



WE WISH YOU A  
**Merry Christmas**  
AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

British Embassy  
**An Evening of Celebration  
and Pop Culture**

British Cemetery  
**Past and Present and  
Remembrance Day**

OBC&OGC  
**Navidad en Familia**

Back in Time  
**A Hat Party**





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### BSU CONTACT NEWSLETTER



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Montevideo, Uruguay



**N**ovember unfolds like a frenetic tapestry of events; a whirlpool of activities that propels us from one event to the next one. The final of the OBC&OGC – British Society Squash Tournament Tomi Morton took place on the very 1st day of November and the British Society Committee was there to witness it!! It was very moving because Astrid Morton, one of Tomito's daughters was able to come from abroad. Barely catching our breaths, we dive into a cascade of milestones. Remember, remember the 5th of November, gunpowder, treason and plot..." This cultural memory has been faithfully preserved for over 400 years. We didn't celebrate it this year, but we promise we will next year. We did participate together with the British Embassy in the Encuentro de Colectividades organized by the Municipio Ch. You could find different Chutneys and Marmalades and even Lemon Curd at our stand. We had Ms. Patricia Izubejeres playing the pipes and then when it was Great Britain's turn to go onto the stage a long queue of dancers followed her. The fair was very well organised and we have been invited to take part next year. Remembrance Day at the British Cemetery following the calendar. Every year at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month many people around the world remember the sacrifices many have made so we could enjoy life today. King Charles III birthday followed on the 14th November. Amidst the echoes of the Royal celebration the spotlight shifted to the vibrant world of Theatre for on the 15th November the Montevideo Players performed 12 Angry Jurors at MAD music school, acting and dance. Betalba House sent an invitation to meet visual artist Diego Masi through his sound art that fuses the rational with the emotional. Amid the events happening at Betalba House another captivating event unfolded. We invited our sister societies to an engaging talk by Mr. Alfredo Etchegaray about the recovery of the Eagle of the Graf Spee. Alfredo regaled the audience with captivating anecdotes. The Spring Croquet Tournament took place at the British Schools adding a touch of competition to our bustling calendar. Whether it is Trevor or Empson who takes the trophy home it is worth playing, a lighthearted yet spirited contest. As the echo of the mallets faded away the crescendo of events reached its pinnacle with the Joint and Joyful Tea. As if on cue, the calendar turns, and December peeks around the corner. I keep repeating myself "Time flies". The countdown to Christmas intensifies there is a magic that transforms our hectic days into cherished moments, a time of promise of joy and reflection. I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a new year full of togetherness for I believe that together everyone achieves more.

Andrea

## Winter Time

By Robert Louis Stevenson

Late lies the wintry sun a-bed,  
A frosty, fiery sleepy-head;  
Blinks but an hour or two; and then,  
A blood-red orange, sets again.

Before the stars have left the skies,  
At morning in the dark I rise;  
And shivering in my nakedness,  
By the cold candle, bathe and dress.

Close by the jolly fire I sit  
To warm my frozen bones a bit;  
Or with a reindeer-sled, explore  
The colder countries round the door.

When to go out, my nurse doth wrap  
Me in my comforter and cap;  
The cold wind burns my face, and blows  
Its frosty pepper up my nose.

Black are my steps on silver sod;  
Thick blows my frosty breath abroad;  
And tree and house, and hill and lake,  
Are frosted like a wedding-cake.



## MEMBERSHIP FEES

Remember you can pay your 2023 membership fees easily from the comfort of your own home using your credit or debit card through [MercadoPago](#).

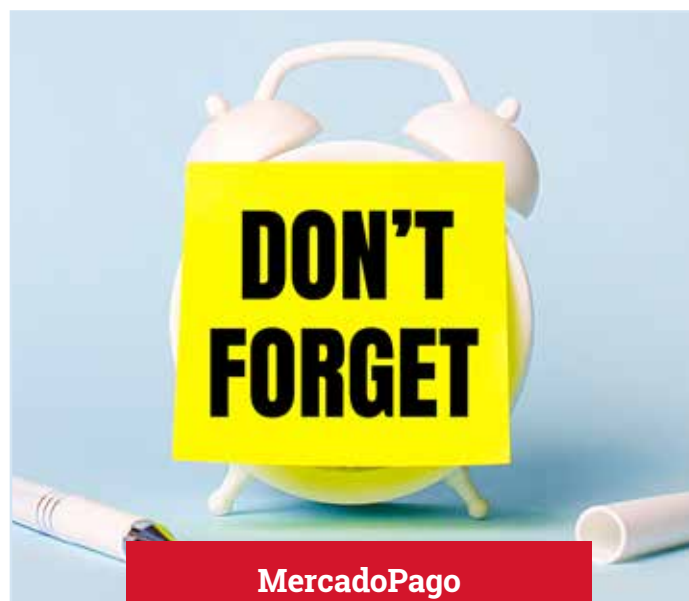
We have also implemented **recurring payments** so you no longer have to remember to pay your fees. You do not need to have a MercadoPago user, by clicking [HERE](#) you can choose to enter your details as “Invitado”, you are 3 clicks away of never having to remember to pay again! This recurring payment is very easy to cancel if you wish to do so in the future.

You may also pay by transfer or a direct deposit to the account of British Society in Uruguay at **Banque Heritage** (account number 62582-03). Please email your transfer/ deposit slip to our Treasurer.

If you forgot to pay any previous annual fees please email our Treasurer at [treasurer@britsoc.org.uy](mailto:treasurer@britsoc.org.uy) to learn about ways to pay past dues.

If you wish to become a member first fill in [this form](#).

**Once this is done, your membership will be updated.**



**MercadoPago**  
**Annual Fee - \$700**

**MercadoPago Recurring**  
**Payments - \$650**



# Birthdays

in December

1. María Teresa Esteche González
1. Norman Alexander Fox Taylor
3. Mark Rosevear Jefford
4. Cristina Ana Edbrooke
5. Stephanie Ann Biscomb Springings
6. Matias Martin Campbell Lacoste
7. Emily Teuten Ponzoni
7. Guillermo Leonardo Symonds Cooper
8. Mónica Maria Bastarrica de Medina
10. Alice Lilian Vignoles Ugalde
10. Sofía Scherschener
10. Valerie Murielle Dee Horne
10. Roy Leonardo Cooper de Arteaga
11. Adriana Butureira Rosemiglia
12. Vivienne Nerina Gepp Ward
14. Andrea Miguez Bercianos
14. Alicia Solange Espina Diaz
15. Marta Iñar del Valle Baraibar
15. María Magdalena De Torres Ellis
15. Alexander John Shaw O'Neill
16. Caroline Eleanor Mac Lennan Skirzewski
17. Jessica Margaret MacIntyre Clark
18. Daniel José Stewart Davies
18. María Noel Coates Caldeyro
20. Celina Amelia Burmester Almeida
20. Megan Mair Davies Reyes



21. Inés Beare Jorge
21. Enrique Morrone Lamanna
21. Elizabeth Susan Hyland Adkins
21. Marina Sylvia Jiménez de Arechaga Cooper
22. Ricardo Daniel Medina Day
22. María Jimena Llovet Pereira
23. Edison De León
23. Winston Enrique Willans Bruce
24. María Natalia Delbono Lacoste
27. Daniela Justine Golby Lopez Rey
28. Carlos Gabriel Verdún Fernández
30. Isabel Pauline Prevett Gomensoro
30. Mary Emily Wells Ensink
30. Caroline Lucie Wells Ensink
30. Nicholas Drever Lavista
31. Adriana María Ponzoni García

# New Members

Ximena Williamson Braga  
Valeria Caputto Barboza

*welcome*

For news from across the pond visit [www.abcc.org.ar](http://www.abcc.org.ar)



I don't like it when people text me in abbreviations at this old age. They be like "GM!".

Well, General Motors to you too.

# 2023



### List your events in our calendar:

We invite all sister societies to send us dates of your upcoming events to [editor@britsoc.org.uy](mailto:editor@britsoc.org.uy).

## DECEMBER

**WEDNESDAY 6 - CUB:** Lunch Invitation Econ. Salvdaor Ferrer, 12:15 at Parva Domus.

**FRIDAY 8 - BRITISH CEMETERY:** Museos a la Noche: tour "History of the British Cemetery" 10pm

**WEDNESDAY 13 - BRITISH EMBASSY:** Velada Británica 18h at MAPI Café, 25 de Mayo 279.

## JANUARY

**SUNDAY 21 - ANGLICAN CHURCH:** primer misa del 2024 10hs



### *Get your Xmas Crackers!*

**There are 20 dozen Xmas crackers for sale at U\$S 28 the dozen on behalf of BABS.**

**Contact: Angela Dickinson +598 99 175 925**

MAPI Café y la Embajada del Reino Unido invitan a :

## VELADA BRITÁNICA

Miércoles 13/12/2023  
a las 18 horas  
Museo MAPI  
25 de Mayo 279

Conchillas a través de la música  
de Jimmy Page

Entrada incluye :  
un gin tonic (o trago sin alcohol),  
snacks y un ejemplar de la novela  
"El tiempo es una gran mentira"  
de Luis Fernando Iglesias de obsequio

Literatura, música  
e historia de la visita del  
guitarrista de Led Zappelin  
a Conchillas en un diálogo  
entre el autor y Noelia Campo

Música y video:  
Dj Clara Iglesias

Precio de la entrada : \$800  
Reservar a :  
[contacto@mapi.uy](mailto:contacto@mapi.uy) o al  
teléfono: 2916 9360



Penguin  
Random House  
Grupo Editorial



Gin  
**PATRIMONIO**



ALFAGUARA

MAPI  CAFÉ





## Spring Tournament

The Spring Croquet tournament brought together participants of varying skill levels, including many who had never played the game before. The event was a resounding success, with participants reveling in the joy of learning and playing this classic lawn sport.

The atmosphere was filled with excitement and camaraderie as novices and experienced players alike gathered on the pristine lawns. The competition served as a fantastic introduction to the world of Croquet for those unfamiliar with the game, fostering a sense of community and shared enthusiasm. The inclusive nature of the competition created an environment where everyone felt welcome, fostering a sense of sportsmanship and unity among the diverse group of participants.

