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Hopefully, the weather will warm up a little over the next couple of months and we'll all be able to take a walk in our beautiful countryside, along the canals, by the river and benefit from some spring sunshine.

Wishing you all a Happy Easter. Susan x



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- A stranger appointed by the court such as a solicitor would end up making crucial decisions about you and your assets – where you will live, whether to accept medical treatment to keep you alive, what you eat and wear, and will control all your finances and your property.
- Your spouse, children or friends would have to apply to court to get permission to make decisions on your behalf and act for you – which is far more expensive and time-consuming than making an LPA and the court could refuse the application.

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Tredegar House Folk Festival

9th – 11th May 2025

The 34th Tredegar House Folk Festival will soon be here and this year the festival is again running a singer-songwriter competition (closing date end of January), where the winner gets a cash prize, a 3 hour recording session plus the chance to perform their song at the festival. Judging is by an independent panel of significant industry figures. Mair Thomas - the winner of the first competition, is now a regular on BBC radio and has twice appeared at the Llangollen International Eisteddfod. We are pleased to welcome her back to the festival this year.

As well as the big Friday concert (held in the concert marquee) featuring 4 top acts, there will be a free twmpath in the Dawnsio.Cymru marquee run by Menter Iaith Newport (a principality-wide organisation supporting and promoting the Welsh language). It will be conducted in Welsh, but that shouldn't stop anyone joining in with the dancing, as plenty of fun will be had.

Meanwhile in the Marcus Music marquee there will be the Friday Night Big Bash, a night of great tunes, many instruments and lots of joining in. Bring your instrument along or just come and listen, in what promises to be a special intimate atmosphere.

Moving on to Saturday and Sunday afternoons where both marquees showcase free dance displays featuring local and national sides, including India Dance Wales, Morris dancing, Middle Eastern, Welsh, Flamenco, Appalachian and more to be confirmed.

Saturday evening the concert has 4 acts kicking off with Avanc, a fantastic group of a dozen young Welsh musicians that really raises the roof. For dancers, there is the traditional Saturday ceilidh featuring Juice with caller Ned Clamp.

Sunday late afternoon brings the huge 5 act concert. There are too many acts appearing at the festival to name, so please keep checking the website www.tredegarhousefestival.org.uk and our Facebook page for details of all music and dance acts, including musical clips (website).

Workshops, singarounds, folk club sessions and dance displays all have free entry, plus on site there is a CAMRA bar, food outlets, children's entertainer and a farmers market.

People buying weekend tickets or tickets to any of the 3 concerts or Saturday ceilidh, get the added bonus of free entry to Tredegar House.

Thanks must go to the Arts Council of Wales and Ty Cerdd for their continuing financial support, without which the festival could not have survived for so long.

Fingers crossed for good weather!







