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# **LIFE, LOVE & MEMORIES**



# **MEMORY LANE**

**PUBLISHED BY AGE UK OLDHAM**

We welcome you to our May newsletter. On the 6th May it is 80 years since the ending of WW2 in Europe (**V E DAY**). Some of our older readers may remember the celebrations whilst for others as they welcomed peace they also knew their loved ones would never return.

Anyone growing up during the war years may have memories of seeing their fathers for the first time. The person they had only ever seen in a photo, how exciting and overwhelming it must have been for them.

### **What Happened on the First VE Day...**

The Prime Minister of Britain, Winston Churchill, announced the end of the war over the radio. Millions were waiting for the fighting to stop and there were many celebrations. People danced in the street around Britain and shared food. Others went to Buckingham Palace to see the King. Lots of people were dressed in red, white and blue. King George VI and his daughters Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret came out on the balcony to greet the crowds. Our late Queen Elizabeth often said it was a day she remembered well.

It will be hard for our younger generation to visualise what it must have been like, no social media and very few TV's to announce the news just everyone gathered round the wireless (*radio*).



Tuning in the 'wireless' ready to listen to the broadcast. Notice: It looks like they're holding their gas masks.



Typical street party scene

If anyone has any memories of this time that they would like to share please get in touch

Tel: 0161 633 0213

or


Call into the office on Church Lane.

We will be pleased to hear from you.



On the Balcony at Buckingham Palace

*The following is taken from the Friendship Book of Francis Gay 1984*



I WONDER whether you, like me, were ever puzzled by the title of the children's game, "Here we go gathering nuts in *May*?" Whoever heard of gathering nuts in May? But apparently, the song should be, "Here we come gathering knots in May," that is the knotted garlands of the May blossom and other flowers which played such an important part in ancient May Day ceremonies.

Many of our old May Day customs have been allowed to die out, but a mother with two small children at school tells me that last year the children in their class all made tiny May posies of flowers to take home to their mothers.

It occurs to me that we might bring some unexpected happiness to one or two people on this May Day if we took them a May garland.





## MARK DEMSTEADER



Mark Demsteader was born in Manchester in 1963 and grew up in Uppermill and still lives and works there. He studied at Rochdale College, Oldham Art College and The Slade. His awards include The Public Eye Award, The Lyceum Prize and The Sidney Andrews Scholarship.

Mark's work has developed from a fascination with the human form and an obsession with classical themes. He favours absorbent, handmade Indian paper called Khadi as the natural ingredients in it such as grasses and leaves add another element to the finished drawing.

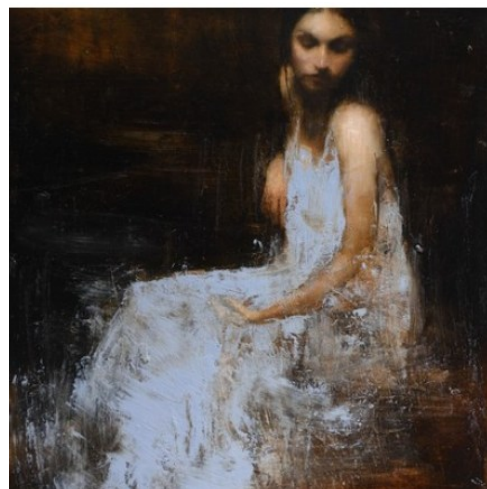
These pre-occupations can be seen in recent paintings where his close observation combines with surface texture and carefully balanced compositions to create a beautiful and powerful representation of the figure, often in renderings of just black and white paint. His paintings are about movement, dynamism and expression; he believes that a drawing that is tight and overworked is to be avoided at all costs. He loves the accidental marks that occur. He will mix pastel and water and often has a hairdryer to hand to dry the results. Mark likes to have space to move about in when he is working. For that reason, he rents space in an old mill to use as a studio; he makes too much mess to make working at home possible.

Mark's paintings feature in many important collections, and current demand for his work reflects his growing reputation.

