



THE BRITISH SOCIETY
IN URUGUAY

FOUNDED 1918

-Contact

July 2019

BSU
After-office Talk
Meaningful Results

British Embassy
Queen's Birthday Party



THE BRITISH SOCIETY
IN URUGUAY
FOUNDED 1918

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British Society After-office Talk

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British Embassy Queen's Birthday Party

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BSU CONTACT Newsletter
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Montevideo, Uruguay





PRESIDENT'S WORDS

Dear members

You may notice slight changes in our newsletter this month. This is due to the fact that we have changed Editor. This month we welcome back Geoffrey Deakin to the position, something he is taking on in addition to his Webmaster responsibilities. I am confident he will do a good job of it, as he did in 2015 and 2016

Last month saw two pleasantly successful events: the second after-office talk of 2019 and the Autumn Croquet Tournament.

The after-office talk by Derek Tyler was about the fascinating life of Queen Victoria and looked into her connections with Uruguay; added interest was given by the fact that it was held at Teatro Victoria, formerly known as Victoria Hall, which was once a significant location for the British community and was the venue of the 1918 meetings which resulted in the creation of The British Society in Uruguay! A good number of people braved the bad weather and ignored the fact that there was a Uruguay match at the Copa América that same evening in order to attend, but the result was rewarding: the talk was lively and interesting.

The Autumn Croquet Tournament, a direct result of last year's Centenary Croquet Tournament and of a growing interest in the sport in the community and beyond, was well-attended and enjoyed by all. The newly-minted British Society Cup for this new event went to newcomers Stewart and Roxy Hird. Congratulations to them!

This month brings another after-office talk on 11 April, featuring Alejandro Stanham – a Professor of Strategy, Marketing Research and Decision Making at the Universidad Católica and the Universidad de Montevideo – who will give a wellness talk aimed at helping you reflect on several personal aspects that are decisive to obtain results and have significant relationships. The event will be held at the British Hospital's conference room on the last floor of the policlinic building on Calle Morales.

As always, tickets will be available on [RedTickets](#); members can also book with secretary@britsoc.org.uy.

Anyone visiting the British Cemetery can now see the spot where The British Society's Time Capsule is buried. Prepared at the end of the centenary year 2018, the capsule was finally buried in presence of HMA Ian Duddy earlier this year and now the spot is clearly marked by an engraved granite slab. As you can see in the photo, it rests in view of the bust of Queen Victoria near the entrance to the Cemetery. It is supposed to be disinterred in December 2118, on occasion of the Society's 200th anniversary. It contains a variety of mementos of the first centenary, including a host of photographs of all our centenary events, so if you partook of any of them, your image will come to light in 100 years' time!

Richard Empson





UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday 9th of July 19:00 hrs

After-office Talk - Meaningful Results

British Hospital Conference Room

Morales 2578

Tuesday 4th of July 19:00 hrs

The Sweet Collection *English Cookie Tins*

Sponsored by The British Embassy

Museo de Historia del Arte

Intendencia de Montevideo

Open until 31st August

FUTURE EVENTS

12th of October.

Sr Caledonian

Date and venue to be confirmed

Organised by: St Andrew's Society

October

Brit Rock II Music Festival

Instituto Anglo Theatre

Date to be confirmed

September

Upcountry Trip to Fray Bentos

Date and venue to be confirmed

November

2019 Spring Croquet Tournament

Date and venue to be confirmed

MEMBER NEWS

Birthdays in July

01	Jorge Clavijo	16	John Hobbins
03	Jaqueline McClew	17	Carlos Monkhouse-Jones
05	Elizabeth Hambrook	19	Sylvia Vignoles
06	William Biscomb	20	Andrew Teuten
08	Marion Maynier	22	Federico Carter
09	Virginia Castleton	23	Colin Shearer
10	Jacqueline Larbalestier	23	Joaquín Bazzano
14	Virginia Sosa	24	María Davies
14	Caroline Stanham	25	Diana Beare
15	Victoria Cooper	25	Geraldine Pool
15	María Lebrato	26	Victoria Hobbins
15	Romina L. Serrano	27	Ruth Morton
16	María Freyre	28	Ingrid Gordon-Firing
16	Catalina Prevett	30	Elizabeth Cobham
16	Nicholas Beare	30	Estela Cardeza

Welcome New Members

Celia M. Orizabal
 Celina A. Burmester
 Hernes F. Rodriguez
 Jorge E. Arbon
 Mark Rosevear Jefford





EDITOR'S NOTE

As our President said in his words, I am once again retaking the helm as Editor of our Newsletter Contact. You might notice a few changes in the general design meant to facilitate reading and enhance your enjoyment of our publication. Please, feel free to contact me with any comment or suggestion about our Newsletter.

Starting this semester, through our monthly covers, I am going to take you on a trip to visit amazing and yet sometimes little-known places of the UK. Every semester we will visit different regions throughout the British Isles.

With this month's cover, we start our picturesque voyage in Wales visiting Portmeirion.



Portmeirion is a beautiful hotel resort and visitor attraction on the coast of Snowdonia National Park in Gwynedd, Wales. Built by Sir Clough Williams-Ellis between 1925 and 1975, Portmeirion was designed to resemble a quaint Italian fishing village. Visitors staying overnight get the whole place to themselves once the gates are closed, when they can explore its beautiful gardens, fountains, church, and the coastal paths of the lower village. This has been the location for numerous films and TV programs.

I wish to specially thank Mrs. Trudy Chappell, Head of Junior of The British Schools, for helping me with various suggestions of iconic places in Wales. Being a true Cymry (Welsh), her first-hand knowledge of some of the loveliest places in the beautiful country of Wales is very appreciated

Geoffrey W Deakin
Editor.