As the day unfolded, friendships were forged, skills were honed, and memories were made. The Croquet tournament at the British Schools on Sunday, the 26th, proved to be a wonderful experience for all involved. It showcased the power of sport to bring people together, irrespective of their prior experience, and highlighted the importance of enjoying the simple pleasures in life, especially when accompanied by beautiful weather and the spirit of friendly competition.



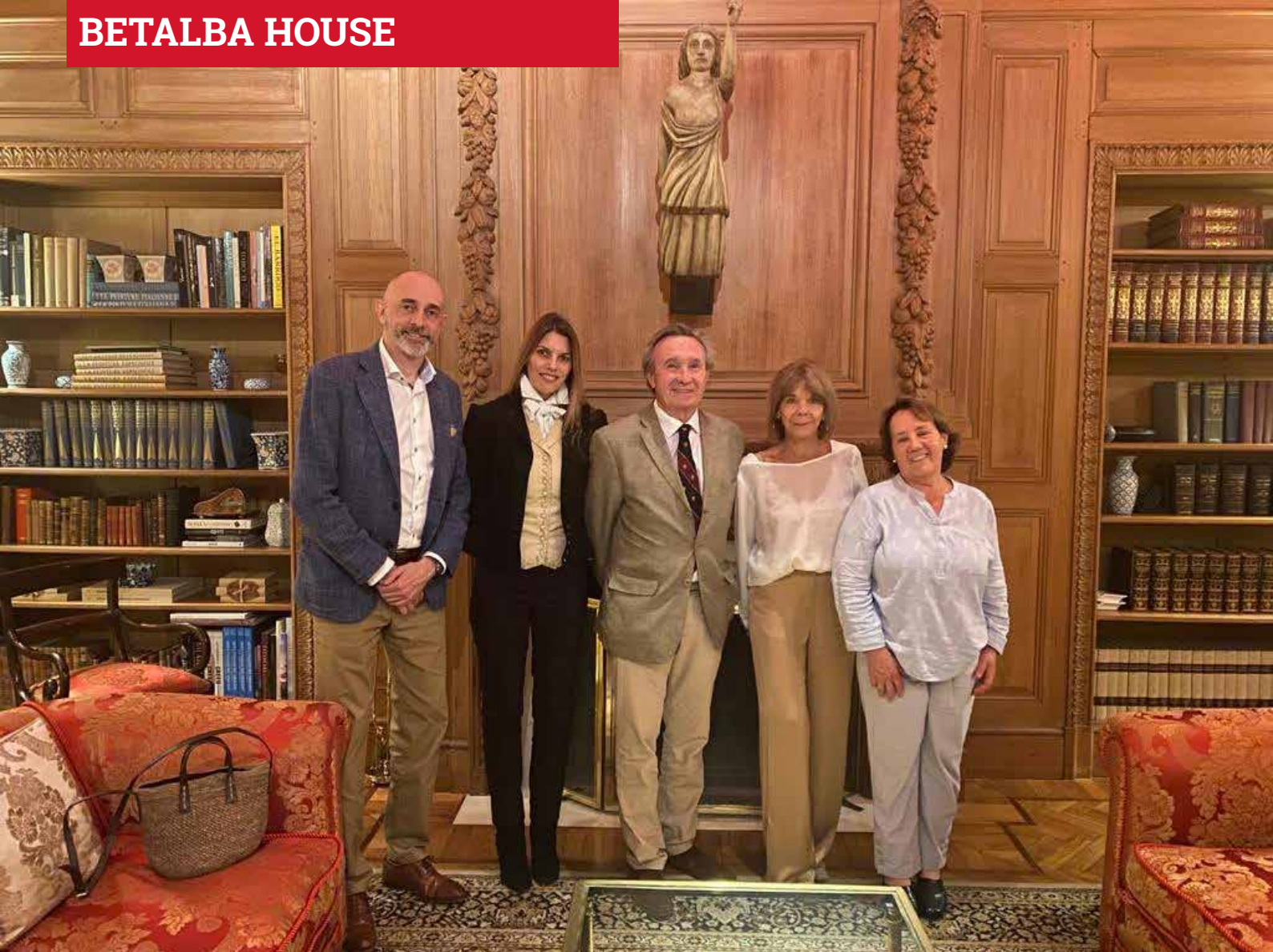




On Tuesday 28th The British Hospital Guild together with the British Society orchestrated an enchanting handicraft event based on the five elements. We have been working on taking care of the environment and becoming more involved in the conscientious consideration of the elements. Water faces peril from the danger of plastic pollution. Fire, a force both vital and potentially destructive, threatening our forests. Earth, the solid foundation of our existence and wood that brings warmth. Through education and advocacy, we aspire to create a world where the equilibrium of the five elements is cherished and protected, ensuring a harmonious coexistence with the planet which we call home.







**A**lfredo Etchegaray's captivating talk at BETALBA House centered on the remarkable journey and challenges involved in the recovery of the Eagle of the Graf Spee, an event that has captured the imagination of history enthusiasts worldwide.

The BETALBA House event was meticulously organized with a distinct purpose — to extend a warm invitation to sister societies, fostering a sense of camaraderie and providing them with an opportunity to intimately acquaint themselves with the rich tapestry of BETALBA House.







## An Evening of Celebration and Pop Culture

**A**mbassador Faye O'Connor hosted a reception on November 14th to celebrate the birthday of His Majesty King Charles III. It was an opportunity to thank partners and contacts with whom we have worked throughout the year. As well as serving traditional food and drink, guests enjoyed British music by DJ Paola Dalto and an exhibition of portraits of The Beatles by talented Uruguayan artist, Laura Moras. Students from The British Schools delighted our audience by performing hits from their latest musical "We will rock you".







## International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

To mark International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Embassy organised an “inter-generational dialogue on violence-free relationships” at the Residence, with NGO El Paso’s Director Andrea Tuana as main speaker. Women of all ages and from different walks of life interacted and exchanged views

about healthy relationships and signs of abusive ones. Ambassador Faye O’Connor and the British Ambassador to Argentina, Kirsty Hayes participated. Highlights are being shared on [social media](#) as part of our 16 days of activism campaign.



## Falkland Islands touches new audiences

In November, Uruguayan Instagram influencer @RomiMochileando spent a week travelling around the Falklands with colleagues from Argentina and Paraguay, by invitation of the local government. Romi was absolutely stunned with the beauty of the islands, its nature, the kindness of its people and was very happy to have a glimpse of their daily life. You can see plenty of [photos](#) and [videos](#) on her [Instagram account](#).

## Strengthening Defence collaboration

Professors from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, Dr. Pablo Merino and Dr. Aaron Edwards, gave lectures on geopolitics and strategic leadership for CALEN Uruguay’s students of the National Strategy Master and students from various Armed Forces Institutions including the Military, Naval and Military Aeronautics Schools, Naval War College and Air Command and Staff College. The lectures allowed junior and senior audiences to reflect on current leadership and strategic challenges.







## All our history is consolidated on Christmas Eve

I would like to start by saying that our entire history focuses on Christmas Eve. God the creator, God of mercy, the God of the people of Israel who accompanied them in the desert on the way to the promised land; it transforms into a human being and opens a new horizon of joy. Also becomes good news for the weakest and for all those who for different reasons have lost hope.

Christmas without a doubt brings up the mystery of the incarnation of God who becomes one with us and reveals his love and compassion. He rises as a child to share our human fragility.

Jesus was born in a manger because there was no place for him. He decided to come into the world among the poor people, under the care of the Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph, in the company of the shepherds and, from that moment, he began to enlighten us. I wish that we can all find that same Jesus who accompanies us on our path and we can feel his tenderness.

Apart from the parties, music and gifts, let us not forget that Christmas is a turning point, where God is not indifferent because he becomes one with us and shares our journey.

Finally, from the Anglican Opportunity Movement we want to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2024 together with your families and loved ones. May God and Jesus always be in your hearts!

Priest Gonzalo Soria  
Vicar of the Anglican Church of Uruguay.

### Mass Schedule

December:

- 03 - 10:00 hrs - Holy Eucharist (English)
- 10 - 10:00 hrs – Morning Prayer (Spanish)
- 17 - 10:00 hrs - Eucharist for Migrant People (Spanish)
- 24 - 10:00 hrs – Christmas Eucharist (Spanish)



## A Proud Legacy: Anglo Institute Turns 90!

ANGLO

**A**s we bid farewell to another remarkable year, it is with immense pride and joy that we reflect on the incredible journey of the Anglo Institute, our cherished institution within the British Society. In the coming year, we are thrilled to announce that the Anglo Institute will be celebrating its 90th anniversary—a milestone that speaks volumes about its rich history and unwavering commitment to excellence.

Founded as one of the youngest sister institutions under the British Society, the Anglo Institute has flourished over the decades to become the largest private educational network in Uruguay. Our journey has been nothing short of extraordinary, marked by moments of significance and accomplishments that have shaped our identity and reputation.



From hosting future kings and princesses to welcoming British and local artists and politicians, the Anglo Institute has become a cultural hub and a beacon of academic excellence. Over the years, our

institution has evolved to become a reference point in theatre, English language teaching, Cambridge international examinations, and teacher training.



Notably, the Anglo Institute has expanded its influence to incorporate a prestigious bilingual school, reflecting our commitment to providing a holistic and world-class education. The journey to this point has been a collective effort, and we are immensely grateful for the unwavering support of our dedicated staff, students, and the broader community.



Thank you for being a part of the Anglo Institute's remarkable journey. We look forward to celebrating this momentous occasion with the same enthusiasm, dedication, and spirit that has defined our institution for nearly a century.

May your holiday season be filled with joy and may the New Year bring you happiness and prosperity!



## The Anglo School moves forward: Implementing the brand-new Cambridge Early Years programme

**W**e are delighted to announce that as from March 2024, The Anglo School will be adopting the brand-new Cambridge Early Years programme.

Cambridge Early Years is the new Cambridge programme for 3–6-year-olds. It gives young learners the best start in life, helping them to meet key early milestones and thrive in and outside of school. Cambridge Early Years is the first stage in the Cambridge Pathway, which gives students a clear path for educational success from age 3-19. By adopting this first stage to our curriculum, we will be offering our youngest students solid foundations to move smoothly onto the well-established Cambridge Primary and Secondary programmes, which we have been working with for almost 20 years now.