His recent exhibitions across the United Kingdom have served to establish him as one of today's outstanding talents.



The Apparition



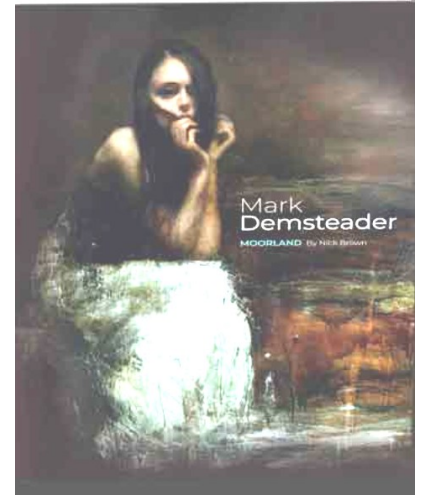
Study for Wilderness

Mark rose to international recognition with 'Emma' – a sell-out exhibition featuring portraits of the Hollywood star Emma Watson and featured in Vogue.

Now, Demstader's work, which has been acquired by famous faces including Angelina Jolie, Nicolas Cage and Sir Jim Ratcliffe, has been captured in his 180-page book launched at the Manchester Art Fair in November 2024.

The book, entitled 'Moorland' was produced by Cheshire Art Gallery, who represent Demstader in the North, and written by former Principal of Oldham Sixth Form College, Nick Brown OBE FRSA. Their hard work made it possible.

Moorland includes in-depth interviews with the 61-year-old artist, alongside an exquisite collection of photographs.



Ella Pemberton, of Cheshire Art Gallery, added: "We're looking forward to bringing Mark's work to Manchester Art Fair.

"Not many paintings stop people in their tracks, but Mark's work really does. It's an absolute honour to be able to show his paintings and see the response that they provoke.

"Moorland is the only real resource on Mark, in which he talks explicitly about his life, works, and technique.

"It's the book that collectors, students and admirers of his work have been waiting for."

Director of Manchester Art Fair, Sophie Helm, concluded; "Mark is one of the most respected figurative painters working in Britain today.

"His powerful depictions of the human form have sparked a renaissance of interest in traditional life drawing amongst the art collecting fraternity.

"We're incredibly proud to provide him with a platform to unveil his inaugural book, Moorland, here in his home city of Manchester, and to provide visitors of Manchester Art Fair with a rare glimpse into his journey to becoming a bestselling artist."

Mark's journey to being one of Britain's leading figurative painters was far from conventional. His formative years were spent amidst the sights and sounds of Manchester's Meat Market at his father's family butchery and meat packing business. Absorbed in the noise, smells and sheer physicality of this environment, young Mark learnt more about the structure of sinew, bone and flesh, albeit livestock not human, than in any subsequent life drawing class. As a teenager, passionate about pursuing an artistic career, Mark completed two foundation courses, at Oldham and Rochdale colleges of art.

However, in the 1980s conceptual art dominated the mainstream market and there were slim pickings for a young determinedly figurative painter in Manchester. Forced back to the wholesale butchery Mark continued to attend life classes religiously throughout the next decade. In the early 1990s the family business fell to the recession and Mark was spurred on to find a commercial outlet for his work. To buy time to build a portfolio he worked as an art technician at an Oldham grammar school for ten years. A short course at the Slade gave him an opportunity to tour the London galleries with his portfolio but with Brit Art in the ascendency he found good drawing very much out of favour. Luckily a local gallery had the foresight to offer him space in a mixed show and he sold six works at the opening. Mark gave notice at the school soon after. His subsequent rise in the art world is gratifying to those of us who admire that increasingly rare talent of good draughtsmanship. These preoccupations can be seen in recent paintings where his detailed observation combines with surface texture and carefully balanced compositions to create a beautiful and powerful representation of the figure.