BSU COMMUNITY COOKS

A Call to Community Cooks and Aspiring Chefs

The British Society would like to invite members of the community (both male and female) who would like to contribute their cooking skills to the Society's events to join the group of community cooks who prepare meals for lecture-suppers, the Annual General Meeting, and other assorted events throughout the year, making each one of them so much better, richer and enjoyable for all.

The Society pays for all expenses incurred, the cooks' contribution being their time and cooking skills only.

If you would like to help at one or more of our wonderful and fun events, please contact secretary@britsoc.org.uy to have your name included in the cooks roster.

Zero obligation, zero cost... just a way to contribute to the community while doing something you like

See who has already signed up: [British Society Cooks](#)



After-office Talk

Tuesday 9th July, 19:00 hrs



Alejandro
Stanham

MEANINGFUL RESULTS

In search of our "WHAT FOR?"

The process of becoming and being ourselves

The courage to overcome what reality demands of us



British Hospital Conference Room

Morales 2578

www.britsoc.org.uy

MEANINGFUL RESULTS

We will be reflecting on several personal aspects that are decisive to obtain results and have significant relationships.

Sometimes we feel like we are against a ceiling in our performance, in our achievements, which are below our aptitudes. Or we face an obstacle or situation that blocks us. Or we achieve a great success, but we do not hold it.

In these cases, we usually look for a course or seminar that gives us more knowledge or tools with limited success; and we forget the most important tool, the one that is with us always and at all times: our own person.

ALEJANDRO STANHAM

Professor of Strategy, Marketing Research and Decision Making in Universidad Católica and Universidad de Montevideo.

Business consultant in Strategy, Leadership and Decision Making.

Conferences and workshops on Leadership and Personal Growth.

Was Marketing Manager at Dupont in Uruguay and at Impsat Fiber Networks in Argentina; Editorial Director at Estrategia & Negocios publishing in Central America.

Agricultural Engineer and MBA.

Tickets available on [RedTickets](#)

Members can also book with secretary@britsoc.org.uy

TRIP TO FRAY BENTOS



BONUS VIDEO LINK

In case you missed this year's Trooping the Colour, The Queen's Birthday Parade.

Live from Horse Guards Parade in London, Huw Edwards introduces one of the world's most esteemed military displays, to celebrate the official birthday of Her Majesty the Queen.

This year the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards are providing the Escort and their Regimental Colonel, HRH the Duke of York, has spoken exclusively to Huw Edwards. Huw will be joined by military and royal experts to guide us through the meticulous parade, a balcony appearance by the Queen and the royal family, and the traditional RAF flypast.



[Click here to watch the Video](#)

THE SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL HOME

Apple and tomato chutney was made some weeks ago and everyone worked hard!



The residents were hard at work making handicrafts with Gabriela.

BRITISH EMBASSY

Queen's Birthday Party



Technology and the environment were at the centre of Her Majesty The Queen's 93rd birthday party, celebrated at the Ambassador's Residence on 5 June. During his speech Ambassador Ian Duddy summarised the various projects and themes that kept the Embassy busy during the last year and thanked all those who worked with us to make them possible.

As the event coincided with World Environment Day, the house was illuminated in green, while inside an exhibition was projected highlighting British Government initiatives to reduce the use of plastic. In addition to enjoying this technological display, guests were also invited to take a traditional English Tea with the Queen!



BRITISH EMBASSY

Continued...

Visit to Flores



The Ambassador had a busy day in his first visit to Flores, where he met with Intendente Fernando Echeverria, visited Gardner school (associated with Dickens Institute), the local Anglo Institute, and a recycling project led by Chevening alumni Guillermo

Sena, who was born and lives in the Department. His next trip is to Florida this month, after which the Ambassador will only have two more departments still to visit in his tour of the country!



BRITISH EMBASSY

Continued...

Football passion

10 Uruguayan football fans were invited to watch the Champions League final with Ambassador Duddy at a Sports Bar on Saturday 1st June. Hundreds of Twitter followers took part in the competition, with the aim of sharing this experience with the Ambassador, who is a

dedicated Tottenham Hotspur supporter. Although the result was not the one the Ambassador and many guests hoped for, the event was a great success and we can take some solace that, after all, a British team still won the cup!



ANGLICAN CHURCH OF URUGUAY



The English-speaking congregation of Holy Trinity Cathedral invites all residents and visitors to its **English service every Sunday at 10 am** with an Anglican Eucharist celebrated according to the 1979 Prayer Book of the the Episcopal Church of the USA.

Baptized Christians of all denominations are invited to receive Holy Communion in order to be spiritually fed and united to their brothers and sisters in Christ.

www.anglicanchurch.uy



BRITISH URUGUAYAN CLUB

CLUB



URUGUAYO
BRITÁNICO
SINCE 1916

LUNCH INVITATION

WEDNESDAY
3RD OF JULY
12:15 HOURS

GRAL. LIC.

GUIDO MANINI RÍOS

URUGUAY AT A
CROSSROADS

HOTEL NH COLUMBIA
RAMBLA GRAN BRETAÑA, 473
DRESS CODE: BUSINESS

MORE INFORMATION 



ANGLO-URUGUAYAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE

INTO THE INTERIOR WITH THE ANGLO



NEW SECTION

In this new section we are going to introduce many of the Anglos in Uruguay – British cultural reference points in the country. As many will know, we are present in every department, with 48 Anglo centres in total. The idea is to tell you a little bit about the history of the Anglo in each place, the people who run it, what they have done in the past and what they plan to do in the near future. So, look out for an article about an Anglo near you and see if they are doing anything that might interest you!

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT!: THE IMPACT OF ANGLO ARTIGAS IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY



The impact of Anglo Artigas extends beyond just teaching English, as the following story shows.