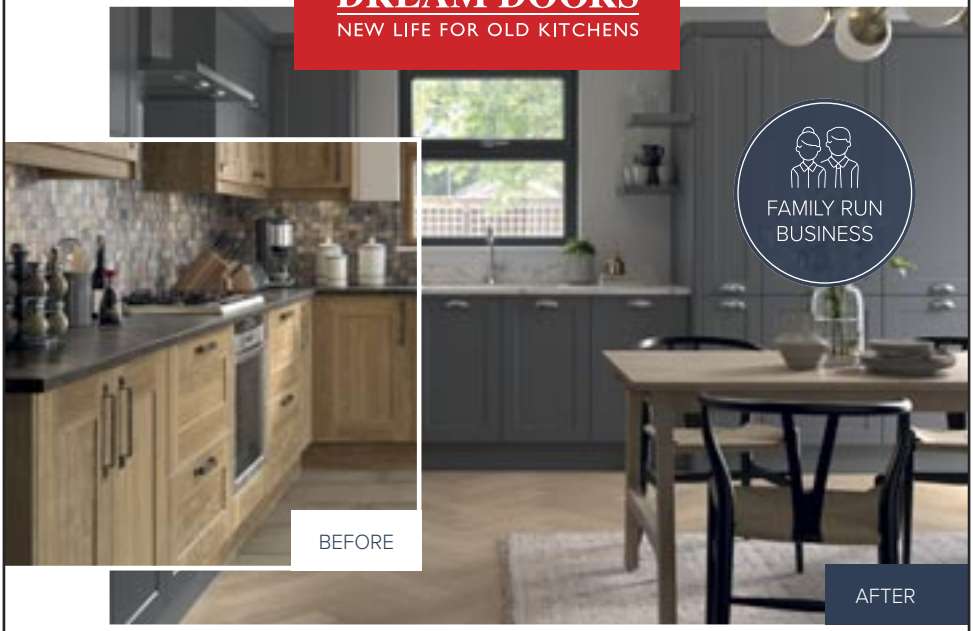


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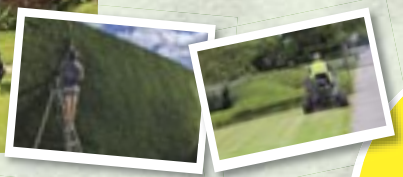
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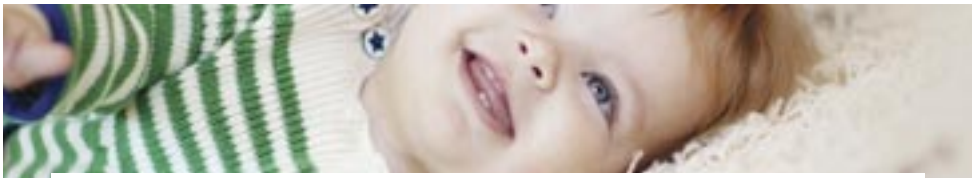
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A Very Naughty Boy

by Paul Minton

Do you like the movie, *Bonnie and Clyde*? Are you a fan of Clint Eastwood's *Escape from Alcatraz*? If the answer is yes, then let me introduce you to Francis Henry Simmonds, whose life contained elements of both films albeit with a Welsh twist.

Francis was likely born in Birmingham around 1886. He was described as a debonaire character, who could mix easily with the higher echelons of society but make no mistake, he had wanton criminality coursing through his veins. One early report of his apparent misdeeds came from Brecon Assizes in January 1907. At 20 years of age but looking younger, the 'very respectably dressed' defendant was given six weeks' hard labour for stealing two tame rabbits, one pair of leggings and a knife from Llanelly near Gilwern. He was also charged with taking £1 in Cardiff and was wanted over another theft in Hereford.

Whilst incarcerated in Gloucester Gaol in 1908, Simmonds plotted to liberate the other prisoners and escape, with some reports suggesting he got as far as locking the Governor in a cell. However, the scheme unravelled when one of the convicts gave 'the show away'. After his release from another stint, this time at Worcester Prison, the crook arranged 'to do a big job' in Cardiff. It was there, in March 1912, that he met a local beauty. The daughter of a wealthy businessman, she had had an excellent upbringing, having been educated at Dover and Wisbaden, Germany. At the time, she was married to a photographer but growing weary of matrimony, she eloped with Simmonds; they lived as husband and wife during the weeks that followed at various locations across Monmouthshire, including Newport.

It was his theft of a horse and cart that undid their happy cohabiting. Detective Inspector William



Detective Inspective William Tanner



Divisional Inspector Samuel Cox

Tanner and Inspector Samuel Cox tracked him down to a property in Stafford Street, St Julians later that spring. As they burst in, Simmonds drew a gun and shot at the officers. Tanner leapt towards his quarry and in the struggle, the revolver discharged once more, the bullet penetrating the loose part of the DI's raincoat. The woman defended her paramour by attempting to push hatpins into the necks of the policemen but eventually, the law triumphed and the two lovers were arrested. At Monmouthshire Assizes, Simmonds was sentenced to six years at Usk Prison and his partner to six months.

