

PANDEMIC PROJECTS

If you have an interesting story to tell about how you have spent your lockdown time during the last 3-4 months, (and it doesn't all have to be 'worthy', some of us have probably got into awful pickles), please send it to <mailto:gailmariemoss@icloud.com>

David Hollister of the Members Out Together (MOT) group, which is doing no such thing at the moment, has been researching the life of the Queen. He says that, as with Eric Morecambe's claim, the facts may not necessarily be in the right order.

The Trials and Tribulations of HM Queen Elizabeth II

1. Aged 10, Princess Elizabeth became heir presumptive, a status which would only change if her parents were to have a son. She is said to have prayed every night for a baby brother.
2. As Princess, her PPS was Martin Charteris whom she liked; as Queen she had to accept Sir Alan Lascelles in the role whom she did not like.
3. As a newly married couple, she and Philip lived at Clarence House which they both loved, particularly Philip; once she became Queen, they were compelled to move to Buckingham Palace.
4. Their first Commonwealth tour, lasting 5 months, was undertaken without their children, Charles and Anne, to which Philip objected but he was overruled and became somewhat petulant during the tour.
5. Princess Margaret's affair with Peter Townsend, about which the Queen was quite happy, was incompatible with the Royal Marriages Act 1772 which caused a rift between the sisters.
6. Winston Churchill had a heart attack which put him out of action for almost 10 days and he insisted the Queen should not be told; when she discovered the truth, she felt she had lost the trust of her first PM.
7. Anthony Eden and Harold Macmillan caused the government some embarrassment over Suez; she felt, rightly, that she had not been made aware of all the facts.

8. Harold Macmillan succeeded Eden who retired due to ill health. Macmillan then became unwell and resigned. The Queen called them both "quitters".
9. Prince Philip attended, on behalf of the Queen, the Olympic Games in Australia with his friend and PPS Mike Parker. Mrs Parker sued for divorce on the grounds of adultery while they were away.. Parker was sacked but, because of his friendship with Philip, the Queen was required to give a 'show of unity' within the Royal Family; she created him HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.
10. Philip suffered with backache and consulted the chiropractor Stephen Ward. The later Profumo/Keeler scandal caused major problems for the Queen when a drawing of Philip was found in Ward's flat.
11. Princess Margaret's relationship with Antony Armstrong-Jones caused her sister some anxious moments right up to the divorce, the first Royal divorce since Henry VIII's.
12. The Queen wanted Prince Charles to be educated at Eton but gave way to Philip's insistence that he should attend Gordonstoun where Charles was very unhappy.
13. Sir Anthony Blunt, the Keeper of the Queen's Pictures, was found by MI5 to be the 5th man in a spy ring. The Queen wanted him sacked and stripped of his title but the Civil Service and MI5 insisted this would cause embarrassment so he stayed in place until he retired.
14. After the Aberfan disaster, the Queen was forced, against her better judgement, to visit the site. She was asked to "look tearful" by PM Harold Wilson which was not her style.
15. Newspaper columnist Malcolm Muggeridge wrote a piece asking "What exactly does the Queen do?". At about the same time, Lord Altrincham appeared on TV to say the Queen was "too remote" so Philip came up with the idea of a TV documentary to show the Royal Family at work and play. The public liked it but the Queen hated it and said it should never be shown again.
16. The Duke of Windsor, exiled in France, was bored and wanted to return to serve his country in some way. The Queen was initially sympathetic until advised of his past involvement with Nazi Germany, so her favourite uncle was considered a traitor.

17. Edward Heath's government and the miners' strike caused the Queen much distress as she and all her subjects suffered the 'three day week' and power blackouts.
18. Prince Charles' relationship with Camilla Parker Bowles and the subsequent breakdown of his marriage to Diana would cause any parent distress but, to have the whole story played out in the media day after day, is quite another matter.
19. Prince Edward's attempt to produce royal version of 'It's a Knockout' was embarrassing for the whole Royal Family.
20. Prince Andrew's marriage began with high expectation but ended in divorce. He has now caused even more upset with an ongoing investigation into his behaviour.
21. Marion Crawford, long time nanny to Charles and Anne, retired and wrote a book revealing lots of family secrets, creating much displeasure.
22. The fire at Windsor Castle, considered to be the Queen's favourite residence, caused her huge distress.
23. Almost every family in the country was affected by inflation between 1953-1970 and the Royal Family was no exception but its finances were subject to public scrutiny. How humiliating it must have been to receive 10p from a 4 year old wanting "to help you with your palace".
24. The decommissioning of the Royal Yacht Britannia, a treasured form of relaxation for the Queen, caused her great sadness and she was said to have shed public tears.
25. Prince Edward's wife, Sophie, caused the Queen and Queen Mother some anguish when she was interviewed by the 'fake sheikh'; she referred to the Queen Mother as 'the old woman' and the Queen as 'the old dear'.
26. Diana's affair with Dodi Fayed caused much concern such that she was stripped of her HRH title. Her later death put the Queen in an impossible situation as a grandmother but she was able to appease the Press and public with a rare TV address to the nation.
27. The Duke of Edinburgh's car accident resulted in him having to give up driving on public roads.

28. Prince Andrew's TV interview with Emily Maitlis was almost the last straw; one can only imagine how difficult it must have been for the Queen to ask her son to withdraw from royal duties.
29. But then came Prince Harry and Meghan wanting to break away and live in, first Canada, then USA.
30. Covid-19 created another opportunity for the Queen to give a rare TV address to the nation when she and Prince Philip fell into the category of 'most vulnerable'. Even more serious was the fact that Prince Charles was diagnosed with the virus.
31. How many trials and tribulations can one person have to endure, to say nothing of the loss of family members and personal friends over the years?