Andrea Pereira, the mother of a child who attends English lessons at the Anglo in Artigas, is a 38-year-old history teacher who took up trail and mountain running as a hobby last year at the age of 37. With the financial support of Anglo Artigas and two other local companies, Andrea soon started to win many races. On 13th April 2019, she broke the 50 Km ultra-marathon race record in Mar del Plata with a time of 3 hours 55 minutes. After that, in May she broke another national record running 70.7 Km in a 6-hour ultra-marathon race.

Andrea is certainly an example to follow for the younger generations. When she started running, she did not have a coach and had to travel to Montevideo to train. It was utterly exhausting for her and it was also hard economically. Andrea, however, had no intention of giving up and instead



tried harder and harder to reach her goals. Last year she was chosen to be part of the Uruguayan national team to take part in the trail and mountain running championship that took place in Minas, where she was spotted by her new coach and ultra-marathon distance runner, Tyson Piñeiro.

Since then her training has changed and a new era has started for her and the "Legion" team she now belongs to. Andrea has done very well in all the races she has taken part in in our country as well as in Argentina so far this year:

- May 2019: 1st place in a 6-hour ultra-marathon race breaking the national record running a total of 70.7 km.
- April 2019: Andrea broke the Uruguayan record held by Silvia Amodo since 2013 in an ultra-marathon race by running 50 km in 3 hours 55 minutes in Mar del Plata.
- March 2019: 1st place in 10 km race in Punta del Este, 1st place in 10 km race in Montevideo and 2nd place in a trail race in San José;
- February 2019: 1st place in the "Ultra Night" 20 km street race in Piriápolis.
- January 2019: 1st Place in trail race in Punta Ballena;

Andrea Pereira is definitely a role model in Artigas. She encourages teenagers to take up trail and mountain running or any other sport that can give them satisfaction.

All her trophies are on display at the Anglo in Artigas because she believes that *"There is nowhere better for them!"*





ANGLO-URUGUAYAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE

Continued...

CHILDREN'S THEATRE AT THE ANGLO



THE ANGLO THEATRE COMPLEX OFFERS A VARIETY OF PLAYS TO ENJOY WITH YOUR FAMILY DURING HOLIDAYS IN JULY.

2x1

MEMBERS OF
BRITISH SOCIETY

TREASURE ISLAND

30TH JUNE – 13TH JULY | 3:00 PM (EXCEPT 3RD JULY)
MILLINGTON-DRAKE THEATRE (THE PLAY IS IN SPANISH)

By Robert Louis Stevenson. Adapted by The Company

This play is based on Stevenson's classic adventure story of pirates and buried treasure.

Get on board The Hispaniola and enjoy this exciting pirate story! Next July, sails will be unfurled and 'ship ahoy'!

THE SELFISH GIANT

30TH JUNE – 13TH JULY | 3:00 PM (EXCEPT 3RD JULY)
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE THEATRE (THE PLAY IS IN SPANISH)

By OSCAR WILDE. Adapted by The Company

The Selfish Giant has a beautiful garden, but he won't let any of the children play in it. Winter comes and never leaves. The Giant looks over his garden from his tall window. What will he do?



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HOSPITAL BRITÁNICO



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Británica



ANGLO-URUGUAYAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE

Continued...

JOB INTERVIEW PRACTICE AT THE ANGLO



Last 11 June we participated in an event entitled Job Interview Practice co-organized by Anglo and Uruguay XXI. The event saw an almost completely full Sala William Shakespeare and gave us the opportunity to share with an audience of young professionals, mostly- although not exclusively- from the finance and IT sector, some of the new trends in job interview dynamics.

The three-fold instance included a presentation centered around the theoretical notion of what a behavioral job interview is and also how to prepare for and tackle sensitive, uncomfortable, unpredictable and sometimes even tricky questions; there was also a panel where representatives from two IT companies, GLOBANT and Tata Consultancy Services, answered questions from a moderator about the value of English and the role it plays in the context of their respective recruitment processes and protocols.

To wrap things up, the event finished with a practical phase where volunteers participated in a mock job interview hosted by Globant, TCS and Anglo followed by an instance of personalized feedback. We leave you with some photos.



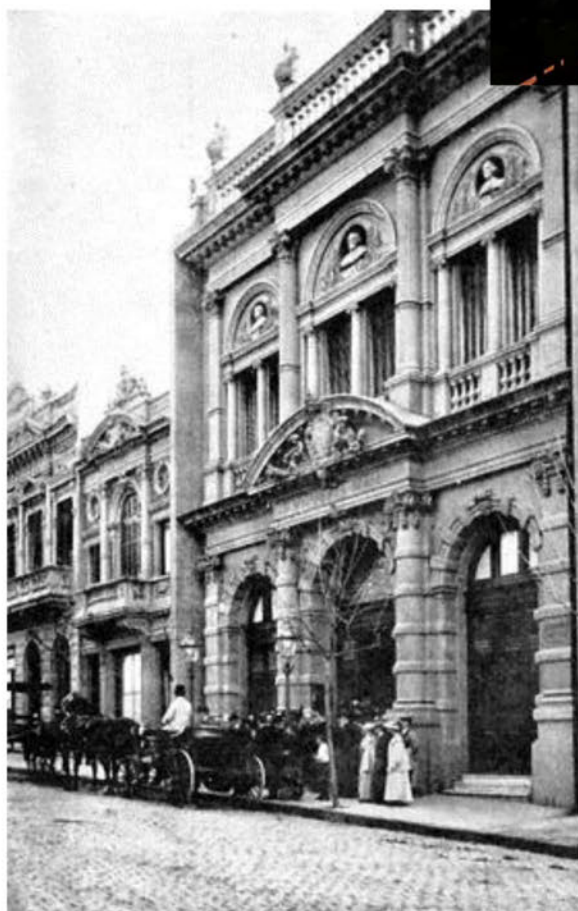
ANGLO-URUGUAYAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE

Continued...