### Why adopt Cambridge Early Years?

It is a child-centred, play-based programme that helps young learners to develop at their own pace. It encourages them to act independently, make their own choices and discover feelings of self-worth. It is therefore very well aligned with our school values: responsibility, respect, empathy and self-confidence.

### Cambridge Pathway

Cambridge Early Years Age 3+	Cambridge Primary Age 5+	Cambridge Lower Secondary Age 11+	Cambridge Upper Secondary Age 14+	Cambridge Advanced Age 16+
<p>An integrated programme, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A holistic approach</li> <li>• Engaging classroom resources</li> <li>• An assessment framework</li> </ul>	<p>A broad and balanced curriculum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>10+ subjects (including English, Mathematics and Science)</u></li> <li>• <u>Classroom and external assessments</u></li> </ul>	<p>A broad and balanced curriculum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>10+ subjects (including English, Mathematics and Science)</u></li> <li>• <u>Classroom and external assessments</u></li> </ul>	<p>A wide choice of subjects at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Cambridge IGCSE (70+ subjects)</u></li> <li>• <u>Cambridge O Level (40+ subjects)</u></li> <li>• <u>Cambridge ICE Certificate</u></li> </ul>	<p>A wide choice of subjects at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Cambridge International AS &amp; A Level (55+ subjects)</u></li> <li>• <u>Cambridge Pre-U (20+ subjects)</u></li> <li>• <u>Cambridge AICE Diploma</u></li> <li>• <u>Cambridge IPQ</u></li> </ul>





It includes everything we need for high-quality learning: a holistic, balanced curriculum, engaging classroom resources, professional development and assessment approaches to help us measure our learners' progress.

It supports learners, whatever their level of English when they begin the programme, as it offers a bilingual



or multilingual approach if learners have a home language other than English, as is our case.

We firmly believe that by adopting the Early Years programme we will be offering our youngest learners the best possible foundations to start their learning path, providing them with a holistic and well-balanced curriculum which integrates all areas in the development of a child.





**W**elcome to ANGLO Summer Courses 2024. This intensive self-contained program stretches over four weeks, starting February 2 through March 1. With a strong focus on oral communication and listening comprehension and groups spanning from Elementary to Advanced, chances are there is a group that fits your level and caters for your language needs.

Some of the courses strengths and takeaways:

**Our teachers:** the program is led by experienced and flexible professionals with the training and capacity to adapt to the heterogeneous needs, challenges and areas of improvement present in Summer Courses groups in general.

**Boost your confidence:** we understand that the process to acquire a second language is arduous and stressing partially from an emotional point of view. With that in mind, we go to lengths to ensure an atmosphere that will contribute to the class being a safe space for students to try new things and run linguistic risks without feeling observed, judged or even ridiculed.

**Emphasis on Communication:** our summer courses pivot around the development of the two main skills essential for effective communication (listening and speaking) by means of strengthening the participants' grammar foundations and expanding and activating their passive lexical system. Lessons are interactive and promote learning through content that result from a conscientious instance of needs analysis.

**Focus on Pronunciation:** raising awareness and providing practice in this area is also a key element to our Summer Courses program.

**Extensive feedback:** we understand feedback as the essential component to every learning process. Our experienced teachers identify areas in need of



improvement and, through detailed, specific and personalized feedback, ease the transition from where each student currently is as far as his command of the language goes and where they aspire to be.

**Emergent Language:** Emergent language is spontaneous, personal, and unrehearsed language that comes up during interactions. It happens when students are trying to express themselves and communicate a meaning or a concept. Emergent language usually occurs in freer, fluency-type activities which are the type of activities that are promoted by our teachers in our Summer Courses classrooms.

**Face-to-Face or Synchronic On-line:** students can opt between these two formats, the traditional classroom face-to-face dynamics and the remote synchronic on-line class.

For more than 15 years ANGLO Summer Courses Program has made a difference for hundreds of students, enhancing their confidence and bettering their command of the English language. We are really looking forward to having you with us next February, we know we can help out providing for your language needs and achieving your academic goals.





Dear readers,

This past month has been wonderfully eventful as we've had the pleasure of hosting several gatherings, warmly welcoming numerous guests on various occasions in our splendid garden settings.

**Past and Present** was as agreeable as ever, uniting our community in a memorable afternoon. A soft sun and blooming flowers accompanied us along with a plentiful and pleasant attendance. A heartfelt thanks extends to Robert Wells and all our esteemed guests whose presence made for such a memorable occasion.

Eduardo Montemuiño orchestrated a new event honoring **Darwin's legacy**, marking the 190th anniversary of his visit to Uruguay, a poignant tribute to his remarkable influence.

On Saturday 11th we were proud to host **Remembrance Day** in our Cemetery. Paying our respects to those who fought to defend freedom stands as important and relevant as ever.

The attendance of students from The British Schools was very welcome, with a special mention to Franco Malde for his reading of an extract from "For the Fallen" by Robert Laurence Binyon. We'd also like to thank Father Gonzalo Soria, from Holy Trinity Church, British Ambassador Faye O'Conner OBE and Group Captain Mike Lavender OBE, Royal Air Force, our helpers with the flags who did a wonderful job, our steadfast trumpeter William Shaw and piper Gonzalo Rodriguez.



## The Kohima Epitaph

*'When You Go Home, Tell Them Of Us And Say,  
For Your Tomorrow, We Gave Our Today.'*

All of the photographs of our events are available on our website's Photo Gallery. Please check them out!

<https://cementeribritanico.com.uy/eng/gallery.php>

But the year isn't over and neither are our events. Coming up on December 8th is a new edition of 'Museums at Night,' running from 7 pm to 10 pm. Continuing our tradition, the Cemetery joins this initiative once again. On that night, the Cemetery's lights will shine bright adorned in its finest attire. We hope you can join us.



# BRITISH CEMETERY





# BRITISH CEMETERY







# Hospital Scheme fresh news!

**We continue working hard for your satisfaction**

## **New Inpatient floor**

A new block of 11 private rooms with a waiting area for conventional care has been built on the 5th floor of the central building. The new facilities adhere to the usual quality standards, with some innovations in technology and furnishings.

## **Coloproctology: International Certification**

The Coloproctology Unit has received accreditation from the Spanish Association of Coloproctology, presented by Prof. Dr. Fernando De la Portilla. It is the first unit in the continent to receive this accreditation. Dr. Gustavo Veirano and Dr. Patrick Lyford Pike, along with the hospital authorities, received the well-deserved recognition.

## **Lullaby: Shared Happiness**

From now on, when a baby is born in the hospital, a lullaby will play in our facilities, with the intention of sharing the joy brought by a new life.

## **New Service: Medical Guidance Line**

The purpose of this line is to guide members who need assistance with information about their care, referrals to specific services, or to follow up on received care. The service operates from 8 am to 8 pm and can be reached at T. 2487 1020, ext. 0.

## **Endoscopy Update**

We have completed the renovation of the Endoscopy area, making it more comfortable.

## **Assist Card: New Benefits**

Our members now have access to new discounts on personalised and tailor-made travel insurance products. For enrolment and more information, call 2628 6073.



## **Ambulance Access and Emergency**

Following the completion of the inpatient floor construction works, we have renovated the area that includes the entrance on Miranda Street, access to the Emergency Department, and the facade of the entire building to unify it and give it the overall style of the hospital.

## **Blood Donation in Carrasco**

Our blood donation campaign at Carrasco clinic is very successful. Schedule an appointment to donate blood and join the Donor Club with benefits for your family.

## **Previsora Martinelli: Cremation**

We have added a new service from Previsora Martinelli to provide cremation within the coverage. This service has no waiting period and is available until December 15, 2023.

## **Gynaecology: Medical Research Programmes**

The Oncological Gynaecology Unit received authorisation to be a reference centre in Uruguay and to carry out an international collaborative clinical research protocol. It involves 28 centres worldwide with the aim of reducing the incidence of ovarian cancer in a specific population. The leading professionals in this field are Dr. Santiago Scasso and Dr. Joel Laufer, who work in a multidisciplinary team with other specialities within the institution.



## Advent 2023

I did not grow up with an introduction to the Liturgical Calendar. I had no clue what the word Advent meant. I did not know about “Reyes” on January 6th. I thought it was strange the way some churches (*Methodist and Catholic in my experience*) focused on certain colors for their robes, candles, and decor. Why would they fill the space with mystery when other churches (*Baptist and Nazarene in my world*) seemed to simply “go about their business” without all the fuss.

I remember the way my mother taped Christmas cards from all the years all over the door frames to decorate. So much work, I thought and then we just have to take it all down again when Christmas is over... We (*my siblings and I*) complained and grumbled until we won, and my Mother said: “Ok. This year, no tree, and no decorations.” We were so happy for a time. But I confess I missed the mystery, the wonder, the Advent expectation (*there is that word again*) of a celebration that was so much bigger and more significant than our family foibles.”

Years have passed and my Mom still hangs cards that she can no longer read, but she loves the wonder,

and the symbols of the mystery. What mystery? The ancient story of that greatest mystery of all: when God, the Creator of Life became a baby born into all the vulnerabilities, foibles and struggles of a young family with an uncertain future.

What if, the (*three?*) Wise Kings (*Persian Zoroastrian Astrologers?*) who traveled from afar had discovered a truth from ancient prophecies hidden in the stars, yet sleeping as a newborn baby... what if...?

Advent always arrives before the celebrations start. Advent is the season on the Liturgical Calendar that always invites us back to the mystery, the wonder, and the waiting... the advent of good news that a baby born in Bethlehem became the hope of the world.

Today, I don’t decorate like my Mother once did, but I remember with gratitude her many contributions to my life. **Merry Christmas Mom!** Thanks for encouraging me to find my way into faith through the marvelous mystery of Advent!