In recent years Mark's reputation has flourished, such that he has become one of the most popular figurative artists working in Britain today. His powerful depictions of the human form have sparked a renaissance of interest in traditional life drawing amongst the art collecting fraternity. This immense technical ability is tempered by the natural sensitivity with which he imbues each subject. Although isolated in the picture plane, each model seems to live and breathe, their expression and poise conveying a sense of narrative that invites the viewer to ask more questions about them than the artist answers. Collaborations have involved the model Erin O'Connor, Marianela Nuñez, a Principal at the Royal Ballet and most famously a 21st birthday exhibition for the actress Emma Watson. In a contemporary art market seemingly obsessed with conceptual art, Mark's work is a timely antidote.



Emma Watson  
Mark Demstader  
Vogue



Mark's charcoal and gouache portraits have an almost sculptural feel to them. Powerful depiction of the female form in clean assured lines have helped spark a reminiscence of interest in traditional life drawings amongst the art collecting fraternity. His superb oil paintings have the essence and feel of an old master painting but with his artistic vision he creates painting which are modern things of beauty.

In the UK Mark rarely exhibits outside London, however, he has collectors around the world and has representation in places such Paris, Hong Kong, Japan and the U.S.A..



Portraits of Emma Watson



MARK DEMSTEADER -  
BIRDSONG IN BLUE



Ophelia



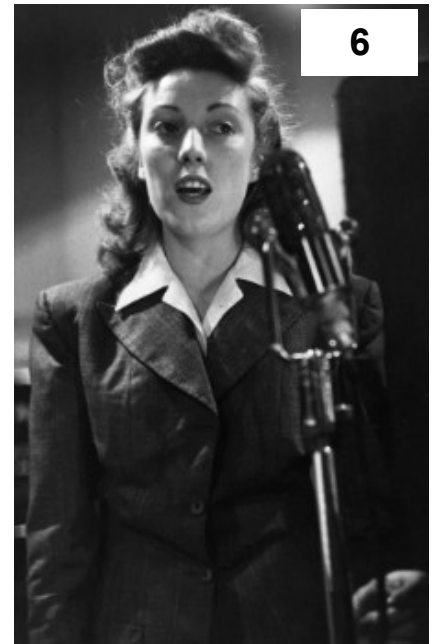
Autumn Lake

Mark still lives in Uppermill and it is his hometown that inspired the title of the book, with Saddleworth Moor providing the artist with the space and stillness that he so cherishes. "You feel like you're in a different universe up there, everything stands still," says Demstader.

Despite being so admired and studied by so many students, Mark has always shied away from the limelight, with very little written on him.

Mark's awards include The Lyceum Prize and The Sidney Andrews Scholarship and his work is included in many important collections. Current demand for his work reflects his growing reputation and his recent exhibitions across the UK have served to establish him as one of today's outstanding talents and best-selling artists.

## NAME THE FEMALE SINGERS



*Answers on next page*



## Answers to Film Quiz

1. Kylie Minogue
2. Alma Cogan
3. Sandie Shaw
4. Bonnie Tyler
5. Shirley Bassey
6. Vera Lynn
7. Taylor Swift
8. Aretha Franklin

Some of the Singers considered the best of all times  
but I'm sure you will have your favourites