CELEBRATING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF QUEEN VICTORIA



To mark the anniversary, the Anglo Institute organized a talk about the former British monarch which was held in the "Teatro Victoria", Montevideo on 5th June. Owing to the popularity of the first event and also that some people were unable to attend, a second edition of the talk was given at the same location on 20th June which was jointly hosted by the British Society in Uruguay. The talks were presented by Derek Tyler.



Participants had the opportunity to hear about the fascinating life of the long-serving British Queen. At a "public" level, Derek explained that Victoria did much to create the modern British monarchy of today with its emphasis on public service and connection with its citizens. On a "private" level, the audience heard how Victoria survived a difficult childhood, had 9 children and survived no less than 8 assassination attempts!

The Victoria Hall (now known as "Teatro Victoria") was established by the British community in Montevideo in 1902 in homage to the Queen who had recently died. The building quickly became a center for the British community in Montevideo hosting dances, meetings and, for example, prize giving days for the British Schools. It was also the location where in 1918 the British Society in Uruguay was established. During the second part of the 20th Century the building closed and was partially vandalized. However in the 1990's the building re-opened, is being slowly renovated and has been in continuous use as a theater.

After the talk the participants had the opportunity to tour the building. We would like to express our sincere thanks to the "Sociedad Teatro Victoria" (a non-profit making organization who currently administer the building) for allowing us to use it as a venue for the talks.

ANGLO-URUGUAYAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE

Continued...

VIDEO LINK BETWEEN STUDENTS IN ANGLO POCITOS AND IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS



On 20th June a group of students in Anglo Pocitos and secondary school students in the Falkland Islands took part in a video link between the two locations. The event was organized by the Anglo Institute, the British Embassy in Montevideo and the Institute of Secondary Education in the Falklands.

At the centre of the link was a presentation by Derek Tyler about the life of Samuel Fisher Lafone. The theme of Lafone was chosen as his life provides what is probably a unique "connection" between Britain, Uruguay and the Falklands. Born in Britain, Lafone then settled in Uruguay where he established "Pueblo Victoria" - now better known as the barrio of La Teja in Montevideo - before later purchasing a significant part of the Falkland Islands in a "deal" with Queen Victoria.

However, the video link was much more than the talk about Samuel Lafone because it provided a fascinating opportunity for students in Anglo Pocitos to interact with their contemporaries in the Falklands. Both groups of students asked the other about life in the other location. For example students in Anglo Pocitos learnt that Stanley (the capital of the Falklands) only has a population of 2,500 people and that there are 250 sheep for every person on the Islands. Meanwhile students in the Falklands learnt, for example, about what young people do in their free time in Uruguay and also that here the internet is much faster.

Afterwards the education authorities in the Falklands commented that they thought the link had gone very well. It was also enjoyed by the students in Anglo Pocitos.



ANGLO-URUGUAYAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE

Continued...



SAT. 28 & SUN. 29 SEPTEMBER 2019 CONFIRMED SPEAKERS ::::



**JOHN
CORBETT**



**ADRIAN
UNDERHILL**



**PAULA
REBOLLEDO**



**PENNY
UR**



**MARK
ORMEROD**



**ARIEL
GOLD**

6 plenary sessions & 20 concurrent sessions

15th



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You don't need to be British to join.

All those interested in our events
are very welcome.

SILVER RIVER LODGE



All our meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of every month, from March through November, at the William G. Best Masonic Temple, located at 1429 Canelones Street, Montevideo.

For further information please contact us at
secretarysrl876@gmail.com
or call Mr. Martin Macadam
at 096 001 995.



BRITISH HOSPITAL



BRITISH HOSPITAL

As from July 2019

BETTER TRAVEL INSURANCE PLANS

All members who have bought Mapfre Travel Insurance Plans will have improvements made to their existing coverage and benefits.

Plus Plan improvements

- Medical assistance coverage increases to \$40,000.
- Compensation for delayed baggage.
- Boarding kennel coverage for your pet up to 60 euros.

Platinum Plan Improvements

- Medical assistance coverage doubles to \$100,000.
- Increase coverage for pre-existing illnesses, lost baggage, medication, and boarding kennels for your pet.
- Compensation for baggage delay of US\$ 600 and trip cancellation due to force majeure of US\$500 in services and US\$ 500 for flights.

VIP Plan improvements

- Medical assistance coverage increases to \$15,000.
- The amounts of dental treatment and medication are doubled.
- Increases lost baggage compensation to \$1000.
- The coverage period is increased to 90 days.

Basic Plan improvements

- This plan becomes a VIP Plan.
- Members will be contacted by Uruguay Assistance with additional information.