During his subsequent imprisonment, Simmonds studied his jailors' schedule carefully and deduced there would be minimal staffing on a particular Sunday. He hoped to incapacitate a guard by using a loosened table leg, retrieve his victim's keys to free his fellow convicts, and then murder the Governor. To share his intentions with his co-conspirators, he made an ink well from wax used in the manufacture of mailbags and wrote messages on pages torn from library books. These notes were exchanged during hymn singing in the prison chapel. However, one offender disapproved of the plan and revealed the plot to the authorities. As punishment, Simmonds received 15 lashes and was transferred to Dartmoor's Princetown Gaol.

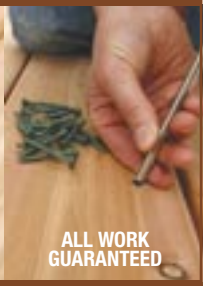
After serving his time, Simmonds joined the army and was stationed for a while near Chepstow, where he was telephone operator. During his posting, he visited DI Tanner in Newport. When he had last seen the policeman, he had threatened revenge, but their reunion was ultimately cordial with Simmonds seeking forgiveness.

It would appear, however, that his life of crime was never fully abandoned. In 1923, he was killed by a firing squad in Egypt for an undisclosed yet presumably very serious offence. Simmonds is said to have walked to his execution without showing any emotion but it carried no weight with the newspapers of the day, which concluded that 'the world is well rid of such a man'.

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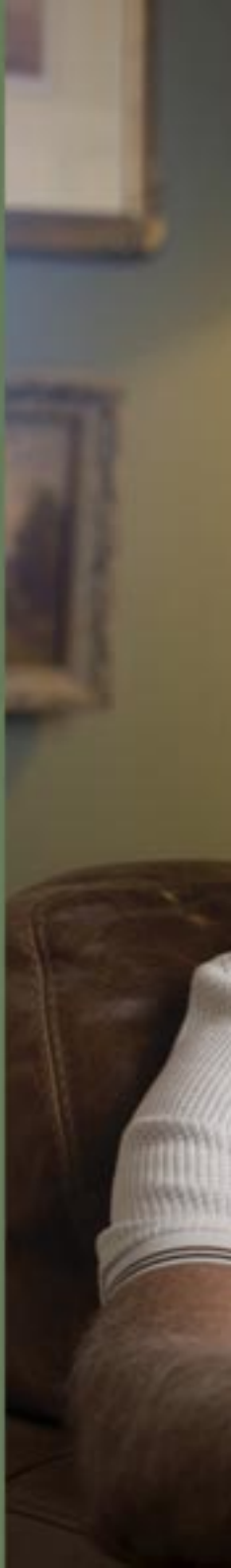
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The friendly group will meet three times a month and the experienced players will be glad to help any novices. Whist's combination of luck, strategy and surprise, exercises the brain in a sociable way. Concentration on the fall of the cards is a useful exercise for the memory and also helps Bridge players to develop their trick-taking skills.



u3a learn, laugh, live

Newport u3a meets at the Dolman Theatre Wednesday to Friday at 9.45-15.00 during term time. LEARN, LAUGH, LIVE is our motto so if you would like more of that in your retirement come and try us out for two weeks. For more details contact Angela Robins on 07983 130541, or visit www.newportu3asites.uk

Hardy Plant Society, Monmouthshire

Our group meets every second Saturday of the month between September and May at 2.30pm in Little Mill Village Hall, Little Mill, Usk NP4 0HE. There is ample free parking. Refreshments are available and non-members will be made very welcome. During the summer months, we have many garden visits and other related activities.
Our regular programme of talks at Little Mill Village Hall continues on Saturday 8th March, Robin Pearce will talk on 'Ornamental Grasses'. Robin ran a wholesale and retail nursery for 20 years and has now retired to spend more



time in his garden. Ornamental grasses are a special interest, as are rare and unusual plants. Ferns too!
The Annual General Meeting of the Monmouthshire Branch of the Hardy Plant Society, held via Zoom, will be on 12th March. The wonderfully knowledgeable Derry Watkins of the renowned Special Plants nursery at Cold Ashton, near Bath will be with us on 12th April to talk about the 'Humble Umbel'. Not to be missed. Derry describes herself as a 'plant freak American with a gorgeous, thriving garden designed by her architect husband, Peter Clegg'.
Saturday 26th April Kelly Weare, a professional gardener based in Monmouthshire and a member of the HPS Monmouthshire branch, will be holding a Practical Workshop. More details to follow.

