

# SNIPPETS

From here and there



## Summer 2023

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The Maleny Garden Club extends a warm invitation to all members and visitors to attend the monthly general meetings held on the last Tuesday of each month, as per program for the year.

### An Unhappy Christmas

'Twas the night before Christmas and Santa's  
a wreck... How to live in a world that's  
politically correct?

His workers no longer would answer to  
"Elves", "Vertically Challenged" they were  
calling themselves.

And labour conditions at the North Pole were  
alleged by the union to stifle the soul.

Four reindeer had vanished, without much  
propriety, Released to the wilds by the  
Humane Society.

And equal employment had made it quite clear  
that Santa had better not use just reindeer.

So Dancer and Donner, Comet and Cupid,  
were replaced with four pigs, and you know  
that looked stupid!?

The runners had been removed from his  
sleigh; The ruts were termed dangerous by the  
EPA.

And people had started to call for the cops  
when they heard sled noises on their roof-tops.

Second-hand smoke from his pipe had his  
workers quite frightened. His fur trimmed red  
suit was called "Unenlightened".

And to show you the strangeness of life's ebbs  
and flows: Rudolf was suing over unauthorised  
use of his nose

And had gone on the news, in front of the  
nation, Demanding millions in overdue  
compensation.

So, half of the reindeer were gone; and his  
wife, Who suddenly said she'd enough of this  
life,

Joined a self-help group, packed, and left in a  
whiz, Demanding from now on her title was  
Ms.

As for the gifts, why, he'd ne'er had a notion  
That making a choice could cause so much  
commotion.

Nothing of leather, nothing of fur, Which  
meant nothing for him. And nothing for her.

Nothing that might be construed to pollute.  
Nothing to aim. Nothing to shoot.

Nothing that clamored or made lots of noise.  
Nothing for just girls. Or just for the boys.

Nothing that claimed to be gender specific.  
Nothing that's warlike or non-pacific.

No candy or sweets... they were bad for the  
tooth. Nothing that seemed to embellish a  
truth.

And fairy tales, while not yet forbidden, Were  
like Ken and Barbie, better off hidden.

For they raised the hackles of those  
psychological, Who claimed the only good gift  
was one ecological.

No baseball, no football... someone could get  
hurt; Besides, playing sports exposed kids to  
dirt.

Dolls were said to be sexist, and should be  
passe; And Nintendo would rot your entire  
brain away.

So Santa just stood there, dishevelled,  
perplexed; He just could not figure out what to  
do next.

He tried to be merry, tried to be gay, But  
you've got to be careful with that word today.

His sack was quite empty, limp to the ground;  
Nothing fully acceptable was to be found.

Something special was needed, a gift that he  
might, Give to all without angering the left or  
the right.

A gift that would satisfy, with no indecision,  
Each group of people, every religion;

Every ethnicity, every hue,  
Everyone, everywhere...even you.

So here is that gift, it's price beyond worth...  
"May you and your loved ones enjoy peace on  
earth." *Author unknown*

*(With Lisa Plucknett in mind)*

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## Algae Forms On The Head Of The Mary River Turtle Making It Look Like A Punk



## A Commentary of the Increasing Interest in Doing Your Work Online From Home.



## Helen's Travelogue

In June, July and August this year my husband and I spent eight weeks on holiday in England, Germany, Austria, Italy and Wales. We had a fascinating time and were fortunate to have family and friends in quite a few of the locations we visited. Fortunately we had the benefit of their local knowledge, experience and hospitality. I am going to share with you all, some of the highlights of our trip.

We landed in Heathrow London in the early hours of the morning and were picked up by

relatives. On our first day we spent walking along the Thames and enjoying a beer at the local pub this time watching the boats on the Thames. We spent time exploring London with our relatives who just happened to be professional tour guides so you can imagine the sights we saw and experiences that tantalised our senses.

We stayed in a quintessential semi-detached house with beautiful oak trees in the backyard, squirrels, pretty birdlife, flowers and the grass that was so very green. We watched the Horse Guards Parade outside Whitehall, tasted the many delights at the different food markets and I got to ride in a London Taxi (PS did I mention I'm as Harry Potter tragic!).

We next visited Ladbroke in the Midland's countryside, a typical English village with stone cottages and beautiful English gardens that were in full bloom with vibrant colours, and displays that seem to last forever.

Althorpe Estate resonated with me, the home of the Spencer's and the resting place of Princess Diana. Her shrine is like I always remember her, - simple, elegant and refined. We then moved onto another village called Calne, in Wiltshire. Again we saw many places but the highlight for my husband were the narrow boats and the operation of the locks, so much so that he spent a good couple of hours helping to open and close the locks for the locals travelling up and down the waterways. Next stop Germany.

We flew into Duesseldorf to catch up with family, and were thoroughly spoilt. The food was quite delicious, and we ate way too much. We also got to ride on the German trains that took us to Colone, Heidelberg and Munich reaching speeds of up to 280kms an hour. The castles were stunning and the scenery beautiful, we could have stayed a lot longer, but left Munich and travelled by car to Hopfgarten in Austria.