ST. ANDREW'S SOCIETY OF URUGUAY



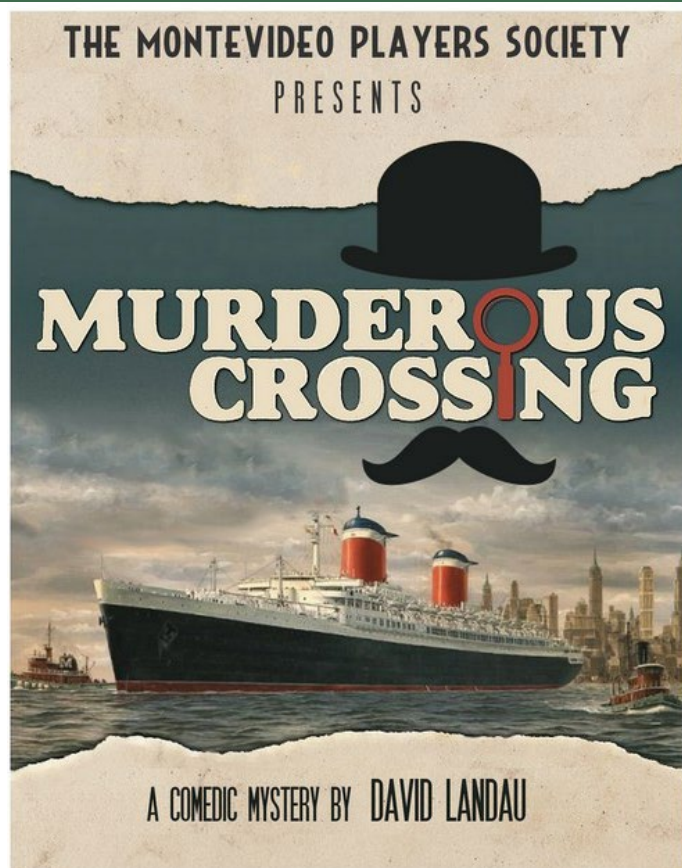
This year The Junior Caledonian Competition took Place on June 8th. At the gymnasium of The British Schools. 62 Eightsomes participated in the competition in the categories 6 to 7 years old, 8 to 9, years old, 10 to 11 years old and 12 to 15 years old. Also, there were 9 foursomes in the 12 to 18 years old.

We would like to thank The British Schools for the use of the Gymnasium, The City of Montevideo Pipe Band and all those who helped carry in making the event such a success, especially DHM Rossa Commane who gave out the prizes.





THE MONTEVIDEO PLAYERS SOCIETY



NEW SHOWS IN JULY

FRI 12 th SAT 13 th SUN 14 th
TUE 16 th WED 17 th

ALL SHOWS 21:00 hs (EXCEPT SUNDAY 14th 19:00 hs)
The Pub and doors will be open 30 minutes before
and also during the interval and after the show

TICKETS

Adults - \$ 350
Students, Teachers & OAP's - \$ 200
Members - FREE!

We encourage all attendees to dress accordingly
(1920's-like attire), and be ready to participate in the
solving of the mystery!

Bookings exclusively through this [link](#).

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VERY LOW BUDGET ACOMMODATION FOR NATIVE SPEAKERS

Backpackers, gap-students - tourists, etc. (all ages)

In a place surrounded by the main Uruguayan tourist
attractions. (Lavalleja, Minas, Punta del Este, Vineyards,
Atlántida, Airport -1/2 an hour, etc)

U\$S 8.= per person per day. After the 3rd. Day, FREE.

Conditions: interact with our non-native speakers, join the
tours, the trips, lunch, talks, games, etc.

We offer: a real positive and funny atmosphere, in a quiet
place, surrounded by nature. A very modern building.
And much more.

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coming soon**

August **SAVE THE DATE!**
10th

1pm
Lunch is on us!

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DICKENS INSTITUTE

Continued...

OUTSTANDING CAMBRIDGE LEARNER AWARDS CEREMONY

On Wednesday 29th May, at the Hotel Dazzler, Cambridge Assessment International Education and Dickens Institute had the pleasure of celebrating the Outstanding Cambridge Learner Awards Ceremony. This Ceremony takes place once a year to honor the best IGCSE Students in Uruguay with certificates and awards.



Mr Ian Duddy, British Ambassador, Mr Richard Gilby, Regional Director, Latin America and Ms Lucila Marquez, Senior Schools Development Manager, Latin America at Cambridge International, Monica Harvey, Chair of the Board, and Patricia Alvarez Harvey, General Director of Dickens, School Authorities, Teachers, Parents and students were present.



Out of the almost 1500 exams in June and November 2018, 26 were the outstanding students that merited awards. To receive these awards is no mean feat. Cambridge International uses strict criteria to calculate these awards. IGCSE results from 40 countries worldwide are considered to ensure that the achievements are consistent across the world in all subjects and at all qualification levels.

We are very happy to share this information with you as, in a World that is facing profound changes, the need for students to prepare themselves for these is greater every day. We know that you will join us in celebrating the work that is being done by Cambridge Assessment International Education, Dickens Institute and the Associated Schools towards a better World through Education.



DICKENS INSTITUTE

Continued...



City of Montevideo Pipe Band, Monica Leon, Lucila Marquez, Monica Harvey, Patricia Alvarez Harvey & Richard Gilby



Mr Ian Duddy and Patricia Alvarez Harvey with Chloe Romero, from The British Schools, Top In The World, Cambridge Assessment International Education IGCSE Literature (Spanish).

IGCSE TESTIMONIAL FROM MAURICIO SPERANZA

At the Awards Ceremony we had the honor of having as Master of Ceremonies Mauricio Speranza from Colegio Nacional José Pedro Varela. He passed his seven IGCSE subjects and obtained his Certificate ICE with Distinction in 2017. His testimonial at the end of the Ceremony is worth reading and an example of how students feel about their IGCSE studies. We share an extract of it:



I can still remember when I entered high school and had my first History class. The first thing my teacher said was "This class will not be like any other".

In History we were encouraged to develop critical thinking, associating historical events and interpreting sources. In Business, case studies were provided in which to apply the areas studied in business, proving that knowledge had actually been gained and not only memorised. In Biology not only did we had to cover an extensive syllabus, but also we were introduced to a completely different learning approach.

I would like to emphasise on the effects these exams have on students whose first language is not English. Having to learn whatever it is in another language is a completely different experience than learning the language itself. Because then two challenges are before you, you have to learn content of a given subject and also you have to understand the language. It is through that process that your vocabulary is expanded, your grammar is corrected and true immersion in the English language is achieved. Only can we say that we are bilingual if we can actually fully use two languages, and that is why IGCSE offers a perfect opportunity to consolidate your English.



MEDICAL COLUMN

 by Dr Jorge C Stanham MBE
 jorgestanham@yahoo.com

What is Artificial Intelligence?