For further details of our local group and programme of events, see https://hpsmonmouthshire.co.uk/
For more about the national Hardy Plant Society, see https://www.hardy-plant.org.uk/
The HPS Monmouthshire Group is also an Affiliated Group of the RHS, see https://www.rhs.org.uk/, and of the online Tender Shoots Garden Club Network, see https://tendershoots.uk/

Belle Vue
Park & Tea Room



WHAT'S ON IN MARCH AND APRIL

March

March 2nd 11.00am – 4.00pm
We cannot wait to welcome you to the first Belle Vue market of 2025. Packed full of goodies from new and existing traders, we look forward to seeing you there. This year once again, our charity is Sparkle and to date your generous contributions have realised over £2k. Those small donations as an entry we collect, do make a difference.

March 16th Guess what!
Because our partners in the National Trust havent yet sorted out their annual calendar (as at print deadline), we have chosen to hold two markets per month for the early part of the year. 11.00am – 4.00pm will see a second lovely market in Belle Vue with plenty of new faces and an opportunity to buy those artisan goodies and gifts.

March 30th Is Mother's Day.
Don't forget to book a special treat for Mum! We have special goodies added to our afternoon teas this year. A little fizz will also make the day that bit more enjoyable. You can book via phoning Jan on 07737 630657 or email jan@bellevuetearoom.uk We have suspended our online bookings for the whole weekend. Teas are £22.50 per person and we can guarantee you a tasty and enjoyable afternoon.

April

April 6th 11.00am – 4.00pm
Once again our market will be packed with goodies and new traders.

April 19th 7.30pm – 9.30pm
Our partners, Momo Events will be joining us for our first outdoor cinema night for a long time… Too long we think so come along and get Dirty Dancing… Watch this classic to get you in the mood for the release of the new version later this year… I can't believe it will be as great as this one! Film will show at 8.15pm but in the meantime we will offer a bar and hot food alongside the Café being open for soft drinks.

April 20th 11.00am – 4.00pm.
Our second special market combining an Easter theme with our usual plant sale at this time of the year. Come and get your bedding plants and garden items alongside those Easter gifts and goodies. Come along to talk anything plants and gardens.







Look out for information on our Sunday Summer Siesta sessions which will replace the Streetfood Fridays we hosted over the past few years. We hope, however that you will enjoy the same colourful experiences which we hope to start at the earlier time of 3pm and finish around 7pm. Bar and hot food will definitely feature. We are now planning the itinerary.

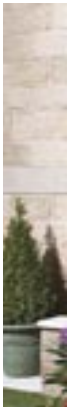


Look out for more information on our notice boards and Facebook/Instagram @Bellevuetearooms and on our website www.bellevuetearoom.uk. Alternatively text or phone Jan on 07737 630657.



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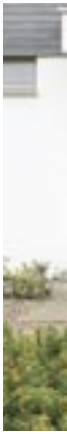
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Puzzles