**John Hamilton**  
Pastor, Christ Church

		<b>SUNDAYS/Domingos</b> <b>03</b> GOLD FOR THE KING Oro para el Rey		<b>10</b> FRANKINCENSE FOR THE PRIEST Incienso para el Sacerdote		<b>17</b> MYRRH FOR THE LAMB Mirra para el Cordero		<b>24</b> SAVIOR FOR THE WORLD Salvador para el Mundo	
<b>December</b> <b>Diciembre</b>		<b>SATURDAY/Sábado</b> <b>02</b> 12:00 YOUNG ADULT SALIDA Salida de Jóvenes		<b>TUESDAY/Martes</b> <b>05</b> 19:30 - 21:30 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Asamblea General					
<b>FRIDAY/Viernes</b> <b>08</b> 19:00 MOVIE NIGHT Noche de Pelicula		<b>WEDNESDAY/Miércoles</b> <b>13</b> 17:00 CAROLING Villancicos		<b>FRIDAY/Viernes</b> <b>15</b> 19:00 CHRISTMAS POTLUCK Cena de Navidad					
<b>SUNDAY/Domingo</b> <b>24</b> 11:00 WORSHIP SERVICE Servicio Dominical		<b>SUNDAY/Domingo</b> <b>24</b> 18:00 CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE Servicio de Nochebuena							





## LUNCH INVITATION

Wednesday  
6<sup>th</sup> of December  
at 12:15 PM

President Banco de la República Oriental del Uruguay

**Econ. Salvador Ferrer**

*"The banking system, the role of BROU,  
and the challenges of future banking"*

Parva Domus, Punta Carretas

Bvar Artigas 136, Esq. Parva Domus

More Information



WEDNESDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER

THE BRITISH URUGUAYAN CLUB

INVITES MEMBERS AND FRIENDS TO SAY GOODBYE TO THE YEAR

AND PREPARE FOR A HAPPY 2024

FULL OF SUCCESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

GALA DINNER 2023

More Information



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## “Navidad en Familia”

**W**e want to take advantage of this December edition of the Newsletter, undoubtedly a special month, to tell you about our “*Navidad de Familia*”.

This is a project that fills us with pride every year, successful in every sense, which the Club has been developing for a long time (in fact, this will be the ninth consecutive year). Its main aim is to try to make a difference for families in need during Christmas. The community is invited to prepare a box, ensuring that behind each one, there's an entire family involved, committed, carefully preparing it with affection and dedication, thinking about the family they've been assigned. Every year, we're amazed by the preparations, packaging, and decorations from each family, as well as the anecdotes from parents and children when asked about their contribution.

There are several aspects that make “*Navidad de Familia*” so important to us, turning it into the primary social, charity and supportive activity of the year for our Club.

On one hand, the main goal: **the benefited families**, gathered through different organizations with which the Club has been working for years. This year, specifically, we will be assisting the **Centro CAIF “La Esperanza”**, the **“Hogar El Andén”**, the **“Oratorio Don Bosco”**, the **“Centro de Equinoterapia Maranatha”**, the **“Fundación Mir”** and the **“Centro Juvenil del Proyecto Cienpies en Cuenca de Casavalle”**. For all of us who provide this type of assistance in one way or another, we understand the immeasurable value of each action. We're talking about around 400 families being helped, and if we consider an average, we're thinking of 1600 people (probably more) receiving this small effort on our part, which brings tremendous joy to them.

On the other hand, the fact that this entire social movement is carried out jointly with **The British Schools**. From different areas, each organization, the Club and the School, contribute their work and effort to carry out this great project. Here, every year, we find dozens of members and







Club and School personnel working together. This joint effort inevitably integrates the third component of our community, which is **families**. Some exclusively identify with the Club, others only with the School, and several with both institutions, but where the final result is the best demonstration of everyone's commitment when it's needed. During the final days of the boxes delivery, we can see children from Junior and Senior, as well as players or veterans from the Club, all helping with the organization, the loading, and the distribution. Some years it ends up looking like an anthill of people, but above all, filled with happiness and joy.

Finally, knowing that we have a great **Social Responsibility Committee** in the Club, which culminates each year with the "*Navidad de Familia*", but organizes and carries out several projects throughout the year (such as the "*Campaña de Útiles*", the "*Campaña del Abrigo*", the "*Campaña del Día del Niño*", the ongoing aid to the "*Fundación El Palomar*" among others), fills us with joy and satisfaction, understanding that a group of members are working tirelessly throughout the year for this social and humane objective.

To all who would like to join in any way, WELCOME. And to all who have participated or helped at any time, THANK YOU VERY MUCH !!!!.

Happy Holidays to everyone!





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*Merry Christmas and  
Happy New Year!*

On the whole 2023 has been a good year, especially if we take into account that it is Coronation Year, which has been quite moving for British people and many others too around the world!

### God Save the King!



For the Dickens it has been a splendid year! Dickens received from Cambridge English the highest recognition it awards Institutions: Platinum Authorised Exam Centre! Congratulations Sofia, Manuel and Dickens Staff!

**dickens**

 **CAMBRIDGE**  
English

Platinum  
Authorised Exam Centre



**THE DICKENS INSTITUTE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF WISH YOU A  
MERRY CHRISTMAS AND MAY WORLD PEACE REIGN IN 2024!**



## A Hat Party

In the 1960s I lived in Madrid, in one of the older residential neighbourhoods not far from the Avenida del Generalísimo. There was something a little surreal about being a foreigner in Franco's Spain. The civil war had been over for nearly thirty years, but the dictatorship still imposed limits on Spaniards that did not apply to expats like me.

By day I worked at an advertising agency, wearing a coat and tie and a crisp white shirt. But at night I moved in bohemian circles, dining late and frequenting cabarets and flamenco bars and jazz clubs in the wee small hours of the morning. I travelled in excellent company: my roommate, Juanín, shared my interest in the bright lights, and possessed impeccable credentials as a boulevardier and all-round bon vivant.

As we whiled away the evenings at sidewalk cafés, we wondered aloud about expatriates in other places and times. We talked about Paris in the 1920s and wished we could have been there in those exhilarating days, mingling with the writers and artists who were pushing the boundaries of traditional art and literature. I was very keen on Hemingway at that time; his novel *The Sun Also Rises* had inspired a pilgrimage to Pamplona to see the running of the bulls the previous July. Perhaps we were too easily impressed by the presumed glamour of other places. We certainly seemed to spend a good deal of time wishing we were somewhere else, or someone other than who we were.

One aimless, rainy afternoon as we waited at a traffic light in the old part of town, we noticed a shop on the corner. The sign over the door said, "Blanca's Theatrical Costumes." In the window were dozens of hats of every imaginable kind, and above them a handwritten sign that said, "Going Out of Business Sale. ¡Bargains! ¡Bargains!" As we stepped over the threshold into the shop it felt as though we had gone backstage at the Teatro Calderón. There were costumes of every colour and fabric, rows and rows of them hanging chaotically on racks against the walls. There were suits of armour, horse's heads, swords, wishing wells, and half-moons hanging from the ceiling. And there was an

all-pervasive fragrance of greasepaint, geraniums, and dust.

We were met by a very small woman of indeterminate age. Her hair was platinum blonde, cut in a pageboy style. Her eyes and lips were heavily made up, and in her red-tipped fingers she carried a cigarette in an extremely long holder. "I am Blanca," she said in a deep, melodious voice. "How can I help you?"

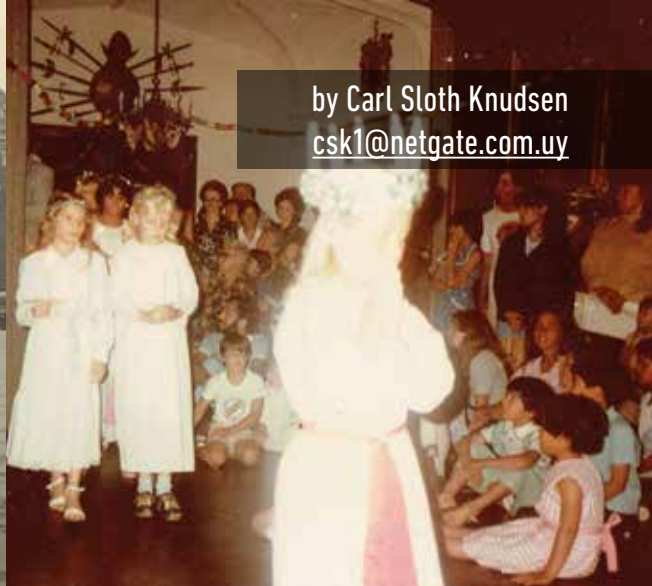
We pointed to the hats in the window, and she arched her eyebrows and blew out a long plume of smoke. "You like the hats?" she inquired. We nodded, yes. "Which ones you like?"

There were top hats and berets, bowlers, elegant felt homburgs, fedoras, jaunty straw hats, ladies' hats with veils, green ones with feathers, turbans, a fez or two, Stetsons, trim-looking derbies, sombreros, bonnets, sailor hats, shiny black tricorne, picador's hats, pillboxes, splendid maroon velvet toques, a crimson cloche, and a marvellous mauve boa several feet long.

As we examined them one by one, Blanca smoked pensively and watched us through half-closed lids. "Every hat is special, you know, like a costume, and much better than a mask" she told us. "With each one you can be whoever the hat makes you feel." We nodded again, yes, exactly. She shrugged her tiny shoulders in a gesture of extraordinary eloquence and murmured, "Why not take them all?" So we did.

Two weeks later we threw a Hat Party that is still talked about by the regulars at the Café Gijón. Hats of every description were scattered about the apartment, on the furniture in the hall, and on coat hangers by the door. As guests arrived, they chose a hat and put it on. Some wore the same hat all night; others exchanged hats with people they had never met and discovered things about each other that nobody had ever known before. Miraculous conversations took place as people came to see themselves as they could have been, should have been, and indeed would have been, if only they'd been wearing the right hat.





## Back to the Future IX

Ending the school holiday, and being in Atlántida, I was introduced to Aimee Behrens, a Norwegian lady friend of my parents whose German husband died some years earlier and was buried at the British Cemetery. We had a very good relationship with her children, Augusto, Elizabeth, Astrid, Olaf, and Rolf, whom we all considered, in a way, as being part of our family.