The British Society was invited to a very interesting event about 2 months ago, at the Piso 40 of the World Trade Center. The subject: Artificial Intelligence (AI). The presenter was Ing Máximo Gurméndez, a British Schools Old Boy and a representative of one of the most sought-after professions of our time: a data scientist. AI has a lot of hype behind, around and on top of it... but although it's food for sci-fi plots, there is no wiggle room to ignore its potential: we have to work on our core knowledge of what it is.

The name was coined back in 1956. Over the last 6 decades, it has expanded exponentially and at present it may potentially equate much of what humans cognitively do. Do you remember Stanley Kubrick's 1968 masterpiece 2001: A Space Odyssey? Do you recall HAL, the computer which takes over the mission and wants to kill all the crew? Well, HAL (which stands for Heuristic ALgorithm Computer, NOT the 3 letters preceding IBM, as was suspected), was certainly, 51 years ago, an excellent example of AI, with added 'sentient' properties: not only thinking, but FEELING like a human being, to the extent that it implores David Bowman, the astronaut, to stop deactivating its circuitry.

HAL would be an example of AGI (Artificial GENERAL Intelligence). What we have at present is ANI (Artificial NARROW Intelligence), meaning that a computer can be trained to equal, or exceed, human capacity to do a specific cognitive task, but not everything. That is, it's only good at what it's designed for. For example: a self-driving car won't make a diagnosis, interpret an x-ray or remove an appendix. AI can clearly exceed humans in games (chess, AlphaGO), interpret retinal images, identify suspicious skin lesions and detect a patient's risk of developing severe sepsis. More so, it can free human physicians from having to do much of the deep guesswork and enable them to proceed with what needs to be done and refocus the AI tools a step forward into the patient's clinical course.

This short article certainly won't be more than a primer for opening one's mind to what AI is, but I'll try to give as big a picture as possible and at the end, I'll provide you with a website which may be a good place to expand. In the first place, AI has one

basic food: DATA. Without data, AI is meaningless. Then, what is so special about the data? Aren't we all dealing with data all the time? Well, data in AI has 4 properties, called the 4 Vs:



1. **VOLUME:** The amount of data that can be crunched is enormous. The buzzword here is BigData. How big big? Ever heard of a PETabyte? Well, that's 250 bytes, a figure without much meaning, but it's equivalent to 1024 TERA-bytes (tera = 10¹²) or the more understandable 106 (1 million) GIGabytes. Our fiberoptic data contracts with ANTEL have a rather high \$ pricetag for exceeding a certain Gigabyte limit, so DON'T process Petabytes at home!
2. **VARIETY:** Data can be of any nature: numeric, continuous, discrete, qualitative, structured, unstructured, text, sound, images, etc.
3. **VELOCITY:** The speed at which BigData is processed can only be handled by computer power that exceeds whatever we currently have in our hands or desktop (or in our skull, of course!).
4. **VERACITY:** The quality of the data is paramount, to avoid the 'garbage-in, garbage-out' phenomenon. Computers are programmed to cull and refine the data fed to them, increasing its reliability and our trust in it.

The process of analysing these massive amounts of data is called Data Mining (DM).

In our everyday computing mode, we're used to inputting commands. As mentioned above, in AI, computers are fed... data! From then on, what the computers do with the data can be either guided (supervised) or unguided (unsupervised), but one of the main outputs is recognising patterns in the data.

MEDICAL COLUMN

Continued...

Discovering patterns, either in the form of relationships or groupings, is one of the potentials of AI. Above that, computers can learn or be trained (yes! – very much like a dog is trained to guide a blind person), or even can self-train to do anything from simple to complex tasks.

How computers learn and self-train is behind the concepts of Machine Learning (ML) and Deep Learning (DL). The dividing line between ML and DL may be diffuse, but DL has more to do with complex, variable, unstructured and ‘messy’ data. The potential of discovering patterns, relationships, groupings, predictions and of being able to process natural language is more typical of DL.

How is this done? This brings us to the concept of Artificial Neural Networks (ANN – aren’t you getting tired of acronyms?). Neurones in the human brain consist of many dendrites (input endings), a body (the processing unit with the cell nucleus) and a single axon (output ending). Dendrites receive signals from upstream neurones. The signal is processed within the body and then sent

downstream via the axon, stimulating dendrites of other neurones downstream, and so on. By creating neurone-like units called perceptrons and sandwiching many of these into successive layers, each feeding the next, executing algorithms (programmes), the process from the input layer to the output layer mimics what a ‘brain’ would do. Recall that in DL the algorithms can be self-generated by the computer and not by the humans watching the process.

Remember, that as good as AI via DL can get, at present it is only as good at what it has been trained to do. There’s no need to worry about HAL coming to wipe us out or fear Terminator returning from the future to weed out all the Sarah Connors in town.

For a very graphic and basic description of Artificial Intelligence, check this website: <https://okai.brown.edu/index.html>. It’s short (you can cruise it in 15-20 minutes) and it has many links to expand our knowledge or simply satisfy your curiosity.

BACK IN TIME

by Tony Beckwith
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Slingshot Cowboy

Cowboys played an important role in my childhood. They were my heroes. I wanted so much to be like Tom Mix, Lash LaRue, Hopalong Cassidy, the Lone Ranger, and all the other good guys I’d see in movies or read about in comic books. They always knew how to react when they were in a tight spot, and instinctively did the right thing. They reminded me of King Arthur’s Knights of the Round Table, my other role models, and the Knights of Old I’d learned about in history class. I doubt I told anyone at the time, but I was fairly sure I could learn more from cowboy movies than I ever could at school.

