiet. A few people looked away, pretending not to notice. A girl by the window looked upset and bit her lip. A man in a dark coat frowned but didn't do anything. The old woman slowly walked towards the door. Every step was hard for her. The doors opened with a loud noise and cold wind hit her face. She stopped for a moment and looked at the driver.

Then she spoke softly but clearly: "I once gave birth to people like you - with love. And now I'm not even allowed to sit." She stepped off the bus and walked away.

The bus stayed still with the doors open. The driver turned his face, like he didn't want to face what he was feeling. Somewhere in the back, someone started crying. The girl by the window wiped her tears. The man in the coat stood up and walked to the door. One by one, the passengers left their seats, leaving their tickets behind. Soon, the bus was empty. Only the driver stayed, sitting quietly, full of silent regret. The old woman kept walking slowly down the snowy street. Her figure faded into the evening light but every step showed quiet strength.

The next morning the driver came to work like always. Same time, same coffee, same route. But something deep inside him had changed for good. He couldn't stop feeling uneasy. He had hardly slept, kept awake by the memory of her eyes, not angry or upset, just deeply tired. And her words kept repeating in his mind: "I gave birth to people like you. With love."

As he drove his usual route, he started looking closely at the faces of older people waiting at the stops. He hoped to see her again, though he didn't know exactly why. Maybe to say sorry. Maybe to help. Or just to admit he felt ashamed.

One evening, near the end of his shift, he saw someone familiar at a stop near the old market - small, hunched over. Same coat. Same bag. He stopped the bus, opened the doors, and stepped outside. "Grandma..." he said softly. "I'm sorry. I was wrong that day." She looked up at him — and smiled gently. No blame. No anger. "Life teaches all of us, son," she said. "What matters is that we listen. And you did."

He helped her onto the bus and gave her the front seat. Later, he offered her tea from his thermos. They rode quietly. But this time, the silence felt kind and healing.

cont...

cont...

A week went by.

After that day, he always kept a few extra tickets in his pocket - for people who couldn't pay, especially older women like her.

And every morning before work, he remembered her words. Not just as a memory of regret - but as a reminder of how to be a better person.

Spring came all of a sudden. The snow melted fast, and soon little bunches of snowdrop flowers were being sold at bus stops - old women selling them, three flowers wrapped in plastic. He started to recognise their faces, saying hello, helping them onto the bus. Sometimes, he just smiled - and it meant the world to them.

But he never saw that one grandmother again.

He looked for her every day. He asked people, described her. Someone said she might have lived near the cemetery, past the bridge. On his days off, he went there - no uniform, no bus. Just walking. Searching.

Then one day, he found it: a simple wooden cross with her photo. Same kind eyes.

He stood there quietly for a long time. The trees rustled, and the sunlight shone through the leaves.

The next morning, he placed a small bunch of snowdrops on the front seat of his bus. He picked them himself. Beside them he set a cardboard sign he had made:

“For those who’ve been forgotten, but who never forgot us.”

Passengers read it silently. Some smiled. Some left a coin on the seat. And the driver kept driving - slower, more gently. Sometimes he stopped a bit earlier, just so an elderly woman could catch the bus.

Because now he understood: Every grandmother is someone's mother. Every smile matters. And even a few words - can change a life.

Taken from the internet

AIR FRYER LASAGNA

Serves 4

Ingredients:

1/2lb cooked ground beef

1/2 cup ricotta cheese

1 tbsp. Italian seasonings

1 tbsp. minced garlic

1 tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. ground black pepper

1/2 box from a 9 ounce box of no boil lasagna noodles.

2 cups marinara sauce

1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese

1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Method:

Pre-heat air fryer to 320°F.

Grease a 7 inch cake pan (suitable for an air fryer) and set aside.

In a medium bowl, combine ground beef, ricotta, Italian seasoning, garlic, salt and pepper. Mix until well combined.

Layer half of noodles in bottom of a prepared pan.

Spread 1 cup marinara sauce on top.

Pour half of beef mixture over sauce.

Top beef mixture with 1/2 cup mozzarella.

Repeat with remaining noodles, sauce, beef mixture and mozzarella.

Sprinkle Parmesan over lasagna and cover pan with foil.

Place pan inside air fryer.

Air fry for 20 mins, then remove foil.

Air fry an additional 10 mins.

Serve Immediately.

ANIMAL CORNER

Easy now...lie still, my friend,
The noise is gone, the fight will end.
I've got you here, just close your eyes,
No more shots, no more cries.

You gave me all — your strength, your speed,
You asked for nothing, met each need.
I wish I could have spared you pain,
To ride you through the fields again.

Your breath is short, your body torn,
But you — you kept me safe through storm.
And now I stay, I will not leave,
We'll share this silence while we grieve.

So rest, old boy...your duty's done.
You fought like ten, you ran like one.
And when they ask who saved me true,
I'll say it plain — it was you.

In memory of all the horses lost



*Thank you to the people
who posted this on Facebook*

SPORTING GREATS

MADGE SYERS



FIGURE SKATER

Florence Madeline Syers 'Madge'
'The Mother of Figure Skating'

Born: 16 September 1881, Notting Hill, London

Died: 9 September 1917, Shaws, Weybridge, Surrey

Olympics competed in: 1 (1908)

Olympic medals:

1908 Gold – Figure Skating (Women's singles)

1908 Bronze – Figure Skating (Pairs)

One of 15 children, Madge Syers (née Cave) was Britain's first ever Olympic Games Winter Sports gold medallist when she won the women's figure skating title in 1908 when the event was part of the Summer Olympics programme in London. She also won the bronze medal skating with her husband Edgar in the pairs event – but it must be said that only three pairs entered!



Six years earlier, in 1902, she was the first woman to compete in the World Figure Skating Championships which was male dominated. The governing body were happy to let her take part, thinking she would lose. But when she came second to the great Ulrich Salchow of Sweden they immediately banned women from competing the following year. Some say Syers should have beaten Salchow with her performance.

The governing body eventually changed their mind and created a separate championship for women from 1906, which Syers won. She retained her world title in 1907.

Madge Syers was also the first winner of the British championship in 1903, beating male opposition to the title and the following year she beat her husband Edgar.

It was reported that Syers was vastly superior to the opposition during the 1908 Olympic competition at Prince's Club, that she was in a 'league of her own'. She was placed first by all five judges in both disciplines; the compulsory figures and the free skating programme.



Ill-health forced her to retire shortly after her Olympic success and she died just before her 36th birthday at her Surrey home in 1917.

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LIFE STORY VOLUNTEERS
EDITOR
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Life Story

Every life has a story...