I saw little of the sisters, as they generally weren't there. Augusto was 10 years older, and when we met, we exchanged ideas about fishing from "La Isla". On sunny days, I used to catch butterflies with Rolf, or else play tennis at the golf club. During rainy days, we used to play home roulette or went to the cinema "Las Cuevas" beside the Casino. Rolf was very smart with numbers, so I gathered he would be an investor when grown up. We were both money-minded, so we made an agreement with his mother who paid 50 pesos for each bag of pine we could bring home - a short-time business as basement capacity collapsed, and we had nowhere else to deposit them. Nevertheless, we were very happy for the job opportunity, and of course, enjoyed having some pocket money without having to ask for it.

At home, I had an accident climbing a eucalyptus tree. I lost control, and falling down, my right foot got stuck by a smaller branch. Hanging head down, and hands not reaching the floor, I asked my brother Martin to take the branch off my leg and just let my body drop. Thereafter, pharmacy, no anaesthetics, several stitches, and lots of "don't try that again." Blood-stained shirt/trousers were discarded.

In Montevideo, we didn't see much of the Behrens family, as they lived during winter time at Boulevard Artigas, a block from Hospital Pereira Rosell and the CocaCola plant, and attended a boarding school in Buenos Aires. When I lived in Denmark, Olaf came to visit me several times, and during one of his trips, we went out to enjoy jazz music, dancing, beer drinking and so on, at a place called "Giraffen" along

the famous TIVOLY PARK in Copenhagen. I told him: "look over there! Four attractive girls sitting alone, something has to be done." We bought a dozen beers and went over to join them, which they accepted. We introduced ourselves. They had just finished university. I sat down beside Anne, with whom I have now been married since the 8th December 1962. A fairy tale, which requires a special chapter. The picture with Olaf and me was taken the day after, as if nothing had happened – but it had.

Aimee Behrens bought several plots of land in Pocitos, at the corner of Antonio de Costa, and Marcos Bruto 1073, and built the house where I spent many hours of my life, and now it belongs to the English Embassy. In the early years, we entered the house through the kitchen door, near the garages. Clean shoes were a must before walking in. At home, we had a two-door fridge, and had difficulty finding things, but here it was enormous and completely impossible; but Rolf always found milk, bananas, and produced excellent shakes.

On the opposite side of the house, an architect called Rubio lived. The sons played football with us on the road. Of course, it was forbidden, so we had someone to watch out for the police. They never caught us, and we enjoyed playing. A swimming pool was being built in front of the dining room, but that plot legally belonged to Augusto. At the time, I was living in Denmark, so I never got to know how the problem was solved.

Two blocks from there and years later, being president of the Scandinavian Club in Uruguay, we hired Christ Church building to celebrate Christmas with our community as seen in the above picture, where children from the Scandinavian houses at "Aldeas Infantiles S.O.S." were invited. They all looked forward to this day, which, besides Santa Lucia and Santa Claus, included songs, gifts, drinks, sandwiches, and dancing around the Christmas tree. Unfortunately, later on, the building was sold and demolished. A sad story.



## Confessions

I must admit that I was always a lazy student. Whenever an exam was coming, having a wide range of cultural interests, I immediately became assaulted by a sudden desire to engage in them. Only when the date for the exam was very close, I had a panic attack and crammed day and night to study.

Perhaps it was due to the fact that the subjects to study were imposed on me by others and that killed my interest, but in spite of having the notions precariously held by pins in my brain, I usually and surprisingly, did quite well.

Occasionally, I had very embarrassing experiences. For instance, in a Zoology exam I was not doing particularly well, so the professor showed me a jar that apparently contained a sponge. I immediately went into a long tirade on sponges, how they lived and fed, their internal structure and so on. The professor let me speak without any comment or remark, so I thought I was doing fine.

When I finished, he said: this is in fact a piece of human liver infected by a worm. Pick up your books and leave. I took off without a word, so humbled and humiliated, it was clearly one of those objects professors use to get rid of you if you are not doing well, without any shadow of a possible complaint. A few months later I took the same exam, but this time, I passed,

But I remember that in two such exams, Physics and Mathematics, I was asked questions I had not a clue about, so resigned to the inevitable, I improvised and came up with the required answers on the spot, through logic and deduction. What a wonderful thing logic is.

Of course, the professors in both cases were not fooled by my tricks and told me I had come up with the answers there, not that I had studied the subject. But I passed...

Another time our Literature professor, knowing I was very fond of Edgar Allan Poe (I even named one of my sons Edgar) and had amassed over my young years the best library in the country on and about him, she asked me to teach the class on Poe. I did with great relish, since I knew more

than her on the subject. Then when the exam came, Poe was my subject. I saw myself passing with flying colours, but she flunked me. The reason? I expected more from you. Talk about unreasonable expectations from a mere undergraduate who wasn't actually supposed to know so much on the subject.

Later on, when I got into academic research, I was never lazy. Maybe because it was subjects I was very keen on, problems to unravel. Whenever things did not come the way I expected, I stopped wasting my time, but when they did, I got surprisingly good and consistent results. All this, always gets me very excited and I must work day and night, nonstop, until things take shape, one way or another.

Whoever amasses data to back up his ideas, ignoring those that don't, is very foolish, since sooner or later someone else will mention what goes against your conclusions, bringing the whole building down.

Perhaps that is why in my 50 years of lectures, congresses, workshops in many countries, I was very surprised (and gratified) that not once a colleague has ever pointed out that I had misrepresented the data and drawn the wrong conclusions, especially when I like to confront such cases whenever they happen to others, which should bring about retaliation if I was ever found to be wrong.

Who would have said that the lazy student would one day become the hard working and hopefully, thorough, scholar, I guess it all has to do with how keen you are on anything you get involved with.

But that also has its dangers. One of my first interests in life as a young man was Nuclear Physics. I came close to making a source of neutrons to irradiate chemical elements and observe the isotopes that emerged. Since I had no concern about safety, just the pursuit of knowledge, If I had carried out my plans, I would probably not be alive today. I have to thank ancient Egypt for saving my life.





## A Richer Dust Concealed

*Cementerio Británico, año 1862, tomada desde la actual esquina de Ejido y Soriano. Izquierda al fondo, 18 de Julio.*

This is one Rupert Brooks most celebrated lines, from his poem "The Soldier". Ironical if we think that he is buried on an Aegean island, perishing on his way to the Gallipoli campaign in 1915. Dying in the colonies in the XIX Century was an inevitable occurrence when millions of Britons were scattered across the globe. Being buried on a proper British cemetery was expected by every one of them and helped to alleviate the grief of relatives and loved ones at Home and in the colonies. Montevideo had very few Britons back in pre Independence days, but they already had a proper resting place, the British Cemetery of Montevideo, founded in 1825.

John Hall was an English businessman and merchant in the River Plate: He must have arrived to Montevideo in the early 1820's, coming from Buenos Aires where he had established with Thomas Dutton the big merchant house of Hall, Dutton & Co. They inaugurated the Montevideo branch and it was an instant success in a time where fortunes were quickly made by businessmen with contact in the British Isles. Very quickly Hall became a referent of the small British colony. In 1824, when Thomas Samuel Hood, the first British Consul arrived, he asked Hall for his opinion of the Banda Oriental, its inhabitants and the political situation. The long letter Hall wrote to Hood rests side by side, in diplomatic informal communications, with George Kennan's "Long telegram" of 1946.

Some excerpts from the 32-page letter: "*The Orientals never contemplate coming under the authority of Buenos Aires because of the latter domineering spirit...*"; "*Creoles [Criollos] are brave but not sanguinary people. Except from the almost daily occupation of the lower orders of slaughtering cattle, where they shed blood with the most indifference...*"; "*The better class Patriots... are convinced of the absurdity of pretending to constitute a sovereign independent state from a country so thinly populated with so few production and contemptible resources*". "[*There are people in Montevideo] who wish that the country may fall in the hands of some rich*

*and powerful European government who could defend them and promote agriculture and commerce...*". Luckily seems Hood did not forward these opinions to the Foreign Office!

In the late 1820's Hall is an established member of the commercial elites of Montevideo and reference for the small British and foreign community of the city. In that capacity he will buy a piece of land on the outskirts of Montevideo with the sole purpose of establishing a cemetery for the European community. Hall will then donate the land to an informal British Cemetery Society, whose purpose would be to build, promote and administrate the cemetery. In the 1880's the city has grown and the cemetery's land is expropriated by the Municipality to build the City Hall (Intendencia, 18 de Julio & Ejido). The money of the compulsory purchase will be sent to London as the Cemetery Society is not legally constituted, until the Minister Ernest Satow will get it back in 1890. Thus the British Cemetery Society by the turn of the century will be the only society of the British community with own funds. Dubious honour as it will be the object of continuous demands by the other indebted societies. With some of the recovered funds the British Cemetery Society will purchase land at the Buceo neighbourhood, site of the actual British Cemetery.

John Hall went on living in the River Plate. With Thomas Dutton they established a salting industry in the Union in 1840, most probably to feed the Federalist forces who camped close by during the Montevideo siege of the Guerra Grande. After the war, John Hall disappears into thin air. No other commercial reference is found, though Dutton is still a popular British name in the River Plate basin. John Hall may have returned to England, or died somewhere in the colonies, making forever England, that corner of a foreign field.





## CHRISTMAS : a heritage tradition

**C**hristmas has always been and forever will be appealing. It's festive, it's gorgeous, it's definitely fun.

But also it comes from deep history and as such it's an honour to tradition. Christman markets usually represent all that spirit and therefore they are a treat that cannot be missed, the perfect places to sip mulled wine or hot cider, try handmade roasted chestnuts or enjoy carousel or the ice rink

In the **UK** there are lots. Let's check some of them.

**London** brims with Christmas markets, either intimate and small or colossal and magnificent.

Around the Thames, Southbank market let you stroll the river from the London Eye towards Tower Bridge.

Also, head over to the one between London Bridge and Tower Bridge (on the south side of the Thames) with a fantastic view to the city and 60 stalls to stroll. It's the perfect walk on a crisp winter evening. A little further from the centre is Greenwich Market housed within and next to the traditional market hall and even further south you can head to Kingston-Upon-Thames where they have their own alpina village with snow-covered trees.

In **Edinburgh** there are two markets, the one off Princess Street and the other a few minutes walk to George Street.

**Bath**, the historic Roman city, feels even more special at Christmas with 200 or so wooden cabins around the Roman Baths or the Abbey with Bath Street having its fair share to explore.