The most exciting moment of any little boy’s birthday party in Montevideo at that time was when the lights were switched off, the rather rickety rented projector whirled, and we watched a black-and-white cowboy movie, perched on sofas and chairs and sprawled on the floor in the birthday boy’s darkened living room. There was, of course, considerable interaction



between the screen and the audience. During the inevitable saloon brawls, we staged our own mock fights, throwing ourselves into fake punches and dramatic falls with all the enthusiasm of extras on the set. Our manly dialogue came straight from the soundtrack: “Why, you . . . !” and “Take that, you . . . !” and “Oooooofff!” and so on. The parts I loved best were the wild horseback rides when the sheriff’s posse fought running battles with train robbers,

BACK IN TIME

Continued...

cattle rustlers, or Indians, the thunder of galloping hooves and the shrieks and whoops of the warriors filling my head with romantic wonder.

When I was just a little older, I spent one of those endless summers being a bicycle bum. I rode with a small gang of like-minded boys, all similarly blessed with dubious social value at that stage. Our bikes were central to everything we did, and we were on and off them all day long. Mine was a tall, gangly Triumph, midnight black with chromed handlebars. It may have looked like a bicycle to anyone else, but to me it was my horse, my gallant stallion, my noble steed. In my mind we had a sort of Roy Rogers-Trigger relationship. Being ten years old really wasn't that bad, for me.

Our gang lived in Pocitos, but we roamed far and wide, mainly along the Rambla, riding out to Carrasco to spend countless happy hours on the relatively deserted beaches on the eastern fringes of the city.

The busses and trucks that lumbered along that coast road were too tempting to resist and, despite repeated parental prohibition, we'd ride up behind them and grab hold of something to hang onto. It was enormously satisfying to get a free ride like that and be towed along for a while until the drivers spotted us and used a variety of tactics (and salty language) to make us let go. I suppose the fact that none of us ever had an accident during one of these episodes says a lot about our bicycling skills.

Our home turf was a lonely, barely used road that hugged the coast between Pocitos Beach and the Punta del Buceo, with empty fields on one side and the open sea on the other. A low wall ran alongside the field, pockmarked and crumbling, in about the same decrepit condition as the road. The ground was littered with rubble and small stones, some of which were very beautiful, professionally speaking. I should explain that our other passion that summer was the slingshot—the catapult as we called it then, or *honda* if we were speaking Spanish—and we always carried one strung around our necks.



To serious slingshot aficionados like us, the pebbles on that road were another irresistible temptation.

We learned to gather our ammunition without dismounting, leaning way over in the saddle, just like cowboys on horseback did in the movies, and scooping up stones as we coasted down the road. From that angle we spotted the potential of the low wall, and it wasn't long before we had tin cans and

empty bottles lined up and were shooting at them from under the crossbar. Did I say crossbar? I meant the belly of our horses. And the slingshots, of course, were really our Winchesters.

With practice we became good marksmen and contributed generously to the environmental pollution and degradation of our part of town. Some of us went on to use our talents in ways I'm sure we'd rather forget (I'll name no names for the children's sake). In my case, I have a gnawing sense of karmic debt concerning the city's street lighting along the

Rambla at the Casino Carrasco Hotel. Those large, elegant globes looked like huge harvest moons, gorgeous golden orbs serenely suspended in the night sky, until . . . a phantom horseman appeared out of nowhere, did his dread work, and was gone!

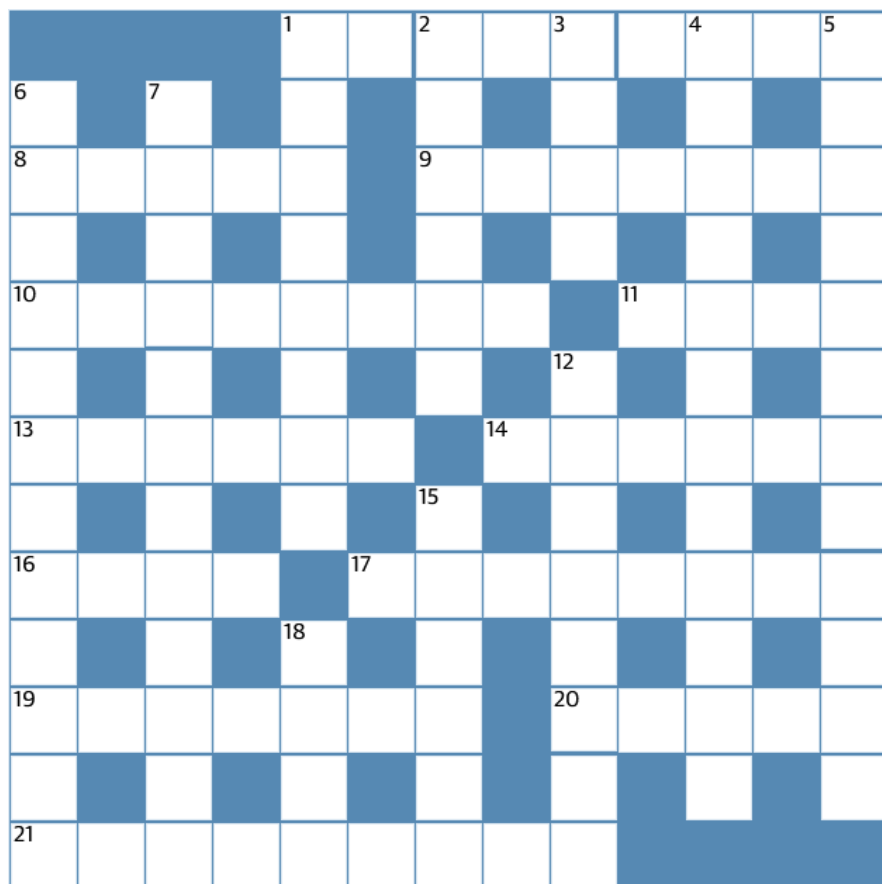
Growing up was a gradual process in my case, and it took me some time to realize what a disappointment I must have been to my heroes, those straight shooters on the screen, not to mention King Arthur's Knights, who only ever used their weapons in a noble cause. Whatever I thought I was learning from those movies it certainly wasn't helping me develop my own moral compass. Until one day it finally dawned on me that that was the whole point of those adventures set in the Wild West. It was simple—I just had to choose whether I wanted to wear a black hat or a white one. At that point a light bulb switched on somewhere in my adolescent brain and the choice was easy.

