

Tuesday 1 June 2021

On This Day



Marilyn Monroe

Marilyn Monroe was one of Hollywood's great screen goddesses.

She was born Norma Jeane Mortenson on 1st June 1926. During her childhood, she spent many years living in foster care. To escape her unhappy home life, she began to model. Her modelling quickly led to a career in the movies.

She rose to fame with *Don't Bother To Knock*. Great roles followed. Her fame as a sex symbol was cemented in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. Everyone was dazzled by the new blonde bombshell.

The Way We Were



Bone handled knives

We were expected to help with the washing up when I was a child. People didn't have dishwashers in those days – just husbands and children!

We were taught from an early age not to put knives in the washing up water. I thought at first it was because you might cut your fingers on the blades if you didn't see them in the water.

Actually it was because the bone handles went very discoloured and lost their smooth shiny finish. You had to hold them out of the water and just wash the blades.

Now And Then



Smith's Crisps

Do you remember the little blue paper wrap of salt inside a bag of Smith's crisps? No strange flavours then, just that little bag of salt to sprinkle over the crisps. It made them delicious.

Finding that little blue wrap was all part of the fun. I would carefully open the packet and peek inside for the blue waxed paper. Just occasionally there were two wraps of salt. Doubly delicious!

Of course, my GP, Dr Franklin, told me long ago to go easy on the salt. "Too much salt causes high blood pressure," he said. But I still like salt on my chips, and on a bag of crisps.

That's Entertainment



Teens dancing in the 1950s

When I was a teenager we would go out every Saturday to the dance hall. There would be a dance band playing, and it was where we met people and had fun.

I would go with my friends. We were a group of girls. We were hoping to meet some nice boys at the dance. Us girls would sit on one side of the hall. The boys would sit on the other side. You sat there praying hard a boy would come over and ask you to dance.

But there weren't always enough boys to dance with. Sometimes if we didn't have a partner, us girls would dance with each other. At least you still got to have a dance!

Over To You



Coronation Street, an early episode

Dear Daily Sparkle,

I have been a big fan of *Coronation Street* since it started in 1960. I even went to see the actual set. I'm always interested to see episodes with famous actors appearing as guests. Some of them are great Corrie fans too, and say they always wanted to be in it.

Roy Hudd was great playing the part of an undertaker a few years ago. I remember seeing Honor Blackman, Ian McKellen and Bernard Cribbins too. Even radio stars have been in it. The actress currently playing man-eating Moira has also played Helen in *The Archers* for years.

Best wishes, from Norma

Telephone Challenge



1. What colour were telephone boxes traditionally painted?
2. Who invented the telephone? *John Logie Baird* or *Alexander Graham Bell*
3. How many vowels are there in the word 'TELEPHONE'?
4. In the past, who put your call through?
Conductor or *Operator*
5. In the old days, which button did you press to get your money back if you were not connected?
6. Did you dial the numbers clockwise or anticlockwise?
7. What number would you dial in an emergency?
8. How many words can you make from the letters in the word 'TELEPHONE'?
Examples: pet, not, help

PAGE 1 ~ ON THIS DAY ~ 1 June 1926 ~ Marilyn Monroe, film actress, born

Background: Marilyn Monroe was the most famous film actress and celebrity of the 1950s. She had been in foster homes and an orphanage as a child and married at 16 - she married three times. By the early 1960s she was struggling with her fame and with depression. She died in 1962, aged just 36, from an overdose.

Questions: Did you ever see Marilyn Monroe in any of her movies? Which ones did you see her in? Why do you think she was regarded as a sex symbol and was called a blonde bombshell? What do you think of the term 'blonde bombshell'? How would you rate her as a film actress? Apart from Marilyn Monroe, which other film actresses were your favourites? What made them so good?

PAGE 1 ~ THE WAY WE WERE ~ Bone handled knives

Background: Lots of people had bone handled knives even if the forks and spoons had metal handles. Not only did the handles go discoloured, but if water got inside the handle, the metal would rust where it joined the blade, and they could break or get loose. They certainly would not withstand washing in a dishwasher. Cutlery is now often made of stainless steel, including the knife handles.

Questions: What sort of cutlery did you have in your household when you were a child? How did you keep it looking nice? Did you help with the washing up? If you were washing up after dinner, what order would you wash things in? *[glasses, cutlery, first before anything greasy]*

PAGE 2 ~ NOW AND THEN ~ Smith's Crisps

Background: During the 1950s and 60s, Smith's were the main brand of crisp in the UK. This was before brands such as Tudor and Golden Wonder became popular. The crisps were not ready-salted. Instead you had to sprinkle salt on out of a small blue twist of paper, and then give them a good shake.

Questions: Do you remember the little blue paper wrap of salt inside a bag of Smith's crisps? What was it like? What did you do with the salt? Did you ever find two blue wraps of salt in one bag? Do you like eating crisps? Do you like plenty of salt on your crisps? Are you keen on a lot of salt on your food? Why did Jimmy's GP advise against too much salt? *[high blood pressure]*

PAGE 2 ~ THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT ~ Dance halls in the 1950s

Background: Dance halls were a popular leisure pastime for teens, as they were known, in the 1950s. A live band would play swing & jazz music. Dancers would need a basic knowledge of dances such as the foxtrot, jive, quickstep and waltz. Many teens would take dance lessons in preparation for weekend dances.

Questions: Did you go to dance halls when you were younger? Did you sit along the side of the wall? How did you get a partner to dance with? Were you a good dancer? How did people learn all the different dances? Who was the best or worst dancer among your friends? Did you have dance lessons? How do you think dancing changed during the 1960s/70s? *[less formal, dancing alone rather than with a partner]*

PAGE 3 ~ OVER TO YOU ~ Coronation Street and famous people who have appeared in it

Background: Many people have had roles in *Coronation Street* over its 60 years. Some went on to be well-known actors after having a small part early in their career. Others had cameo roles when they were successful. Some were surprising – author Beryl Bainbridge was one of Ken Barlow's girlfriends.

Questions: Are you a *Coronation Street* fan? If so which are your favourite characters? Do you watch any other soap operas? What is the appeal of soap operas in general? How realistically do they portray everyday life? Which characters on television do you find the most interesting – the goodies or the villains? What is your favourite television programme? Do you think people in general watch too much TV?

PAGE 3 ~ QUIZ : Telephone Challenge

Answers: 1. Red 2. Alexander Graham Bell 3. 4 (four)
4. Operator 5. Button B 6. Clockwise
7. 999 8. Various