In **Liverpool**, perched right in the city centre next to St. George's Plateau Liverpool's Christmas market is one lovely

place to explore, with its windmill bar and the German bratwusts too.

Christkindelmarkt in **Leeds** is possibly one of England's most established Christmas markets with log cabins, pop-up bars and different entertainments right in the city centre. Make sure to head across to Millennium Square and take a ride on the famous carousel.

In the beautiful city of **Oxford** go to Broad Street and explore the log cabins of the Charcuterie Board, Demijohn and Winter Warmers that serve one of the best Glühweins around.

Last but not least, if you cross to Northern Ireland, **Belfast's** intimate Christsmas market nestled within Belfast City Hall grounds offers more than 20 wooden chalets and on its grounds you can post a letter in Santa's post box.

With so many of them is hard to decide which place to visit. But if you like the hustle and bustle you definitely have to explore these fantastic places where fantasy, identity and history mix and make the most of December celebrations.







## A. S. Byatt (1936-2023)

Dame Antonia Byatt died a few days ago. Born Antonia Susan Drabble in Sheffield -her sister is novelist Margaret Drabble – Byatt grew up in a Quaker family, attended Cambridge University and worked for a time as a university lecturer. She won the Booker Prize in 1990 with *Possession* and was shortlisted again in 2009 with *The Children's Book*. The recipient of many more awards (including the Erasmus prize in 2016), she was made a DBE in 1999.

Writing, she said, 'is simply the most important thing in my life', and this is reflected in so many obituaries, such as this one: "Antonia used to say that making things out of language was the most exciting thing she knew. She did this magnificently over many decades and held readers spellbound. Her formidable erudition and passion for language were combined with a love of scholarship and an astonishing memory, forged learning poetry and rules for spelling and grammar by heart as a child. Her writing is multi-layered, endlessly varied and deeply intellectual, threaded through with myths and metaphysics".

One of her books, *Angels and Insects* (1992) contains the novella "Morpho Eugenia". Named after a butterfly species, it details the key events of the life of a Victorian naturalist, William Adamson, who begins a study of garden ants and discovers the endless layers of interpretation that hide truths (but not The Truth) behind what he has taken for granted about God, science, England, gender, and family. In 2014, a coleopterist working in Central and South America named a species of iridescent beetle in Byatt's honour (*Euhylaeogena byattae* Hespenheide), inspired by her portrayal of naturalists in the novella. The story was adapted into a visually stunning film in 1995 starring Mark Rylance and Kristen Scott-Thomas, well worth watching.

For me, her two most fascinating books are the hugely successful *Possession* and *The Children's Book* (2009).

*Possession* follows two young academics, Roland Mitchell and Maud Bayley who first separately, then joining forces, investigate the lives of a pair of imaginary Victorian poets, Randolph Henry Ash (Mitchell) and Christabel Lamotte (Bayley). The novel, a double romance which skilfully layers

a modern story with mock-Victorian letters and poems, is also a detective story (literary research is very like detective work) which incorporates several other characters (and some very funny incidents – there's a lot of humour in the book) also interested in aspects of the lives and works of these Victorian poets. Byatt's chapter epigraphs, plus complete texts (all fictitious of course) of the works of the nineteenth century poets and people close to them, are relevant to the various 20th century ongoing research projects. The story of the Victorian lovers is never fully resolved by the present-day couple, so Byatt adds a "Postscript 1868" explaining why some things are impossible to discover -in itself a lovely short story- beginning: "There are things which happen and leave no discernible trace (...) Two people met on a hot May day, and never mentioned their meeting. This is how it was". So, she exerts her author's prerogative and solves a mystery, but only for readers, not her characters!

*Possession* is about the joy of reading, Byatt said, and I agree.

It's also now a film starring Gwyneth Paltrow and Aaron Eckhart.

*The Children's Book* begins in the golden days of 1895 and ends in the grim, grey aftermath of WWI. It follows the lives of the Wellwoods, their many children and myriad relatives and friends. Olive Wellwood is a children's author who also writes a book for and about each of her seven children, all living in a large, rambling house with William Morris furniture, interested in art, crafts, and socially progressive views. Byatt tracks the overlapping fortunes of the Wellwoods, the Fludds and other households joined by an ardent belief in art and social reform, not to mention quasi--incestuous relationships. The book also shows Germany and Britain's close cultural connections, and the family links between German and British families (including of course the royal family) which were brutally called into question with the war. So many characters' pre-war idyllic lives (dark secrets and all) are tragically shattered by 1918.

Like *Possession*, it's truly memorable reading.





## Large Language Models, Generative Artificial Intelligence and Healthcare

In the world of modern healthcare, revolutionary advancements in technology are changing the way we approach diagnosis, treatment, and patient care. One of the most groundbreaking innovations in recent times is the advent of large language models and their application in artificial intelligence (AI) to transform healthcare through a process called natural language processing (NLP).

Large language models (LLMs) are like supercharged brains designed by scientists and engineers. They are AI systems trained on vast amounts of text data, learning to understand, process, and generate human-like language. This realm of AI is called Generative AI: the possibility to create text, sound and images.

These models, like the ones developed by OpenAI (ChatGPT), Google (Bard) and others, use sophisticated algorithms and neural networks to understand the context, meaning, and nuances of language. They can perform various language-related tasks, such as text summarization, language translation, answering questions, and even generating human-like text. The paradox is: although text output may make sense and sound human-like, the LLM does not really 'understand' what it's returning to the user! – at least for now.

NLP is the bridge that connects these large language models to the field of healthcare. It enables computers to understand and interpret human language, allowing healthcare professionals to analyse vast amounts of medical data quickly and efficiently.

LLMs can analyse electronic medical records, extracting vital information such as patient history, diagnoses, treatments, and outcomes. This assists healthcare providers in making well-informed decisions, improving patient care and treatment plans. On the imaging realm,

they can outperform radiologists in interpreting x-rays, mammograms, computed tomography and magnetic resonance scans.

They also aid in clinical decision-making by providing valuable insights from medical literature, assisting doctors in diagnosing diseases, suggesting treatment options, and predicting potential health risks based on patient data.

Chatbots and virtual assistants powered by NLP can interact with patients, providing information about their health conditions, guiding them on medication adherence, and offering support between doctor visits.

Even with all the above benefits, challenges such as data privacy, ensuring the models are unbiased and ethically sound, and maintaining transparency in decision-making processes remain crucial areas that need continual attention and refinement. One of the issues with LLMs, is that their response can occasionally be 'false', even though sounding 'real'. This is called 'hallucination' and requires repeated fine-tuning of the model. Fortunately, this problem is being brought under control since the first LLM was opened to the public in late 2022. (ChatGPT has more than 100 million users!)

Many feel that that Generative AI is a risk for humanity and may lead to the extinction of our species. This has led to many organisations and governments in North America and Europe, to propose regulation of AI. Personally, I side with those who believe that AI's benefits shadow its risks. Stifling progress in this area will create barriers for independent small-scale developers and favour the big companies, who will find it easier to comply with regulatory hurdles. Humanity will always benefit from more and more intelligence, both human and artificial.





## The band your grandad used to listen to (part 2)

In the mid-1970s, the Rolling Stones were composed of Mick Jagger (vocals), Keith Richards (lead guitar), Ronnie Wood (rhythm guitar), Bill Wyman (bass guitar) and Charlie Watts (drums & percussion). Although they remained popular, music critics had begun to grow dismissive of the band's output, and record sales had begun to drop. As punk rock became more influential, many people had begun to view the Stones as an outdated band. On the back of the success of previous albums, "Black and Blue" – the band's first record featuring Wood in the line-up – reached number 1 in the US, but did not do so in the UK and critics considered it failed to meet expectations.

The Rolling Stones have always had problems with drugs and the law. One could even say that is has been part of their identity. But there have been times when these issues put the band at risk, and this was one of them. During the band's 1975 tour of the Americas, which kicked off in New York City with the band performing on a flatbed trailer being pulled down Broadway, Richards' addiction to heroin began to complicate performances. A number of minor incidents and brushes with the police culminated in Toronto, where Richards was temporarily detained by Canadian customs after being found in possession of a burnt spoon and hash residue. Three days later, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, discovered heroin in his hotel room. He was charged with importing narcotics into Canada (an offence that carried a minimum seven-year sentence), though the prosecutor later conceded that Richards had procured the drugs after his arrival. Despite the incident, the band played two shows in Toronto, but caused even more controversy when Margaret Trudeau, then-wife of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, was seen partying with them after one show! The

Canadian episode drove Richards to decide to stop using heroin, though he has had problems with other substance abuse since then.

The group's fortunes changed in 1978 with the release of "Some Girls". In part as a response to punk, many songs were fast, basic, guitar-driven rock and roll, and the album's success re-established the Stones' immense popularity among young people. The band released their next album, "Emotional Rescue", in 1980. The album hit the top of the charts on both sides of the Atlantic, but during recording sessions, a rift developed between Jagger and Richards over a difference regarding touring dates, which deepened over the next years.

"Tattoo You" (1981), their following album, featured a number of outtakes from previous recording sessions. Two songs even featured unused rhythm guitar tracks by former member Mick Taylor. The band's 1981 American Tour was their biggest, longest, and most colourful production to date and was the highest-grossing tour of that year.

The Stones next released the album "Undercover" in late 1983. Despite good reviews, the record sold well below expectations. By this time, the Jagger/Richards rift had grown significantly. To Richards' annoyance, Jagger signed a solo deal with CBS Records and spent much of 1984 writing songs for his first solo album. He also declared a growing lack of interest in the Rolling Stones. In 1985, Jagger teamed up with David Bowie to record "Dancing in the Street" for the Live Aid charity movement, which kept him even more absent.



In December 1985, former band member and long-time friend Ian Stewart died of a heart attack, which brought the band together for a brief time.

Most of the material on “Dirty Work”, the Stones’ next album, was generated by Richards, with more contributions from Wood than on previous records. With Jagger absent from the studio more often than not, Richards was left to keep the recording sessions moving forward. With relations between Richards and Jagger at an all-time low when “Dirty Work” was released in early 1986, Jagger refused to tour to promote the album and instead undertook a solo tour, where he performed some Rolling Stones songs. As a result, the Stones almost broke up.