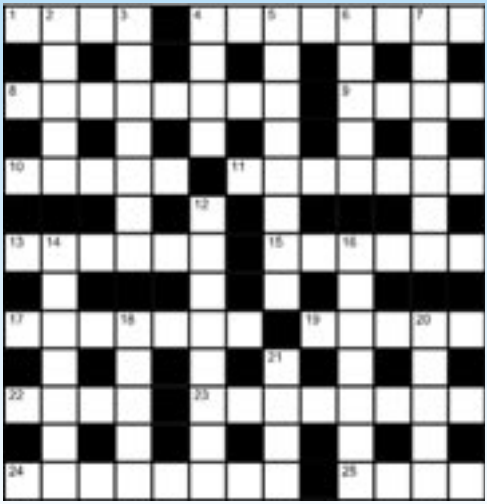
CROSSWORD

Across

1 Nymph who fell in love with Narcissus and faded away, leaving just her voice (4)
4 Humorous verse form of five lines (8)
8 Capital of Belgium (8)
9 Musical instrument associated with Wales (4)
10 Tree with rot-resistant wood (5)
11 Italian liqueur made with elderberries and flavoured with liquorice (7)
13 Art of growing miniature trees (6)
15 Remove by cutting out (6)
17 German cake traditionally eaten at Christmas (7)
19 Battleground of World Wars I and II (5)
22 Swiss patriot, William ___ (4)
23 Monument built to honour soldiers (8)
24 Menu having individual dishes listed with separate prices (1,2,5)
25 Actor ___ Guinness, who played Smiley in Smiley's People (4)

Down

2 Marine colonial polyp which masses in a variety of shapes, forming reefs (5)
3 Molluscs from which pearls are obtained (7)
4 Sediment in wine (4)
5 Sweet aromatic grape used for raisins and wine (8)
6 Amy Winehouse hit of 2007 (5)
7 Capital of Venezuela (7)
12 Short tube attached to the muzzle of a gun (8)
14 Porridge ingredient (7)
16 Country, capital Zagreb (7)
18 Bush with fragrant flowers (5)
20 Leaf which adorns the Canadian flag (5)
21 Poker stake (4)



SUDOKU

3		1		4			9	
6	4					7		
		9			2		8	
9				8				
			6		1			
				5				4
	5		4			2		
		8					4	6
	9			7		1		8

The object of sudoku is to insert the missing numbers in the boxes to satisfy just one condition: each row, column and 3x3 box must contain the digits 1 through to 9 exactly once. This can be done by applying logic – you do not have to guess.

Solutions on page 33

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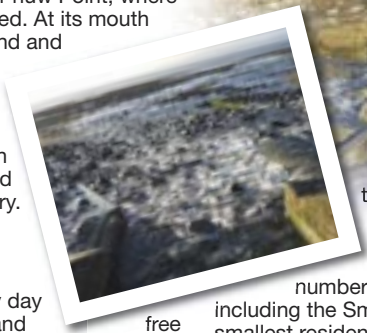
RIVERS IN SOUTH WALES



Afon Col-huw

Afon Col-huw is a very short river in the Vale of Glamorgan. It is only one mile long, formed when two rivers, the Ogney Brook and the Hoddnant converge south of Llantwit Major.

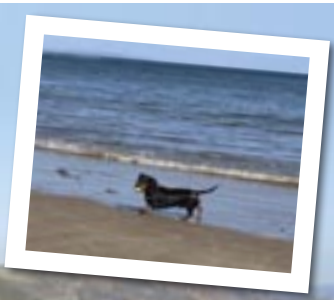
The river meets the sea at Col-huw Point, where Llantwit Major beach is situated. At its mouth the river flows through the sand and stones of Llantwit beach, the mouth of the river was originally sandy, but dredging in the Bristol Channel and thus degradation of the Nash Bank, has resulted in less sand around the estuary.



Popular with families and surfers alike, Cwm Col-huw beach is packed with all the facilities you need for a family day out. There are toilets, a cafe and free parking. Dogs are allowed on the beach from the 1st November to the end of April.

As well as being full of great features typical of the Glamorgan Heritage Coast such as rock-pools, a sandy beach and rugged cliffs, Cwm Col-huw is also home to a number of rare and beautiful species, including the Small Blue Butterfly, Britain's smallest resident butterfly. Wildlife can also be spotted at the Cwm Col-huw Nature Reserve which runs along the cliff tops to the west and back towards the town.

BEACHES IN WALES



Tenby in the Spring

Tenby is perfect for both young and old and there is something for everyone to enjoy all year round. For a true Tenby experience visit the small friendly harbour, where you can enjoy a spot of fishing, take a boat trip out to the nearby beautiful and tranquil Caldey Island, relax and unwind on the fantastic beaches or simply sit and people watch.