*Pam Ayres poem provided by Sue*

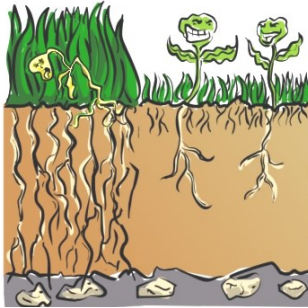
## THE HUSBAND'S LAMENT

The flowers round our garden gate are strangled now with nettles

The caterpillars got the leaves, the road dust got the petals

There's cracks across the asphalt path and the dusty wind does blow

I know they say 'domestic bliss' but .....I really do not know



There's bikes chunked on the garden and there's writing on the wall

The kids have smashed the wash house with their little rubber ball

The paint's peeled off the woodwork and the gutter's sagging fast

I bodged it up last autumn but.....it didn't last



In our shattered living room the telly's on the blink

There's fag ends in the saucers and pots piled in the sink

There's holes burned in the carpet where it smouldered half the night

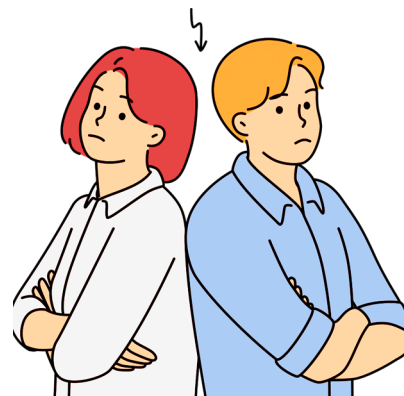
'A Woman's Work Is Never Done' and you certainly proved that right!



There's barnacles in the goldfish bowl and curlers on the floor  
The budgie's out the window and there's woodworm in the door  
The leaves fell off the rubber plant, the leg fell off the bed  
The smiles fell off our faces and the front fell off the shed



And *you* who I adored, one look and I was falling  
You stole away my heart beneath the moon and that  
tarpaulin  
It *can't* be you beside me with your tights so full of holes  
Chewing through your supper, all those piccalilli rolls  
We've been together twenty years and the story has a  
moral  
Since we have no conversation we've never had a quarrel  
We hardly see each other so we never have a fight  
For silence it is golden and we've certainly proved that right!





## **QUIZ QUESTIONS — CREATURES**

1. What amphibious mammal lives in a holt?
2. What are the most common types of creature in the UK?
3. From what animals has the ferret descended?
4. A muntjac is what kind of animal?
5. In *Wind in the Willows*, who suffered road rage?
6. Which is Britain's largest deer: fallow, musk, red or roe?
7. What is the only poisonous snake found in Britain?
8. Myxomatosis has killed millions of which animal?
9. Which insect has the Latin name *Apis mellifera*?
10. What is the name of a badger's home?
11. What is Britain's smallest mammal?
12. Which animal brought the bubonic plague to London?
13. Which rodent fell asleep at the Mad Hatter's tea party?
14. The hair of which animal was used for shaving brushes?
15. What speedy animal lives in a form?
16. Which two animals farmed for fur breed in the wild?
17. What is a stoat called when it turns white in winter?
18. What are baby seals called?
19. Why does a glow worm glow in the dark?
20. Redds are the breeding grounds of what?

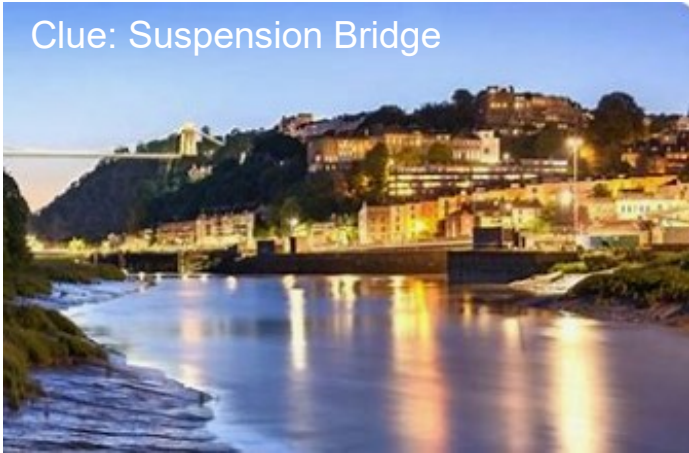
**ANSWERS**

1. The otter
2. Beetles
3. The polecat
4. A small deer
5. Toad (of Toad Hall)
6. The red deer
7. The adder (or viper)
8. Rabbits
9. The honey bee
10. A sett
11. Pigmy shrew
12. The black rat
13. The dormouse
14. The badger
15. A hare
16. Mink and Coypu (now eradicated in the UK)
17. Ermine
18. Pups
19. To attract mates
20. Fish

## HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW — UK TOWN/CITIES

1

Clue: Suspension Bridge



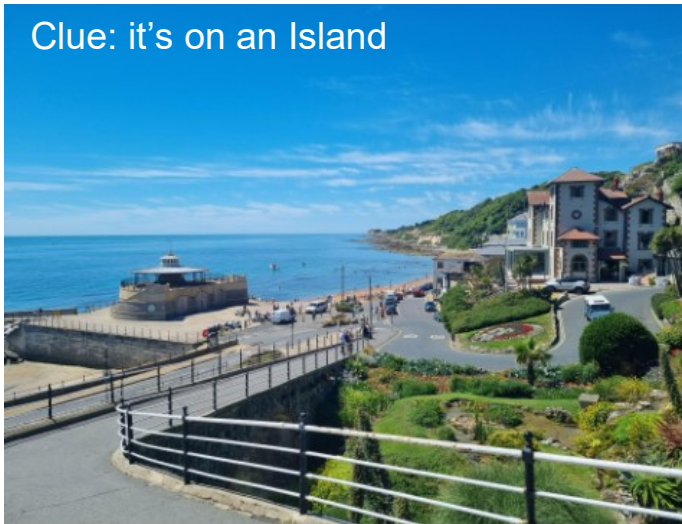
2

Clue: Great Orme



3

Clue: it's on an Island



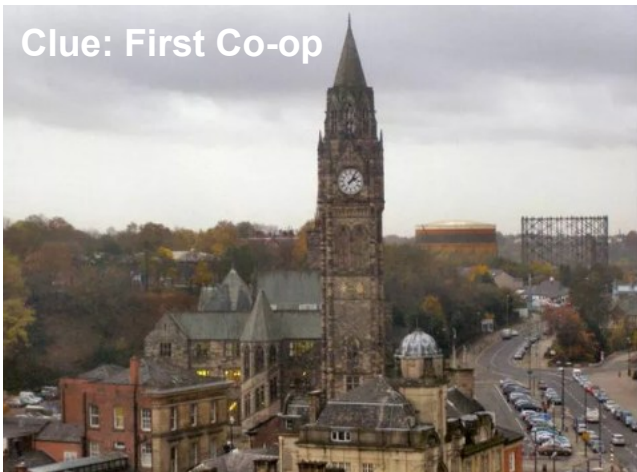
4

Clue: 11th Century



5

Clue: First Co-op



6

Clue: Part of the English Riviera



Answers on next page...



## Answers to Towns/Cities

### 1. **Bristol** (Clifton Suspension Bridge)



### 2. **Llandudno** (Great Orme)



### 3. **Ventnor** (Isle of Wight)



### 4. **Lincoln**



Cathedral  
Built in the  
11th  
Century.

### 5. **Rochdale** The home of the first Co-op.



### 6. **Torquay** Known as the English Riviera.



## **STUFFED RIB CHOPS**

Serves 6

### **Ingredients:**

6 Rib Chops

Flour

Salt and pepper

Crushed herbs

1 tbsp Oil

1 tbsp chopped Onion

2 tsp Chopped Parsley

1 cup of Breadcrumbs

3 Cooking Apples

### **Method:**

Cut a slit through the fat at the edge of each chop to give a pocket for stuffing. Rub chops and inside the pocket lightly with flour seasoned with salt, pepper and herbs.

Melt oil in a pan, add onions, parsley and crumbs and season to taste.

Cook for 2 or 3 mins.

Brown the chops in a strong frying pan, fat edge down, until the fat runs freely, then fill each pocket with the stuffing and fasten the edges together with toothpicks.

Place on a rack in a baking dish or tin with a cover.

Cut apples in half, but **do not peel** and place on each chop.

Cover and bake in a moderately hot oven (375°F for 3/4 hour).

Remove toothpicks and serve garnished with parsley.