In early 1989, the Stones were inducted into the American Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. This prompted Jagger and Richards to set aside their animosity, and the band went to work on a new Rolling Stones album, “Steel Wheels”. Though it was heralded as a return to form, the album only reached number 2 in the UK and number 3 in the US. However, the follow-up tour was the band’s first world tour in 7 years and their biggest stage production to date. The tour was also Bill Wyman’s last: after years of deliberation, he decided to leave the band.

By 1993, the Stones were ready to start recording another studio album, and bassist Darryl Jones was recruited to fill in for Wyman. However, though he continues to perform with the band as their touring and session bassist to this day, Jones was never presented as a member of the band. “Voodoo Lounge” (1994), the band’s resulting album, met with positive reviews and strong sales, going double platinum in the US, prompting Richards to declare “We-re back!” The Stones ended the 1990s with the album “Bridges to Babylon”, released in 1997 to mixed reviews. After this, the band decided to take things with more calm, and their output has been far more spaced apart ever since.

The Stones’ first album in the new millennium, “A Bigger Bang”, was released in 2005 to very positive reviews, but the next year brought misfortune. In early 2006, Keith Richards was hospitalised in New Zealand for cranial surgery after a fall from a tree on Fiji, where he had been on holiday. Ronnie Wood checked into a clinic for alcohol abuse rehabilitation. And throat problems forced Mick Jagger to cancel a number of performances.

In 2012, the Rolling Stones celebrated their 50th anniversary by releasing the book ‘The Rolling Stones: 50’ and by making their ‘50 & Counting...’ tour. In 2016, the band released “Blue & Lonesome”, a compilation of covers of great blues artists. In 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, they released the single ‘Living in a Ghost Town’,

a song that Jagger thought would “resonate through the times we’re living in”, and which went straight to the top of the charts.

In 2021, Charlie Watts died aged 80. Although the cause of death was never officially stated, Richards mentioned in a later interview that Watts had cancer.

In mid-2023, media outlets reported that a new Stones album, “Hackney Diamonds”, would be released, including the final two songs Watts recorded with the band prior to his death, and featuring Elton John, Lady Gaga, Stevie Wonder and Paul McCartney, among others, as guests.

More than 60 years later, with Jagger and Richards having turned 80, one of rock’s most iconic duos is still able to sit down together and write songs. The popularity of the band may have come and gone over the years, but there is simply no brushing the Rolling Stones under the rug. They are truly the greatest rock and roll band of all time.



*Rafael Tejero, 1828. Museo Naval de Madrid*

## Christopher Columbus, the man behind the story.

In the labyrinth of time, where the echoes of bygone adventures reverberate, the enigma of Christopher Columbus unfolded like an ancient manuscript, revealing tales of discovery, suffering and the elusive pursuit of rest. As the author of this narrative, let me guide you through the corridors of history, where each footstep resonates with the weight of an untold story.

In the quiet corners of a Spanish port, the aged mariner, once hailed as the visionary who dared to dream beyond the horizon, now knelt with an ache that surpassed the physical. His joints, weathered by the turbulent seas and the burdens of exploration, defied the very act of genuflection. It was not a grand gesture of triumph but a testament to the toll exacted by the relentless pursuit of the unknown.

Christopher Columbus, the Genovese Admiral, bore the scars of a life spent navigating more than just the celestial spheres. His voyages were not mere charting of maps; they were odysseys through a sea of maladies that plagued the wooden hulls of his ships. The rats scurried, the food dwindled, and the hygiene crumbled—a trifecta that birthed infectious specters. In the shadows of La Isabela, Columbus battled not only typhus-induced delirium but also witnessed the emergence of a malady resembling the dreaded syphilis, a silent invader from the unknown.

Undeterred by the shadow of sickness, the admiral set sail once more, his journey marked not only by the creaking timbers of his vessel but also by the groans of his own afflicted joints. Gout, the cruel companion of aging explorers, clung to him like a relentless specter. Yet, in the face of such adversity, Columbus pressed on, guided not only by the stars but by an indomitable spirit that transcended the frailty of his own flesh.

Returning to the shores of Spain, Columbus found himself entangled in a different kind of tempest—a tempest of disputes over compensation and royal favor. His health, already strained, now bore the weight of bureaucratic



*Photo 1 embedded in text: The Colon Lighthouse, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.*

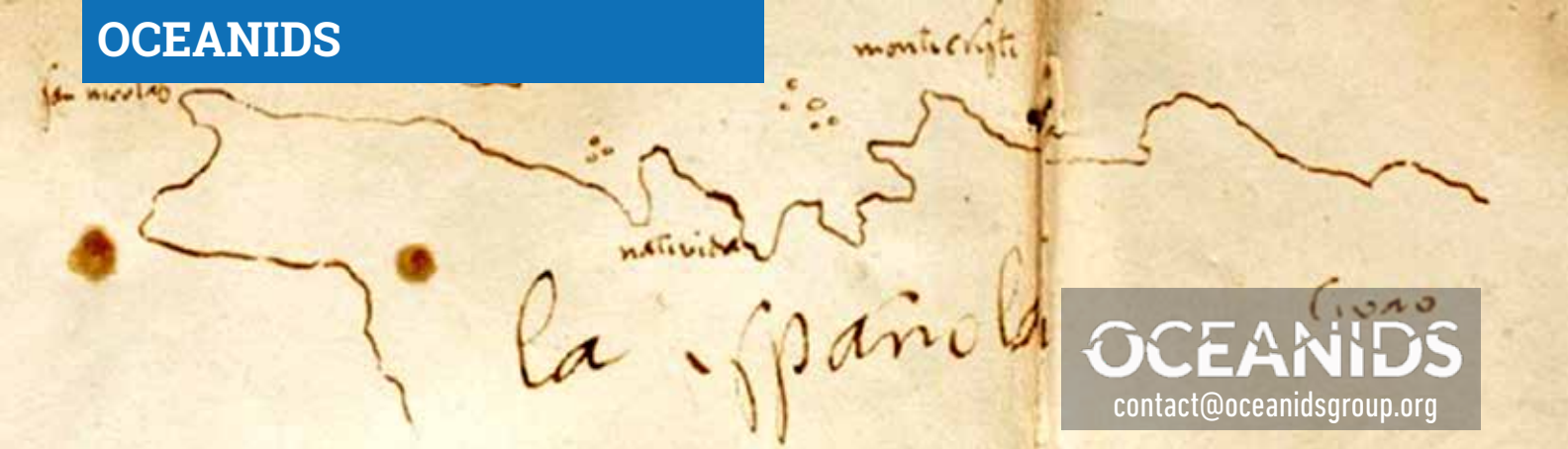
wrangling. Exiled from the court that once hailed him, Columbus, the man who had once knelt to kiss newfound shores, now knelt in solitude, grappling with the eddies of familial and political discord.

As the final chapter of his life unfolded, Columbus, the great Admiral, confronted mortality with a pen in hand. In the quietude of his chamber, he inscribed his testament, a script that mirrored the voyage of his own existence—filled with uncertainties, longings, and surrender to the divine. His conversion to Franciscan tertiary orders became not just a spiritual choice but a poignant acknowledgment of his journey's end.

Yet, even in death, the Admiral's remains embarked on a journey that rivaled his seafaring exploits. Valladolid cradled him briefly before the "Cartuja de Las Cuevas" became a temporary haven. Santo Domingo, witness to his triumphs and transgressions, became the site of his internment, yet political tides and uncertain identities cast shadows upon his sepulcher.

Recent efforts to unravel the mysteries surrounding Columbus's burial site have employed modern technology,





**OCEANIDS**  
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*Sketch of the northern coastline of Hispaniola made by Christopher Columbus, 1492–93. Dukes of Alba Collection, Liria Palace, Madrid.*

including DNA analysis. In 2006, a team of Spanish researchers exhumed what was believed to be Columbus's remains from the Cathedral of Seville. While the results suggested a match to Columbus's familial line, the findings did not conclusively resolve the dispute, leaving room for continued speculation.

Now, as we stand on the precipice of discovery, the question lingers in the air like a haunting melody: where does the great admiral truly rest? DNA whispers secrets, revealing ties to a brother, yet the urn sent across the Atlantic remains an unopened chapter. In this tapestry of exploration and mystery, the bones of Christopher Columbus continue to drift through the seas of uncertainty, leaving us with a narrative unfinished, a novel yet to reach its final chapter.

The location of his burial site became a subject of historical intrigue. The Dominican Republic and Spain both lay claim to housing the explorer's remains, and a centuries-old debate persists over which nation can rightfully boast of preserving Columbus's legacy.

The mysteries surrounding Christopher Columbus endure, capturing the imagination of historians and enthusiasts alike. Whether contemplating the health struggles that accompanied his exploration or pondering the elusive location of his final resting place, the enigma of Columbus persists as a testament to the complexities of human history. As we navigate the seas of time, the legacy of this intrepid explorer continues to beckon us, inviting us to explore not only the distant shores of the past but also the unsolved mysteries that linger in his wake.

In the quietude of Uruguayan landscapes, where the River Plate whispers stories of time, Romina Silva Maglia, a teacher and Uruguayan writer, weaves her own narrative into the rich tapestry of history. In her love for novels, Romina finds a sanctuary where the past and present converge, transcending temporal boundaries. Her written words, like whispers across centuries, carry the weight of stories yet to be told, echoing the feelings of a historical novelist who, as part of OCEANIDS, understands that the true magic of time lies in the tales it bequeaths to those willing to listen.





by Phillip Berzins  
sbpberzins@hotmail.com



## Salmon and Prawn Filo Pie

**W**ith Christmas and New Year arriving shortly, now is the time to begin planning which gastronomic delights you will be serving for these important dates. One of the most important factors to consider is the ease with which the food can be cooked and served once the meal time has arrived. The last thing we want is to spend hours working in the kitchen on the big day and even more annoying is having to spend the time finishing off the menu whilst your family and guests are busy enjoying themselves.

Today's recipe can be made a day in advance and stored in the fridge and be reheated in the oven just before meal time.