Like Tonto, I wanted to ride with the Lone Ranger. Hi Ho, Silver, away!



CROSSWORDS TIME!

from The Guardian
www.theguardian.com



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

June solution:

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Across

- 1 Not more than (2,3,4)
 8 Comes into contact with (5)
 9 Large aquatic mammal — sea cow (7)
 10 Pleasure-seeker (8)
 11 Platform (4)
 13 Have a craving for (6)
 14 The scenic route? (6)
 16 Injure, causing permanent disability (4)
 17 Carried out completely and carefully (8)
 19 Raise petty objections (7)
 20 Rhone (anag) — bird (5)
 21 Process of becoming smaller (9)

Down

- 1 Pyromaniac (8)
 2 Most domesticated (6)
 3 Sicilian volcano (4)
 4 Surpass by superior strategy (12)
 5 Game where players try to find things by following a series of clues (8,4)
 6 Speed is one of them (12)
 7 Sign of bastardy on a coat of arms (4,8)
 12 I haven't a clue (6,2)
 15 Period of play in a polo match (6)
 18 Dignified manner (4)



GEOFF THE CHEF'S CORNER

by Geoffrey W Deakin
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Mini sausage rolls

I make these easy sausage rolls often - they are always welcome at a picnic or party.
Feel free to enhance them as you like.

Ingredients

- 500g/1lb 2oz ready-made puff pastry
- plain flour, for dusting
- 1 free-range egg, beaten
- 8 sausages (the best you can afford), cut in large pieces
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- small handful fresh thyme leaves



Any other fillings you might think of?
Pieces of ham...

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6.
2. Roll the pastry out on a floured surface to a rectangle of about 48x32cm/19x12½in and bash the pastry with the rolling pin a bit. Puff pastry is made of fine layers and normally you have to be very delicate with it. For sausage rolls the pastry needs to be slightly puffed, but not too much, so bashing it with a rolling pin reduces the amount it puffs up.
3. Cut the large rectangle in half lengthways, then cut both smaller rectangles into eight equal sections. You now have 16 rectangles in total. Brush one end of each rectangle with a little of the beaten egg, lay a piece of sausage at the other end, then season the sausage with salt and freshly ground black pepper and sprinkle with thyme leaves. Roll the sausage up in the pastry to enclose and repeat with all the sausages. Put the sausage rolls in the fridge for 20 minutes for the pastry to harden.
4. Once the pastry is hard, remove the sausage rolls from the fridge and score the tops with a sharp knife for decoration, or prick with a fork. Brush well all over with the rest of the beaten egg and bake in the oven for 25–30 minutes, or until the pastry has turned golden-brown and looks crisp. Remove from the oven and leave to cool slightly before serving.

The monthly phrase that seems polite,
but has a different meaning

Live life with a little spice!

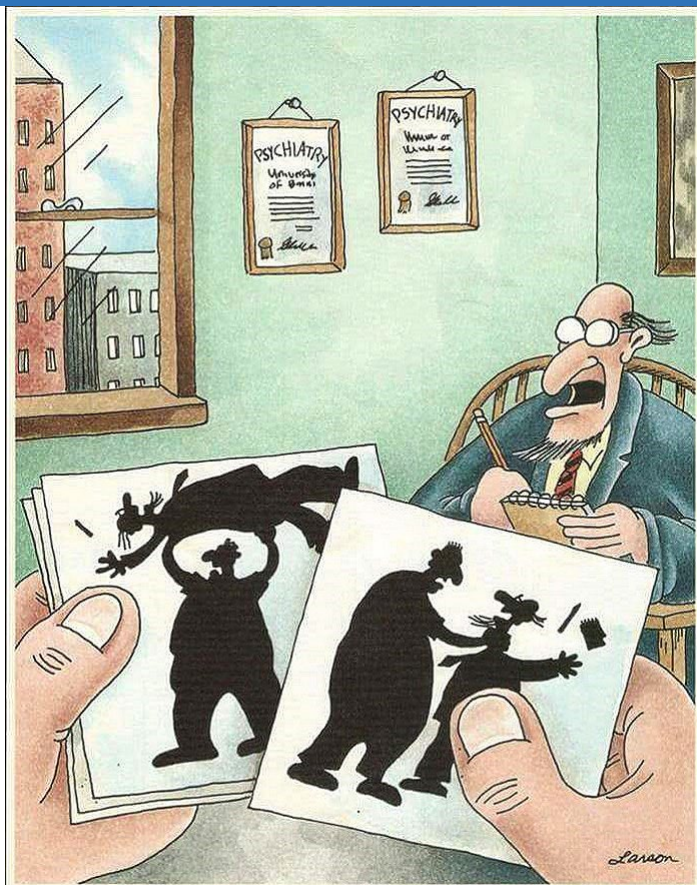


“In case you missed
it...”

You're not doing what I said you
should be doing. Do I really have
to repeat myself?

THE FAR SIDE

by Gary Larson



"It's just a simple Rorschach ink-blot test, Mr Bromwell, so calm down and tell me what each one suggests to you."

LINK OF THE MONTH



Why every unnecessary use of the enthusiastic punctuation says, "please like me." Here's how to cut back.

[Click HERE to visit the Web page](#)