The three beaches are all dog-friendly until the end of April and there's no shortage of good restaurants, cafes and pubs.
With the pastel coloured buildings as your backdrop and the sea ahead, this picturesque seaside town is the perfect place to visit and enjoy early spring walks.

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Puzzle Solutions

Crossword Solution

Across: 1 Echo, 4 Limerick, 8 Brussels, 9 Harp, 10 Alder, 11 Sambuca, 13 Bonsai, 15 Excise, 17 Stollen, 19 Somme, 22 Tell, 23 Cenotaph, 24 A la carte, 25 Alec.

Down: 2 Coral, 3 Oysters, 4 Lees, 5 Muscatel, 6 Rehab, 7 Caracas, 12 Silencer, 14 Oatmeal, 16 Croatia, 18 Lilac, 20 Maple, 21 Ante.

3	8	1	5	4	7	6	9	2
6	4	2	8	3	9	7	1	5
5	7	9	1	6	2	4	8	3
9	6	5	7	8	4	3	2	1
8	3	4	6	2	1	5	7	9
2	1	7	9	5	3	8	6	4
1	5	6	4	9	8	2	3	7
7	2	8	3	1	5	9	4	6
4	9	3	2	7	6	1	5	8

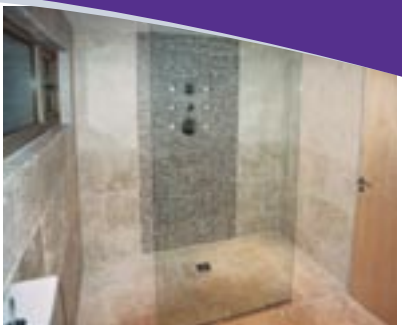
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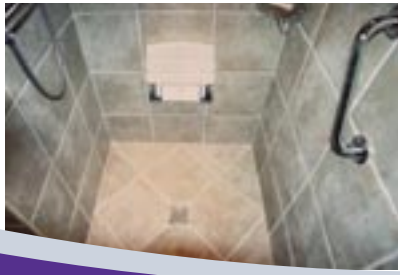
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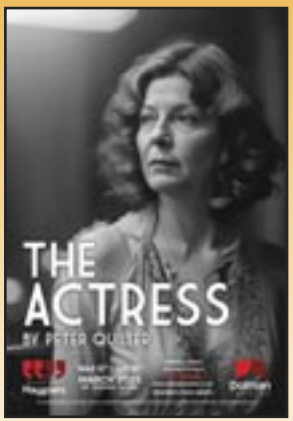
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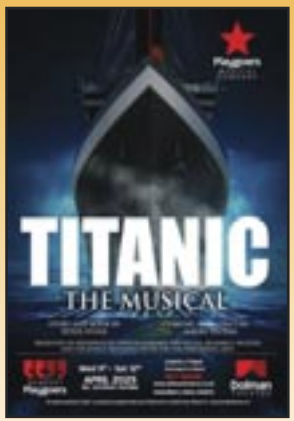
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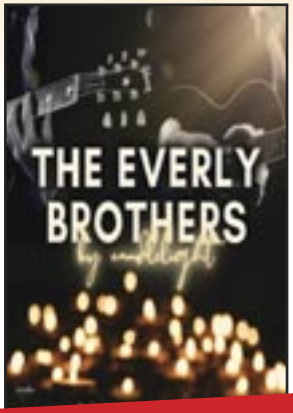
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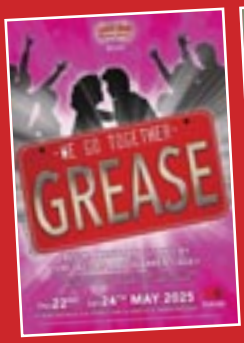
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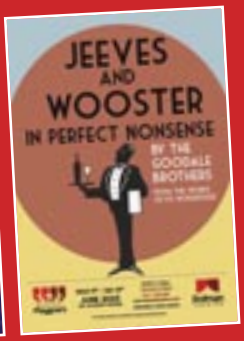