### Ingredients – 8 Portions

- 1,5 kg salmon fillet without skin, cut into 2-cm cubes
- 500 g uncooked, peeled prawns
- 100 g butter
- 150 g finely chopped red onion
- 2 leeks, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves finely chopped
- 1 tbsp grated ginger
- 120 g flour
- 2 lt fish stock or milk
- 250 ml double cream
- Juice and zest of 1 large lemon or of 2 limes
- Half a cup of one of the following options: chopped basil, parsley, dill, chives or coriander leaves
- 320 g packet filo pastry
- 50 g melted butter
- 100 g flaked almonds

### Method

Melt the butter in a large sauce pan and add the onions and leeks and cook for five minutes without colouring. Add the garlic and ginger and cook for a further minute. Sprinkle over the flour and cook three or four more minutes while continuously stirring. Remove from the heat and allow to cool.

Add the boiling fish stock or milk to the now cooled butter/flour mixture, one cup at a time, while stirring continuously over a medium heat. It is important that you add the liquid gradually, only adding the next cup once the sauce is of a homogeneous texture and without any lumps. Once all the liquid is added, cook carefully while stirring to prevent the sauce from sticking and burning for another five to ten minutes until the taste of raw flour has disappeared. Add the cream, lemon juice and zest and bring back to the boil. Remove from heat and allow to cool. Add the fresh herbs and uncooked salmon and prawns. Add salt and freshly ground pepper and mix in well to ensure all the ingredients and flavours are well integrated.

Place the prepared mixture into ovenproof porcelain bowls or dishes. Cover the surface with three sheets of filo pastry which have been brushed with melted butter between each sheet, and cut into eight squares before being scrunched up (see photo). Repeat until all the fish mixture is covered. Sprinkle with flaked almonds and brush with melted butter.

Store in the fridge. Reheat oven to 180°C and bake the pies until the mixture is piping hot and the fish is cooked through and the pastry is golden brown.

Serve with a fresh green salad with cherry tomatoes or a selection of fresh vegetables.

### NOTES

- If making a selection of vegetables i.e. broccoli, asparagus, carrots, spinach leaves, leeks, squash, peas, zucchini or fennel, first cut to desired size and precook them individually until al dente and cool down immediately in cold water with ice cubes. Drain well. Place precooked vegetables into a serving dish which can be used in a microwave oven. Cover with film and leave inside the fridge. Once reheated, remove the film and sprinkle with salt and melted butter or olive oil.
- If you cannot find flaked almonds, place the unpeeled almonds in a pan covered with cold water and bring to the boil. Remove almonds and peel while still hot. Slice immediately while still warm and soft

### Optional:

- Add paprika or smoked paprika at the same time as the garlic and ginger
- Add fresh mushrooms before the garlic and ginger
- Add frozen peas or rehydrated sun-dried tomatoes to finished sauce

## ON BEING OFFERED JOHNNIE WALKER

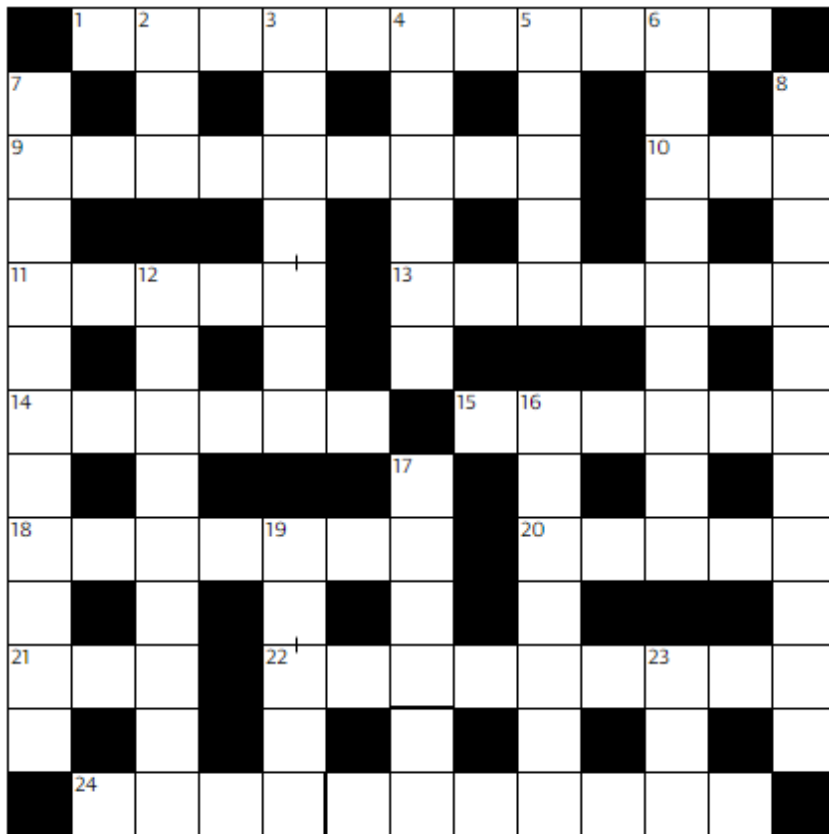
Thank you. One may look a little on one's uppers  
And one's clothing may not ape the latest trends;  
One's DJ may have seen a lot of suppers  
And been scragged, by far too many drunken friends;  
But hard though things may have become, one is  
A gentleman. And a gentleman  
Does not drink  
Blends.



All profits from sales of Jonathan's books this month will go to the children's charity Aldeas Infantiles. To order, eg as Christmas presents that can be sent cheaply from the uk, write to [vozinglesa@gmail.com](mailto:vozinglesa@gmail.com)







Print this page and start playing!  
Solution in our next Contact issue.

November solution:



## Across

- 1 Things (11)
- 9 Star vehicle? (9)
- 10 Substance found in tobacco (3)
- 11 Excite (one's interest) (5)
- 13 Renting out (7)
- 14 Maybe I'm \_\_\_\_\_, 1970 Paul McCartney song (6)
- 15 Floating city (6)
- 18 Wreck (a plan) (7)
- 20 Additional benefit (5)
- 21 Non-existent (3)
- 22 Lowest female singing voice (9)
- 24 Shoots – stir-fry ingredient (4,7)

## Down

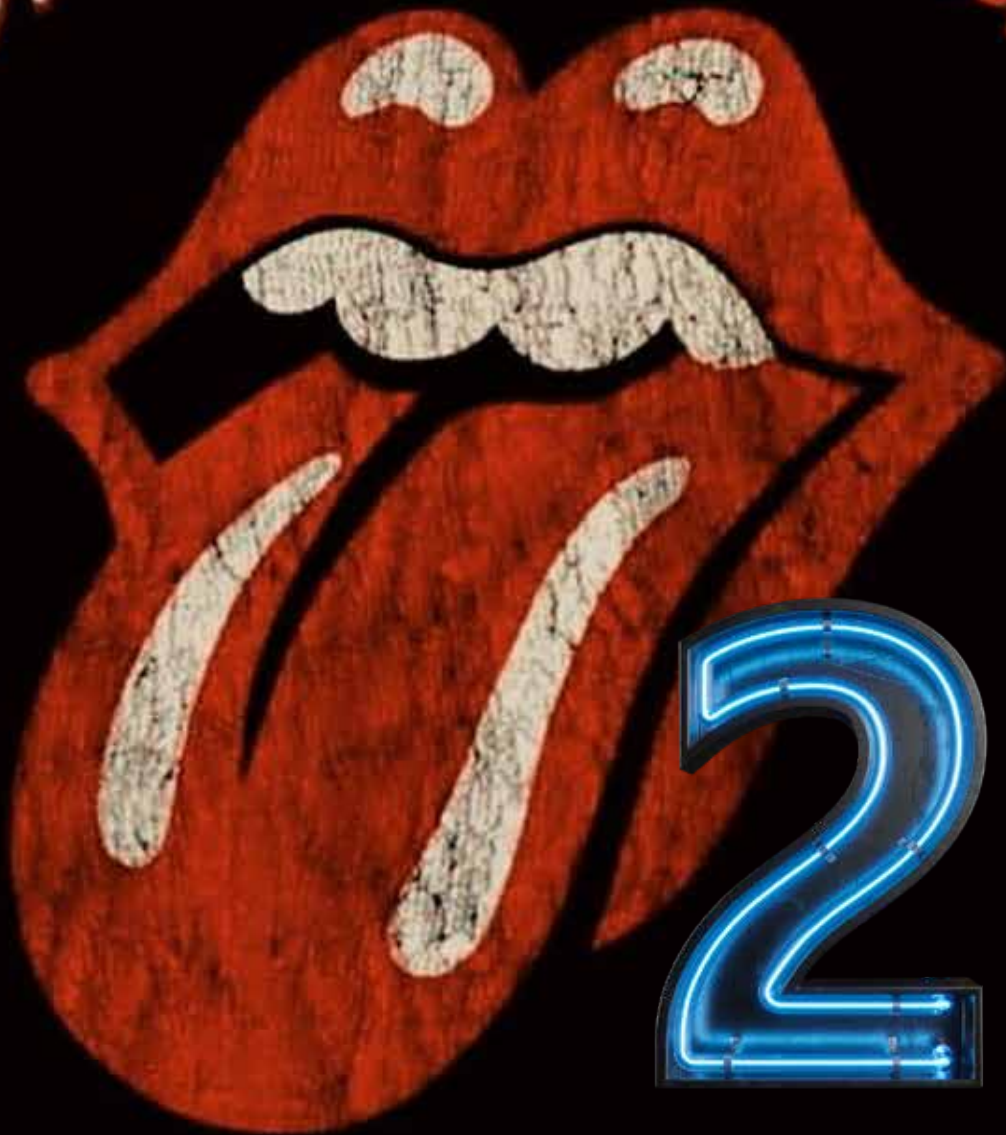
- 2 Unit of electrical resistance (3)
- 3 Sleep (4-3)
- 4 Protect (6)
- 5 Lacking expertise (5)
- 6 Sustenance (9)
- 7 Large (11)
- 8 Forward movement (11)
- 12 Old dance – or card game for four (9)
- 16 Ban on trade (7)
- 17 Left in pieces (4,2)
- 19 Individual who was previously inside (2-3)
- 23 Fate (3)



<https://www.gocomics.com/>



*The Rolling Stones*



Click to listen on Spotify.