## PETS CORNER

### IT STARTED WITH ONE DOG



"It's hard to put into words the benefits that a Wolfie's dog brings, but I think they have special souls that bring out the best in everyone that comes into contact with them"

Pamela Leadbetter

Retired Solicitor of the Supreme Court

### The Story of Wolfie's Legacy

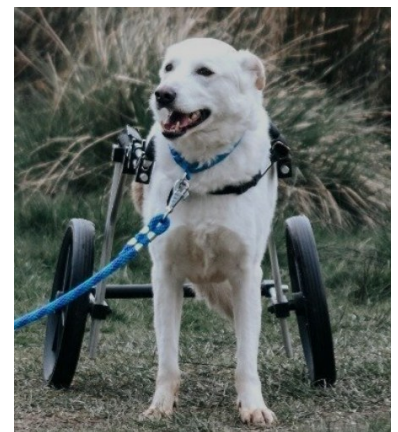


In 2013, Gill Daghistani agreed to look after a rescue dog from Hungary for a couple of days while transport was arranged to take him to his new home in Scotland. When the animal team transporter took the dog – Wolfie - out of her car she told Gill he wasn't going to last long. Ms. Daghistani was immediately smitten with Wolfie, and in that instant knew that he would change her life.

Wolfie suffered years of neglect, and when he was finally rescued, he was riddled with severe mobility issues. When his Degenerative Myelopathy came to light, his intended home was no longer an option, so Gill who'd fallen head over heels for Wolfie gave him a loving home until he passed away aged 14.

Gill realised that whilst there were so many people willing to rehome able-bodied dogs, no one was doing the same for dogs with special needs. They were rejected at 'rescues', or almost always put to sleep by vets, because they were considered hard work or perceived unlikely to enjoy a good quality of life.

Wolfie's Legacy was born, later becoming a registered charity in 2017. Since then, Gill and her team have rehabilitated and rehomed over 500 dogs of all ages, from all over the world, with varying degrees of disability. There are now Wolfie's dogs spanning the UK, with students, policemen, Supreme Court lawyers, Paralympians and pensioners stepping up to give a Wolfie's dog a home.





## SPORTING GREATS

### MICHAEL PHELPS



Michael Phelps is the greatest swimmer of all time.

**Born:** 30th June 1985

**Place of Birth:** Maryland, Baltimore, U.S.A.

**Height:** 6ft 4ins. **Shoe size:** 14

**Parents:** Michael Fred & Deborah Sue Phelps

**Sisters:** Hilary & Whitney Phelps

**Wife:** Nicole Michele Johnson Phelps, model and beauty pageant winner who was Miss California in 2010.

**Children:** 4 sons



Michael began swimming at the age of seven following his two older sisters and also because his mother thought it would get rid of some of his boundless energy.

He loved swimming and ended up joining the North Baltimore Aquatic Club at the age of 10. Around this time he met his coach, Bob Bowman who recognised his potential and started pushing him to train harder.

By 1999 Phelps had made the U.S. National B Team. He was just 14.

At 15, he turned pro, becoming the youngest male swimmer ever to do so. For the next 16 years, Bob Bowman and Michael travelled the world together competing internationally and eventually became household names.

Bowman was there when Michael made his first Games in 200 metre butterfly and represented Team USA in Sydney Australia, and he became the youngest swimmer ever to break a world record, winning 200 metre butterfly at the 2001 World Championship Trials.

Phelps is the most decorated athlete in Olympic history with 28 medals, which include 23 gold. At the 2008 Games in Beijing, he became the first athlete to win eight gold medals at a single Olympics.

Bowman his coach has been with him throughout and Michael has followed a strict training routine and diet. Photo below on the left.



Right: Family man with wife and four sons, Boomer, Beckett, Maverick and Nico Michael





# HERITAGE TOUR



Join us at George Street Chapel for a fascinating tour telling the remarkable stories using costumed actors to help you step back in time to meet the people who lived, learnt and worshipped in the chapel building.

Wed 21<sup>st</sup> May 11am followed by tea/coffee & cake £14.95

Tues 8<sup>th</sup> July 6pm followed by a 2 course Lancashire fayre £25.00

Sat 9<sup>th</sup> August 11am followed by tea /coffee & cake £14.95

[www.ticketsource.co.uk/age-uk-oldham](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/age-uk-oldham) or call 0161 622 9264  
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# Life Story

Every life has a story...