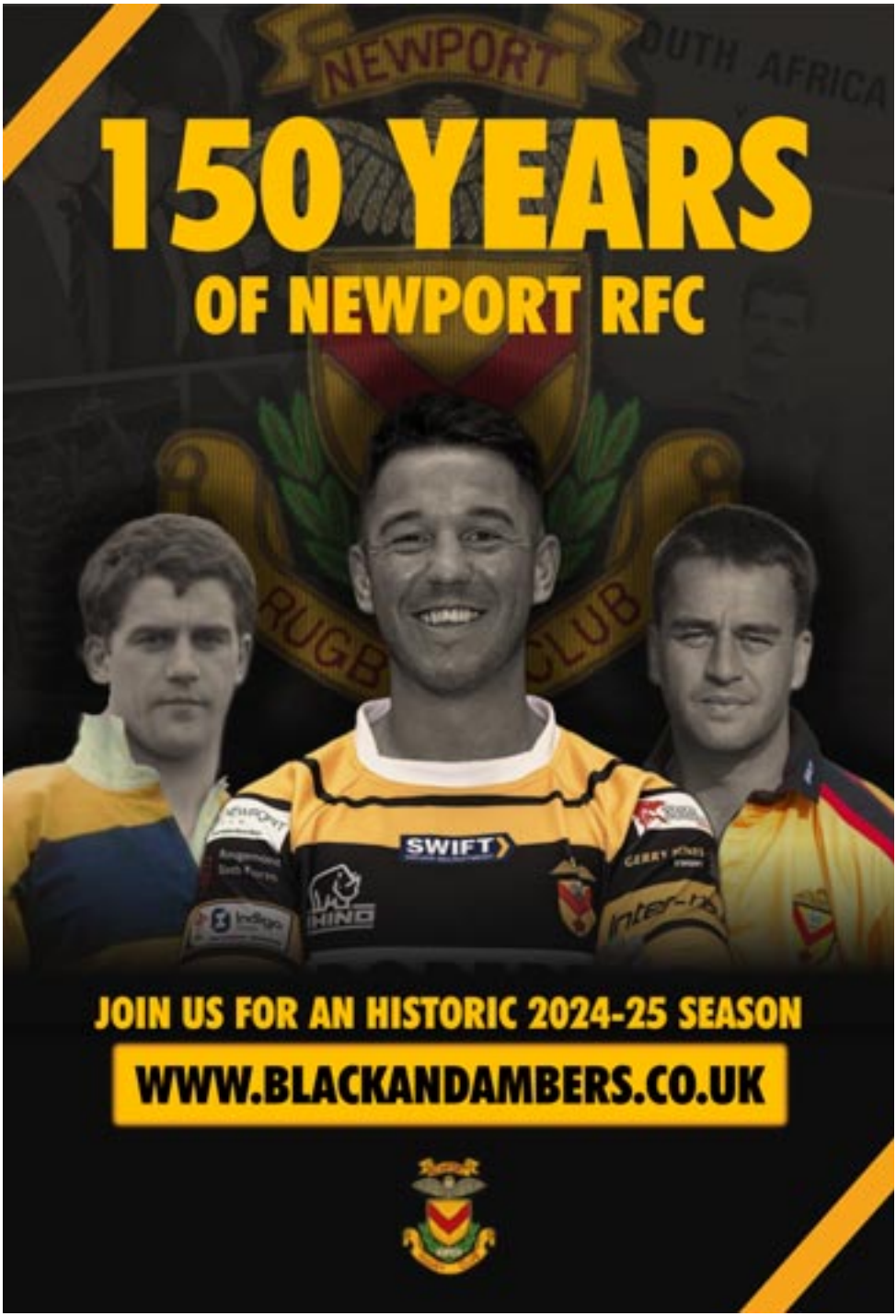






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