Hopfgarten, is a small village with a long history, a beautiful local church and is also a popular ski resort in Europe. We stayed in a friend's house that dated back to the 1500's while the buildings in the village were within walking distance. We hiked to the Gondola that took us up to the top of the mountain to a beautiful rotating restaurant with 360-degree breathtaking views. My husband skipped the Gondola ride down the mountain choosing to paraglide to the bottom landing in the field behind the house we were staying in. We would have liked to have spent more time in Austria, but we had a plane to catch to get us to Florence in Italy.

The wines and food in Italy are etched in my memory and the summer climate I found much like ours here in Queensland. We were staying with family in a villa and spent time exploring and enjoying the local food markets and

locally made olive oil and wines. It was all a little overwhelming all that food and wine while relaxing by the pool taking in the vista of Umbria. We are now heading back to England and the last leg of our trip and my husband's grand finale day out.

Wales was all I expected it to be, unique, the starkly beautiful coastline, rolling hills, woolly sheep and the tongue twisting Welsh language. We were there in summer, but it was cool to say the least, so we were dressed in long pants, jumper, and raincoat to break the wind. The last B&B we stayed in was a converted stable on a still operational farm with a lovely outlook and great local pub down the road. The trip finale for my husband was the Motorcycle Grand Prix at Silverstone and he has the cap and tee shirt to prove it!!! We are now heading home.

We had an awesome time, but home is where our heart is, and we missed our fur children though they had been totally spoilt by *our house sitters*. We are happy to be home and appreciate the opportunity to be able to travel which leaves us reflective and mindful about this pretty special, part of the world, we live in.

Till next time.

Helen Cartwright,

Secretary Maleny Garden Club.

## It Takes a Lady,



23-year-old Phyllis Latour jumps from a US Air Force bomber and parachutes into occupied Normandy to gather intelligence on Nazi positions in preparation for D-Day. She uses an entrenching tool strapped to her leg to bury her 'chute and clothes, and begins a 4 month mission of impeccable spy craft posing as a poor teenage French girl.

Latour had been trained by the British Special Operations Executive (SOE). She learned about encryption and surveillance, how to send messages in Morse code, and how to repair the wireless sets. She had to pass gruelling physical tests set in the rough terrain of the Scottish highlands. She learned the techniques of close combat, and described how they were taught by a cat

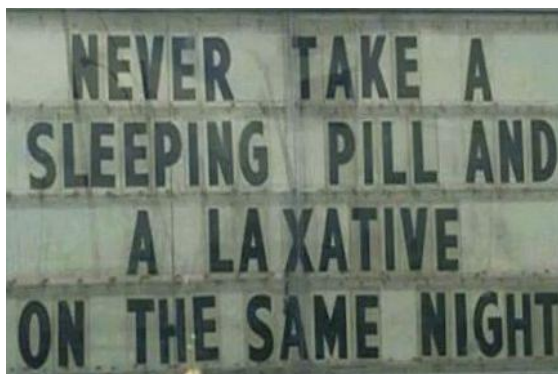


burglar who had been released from jail on "how to get in a high window, and down drain pipes, how to climb over roofs without being caught." Latour was determined to exact revenge against the Nazis, who had killed her godfather.

It would be a dangerous mission. Years later Latour told an interviewer "The men who had been sent just before me were caught and executed. I was told I was chosen for that area [of France] because I would arouse less suspicion." She used bicycles to tour the region, often under the guise of selling soap, and passed information to the British on Nazi positions using coded messages. Acting the part of a silly country girl, she would chatter with German soldiers. She moved constantly to avoid detection. Often she would spend nights sleeping in forests and foraging for food.

Latour developed an ingenious plan to conceal her activities. She carried her secret codes on a piece of silk, pricking each one with a pin when it had been used. She concealed the silk in a hair tie. When she was briefly detained by the Germans and subjected to search, she brazenly removed the tie and let her hair fall, to show that she had nothing to hide. During the summer of 1944 she sent 135 coded messages, helping Allied bombers to identify German targets.

After the war, Latour married and settled in New Zealand, raising four children. Her children knew nothing about their mother's service until her oldest son discovered the information on the Internet in 2000. She was presented with the Chevalier of the Legion of Honour by the French government in 2014, as part of the 70th anniversary of the battle of Normandy. Still living in New Zealand, Latour is 101. [ianscyberspace.com](http://ianscyberspace.com) (I believe a film was made of this story)



#### **Editor's Note.**

***Well another year has flown by. It seems we have only just had Christmas 2022.***

***I would like to thank all those who contributed articles through the busy Maleny Garden Club year. A special thank you to Helen Cartwright for her contribution this month. And to Jan Maguire for her regular contribution to our Snippets newsletter. Have a lovely Christmas and a happy and healthy 2024. See you all in January, Margaret.***

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I forgot my cat outside.  
I am too scared to let him in now.



This may be my last post

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**The Club's Objectives are:** – To further knowledge and enjoyment of horticulture. – To raise awareness in the club and community of local environment and to encourage planting of local indigenous species. – To enjoy social interaction between members of this and similar clubs.

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