

Andrew Beardmore in Conversation with Fiza Pathan

Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire: Unusual and Quirky

Second interview — Fiza Pathan's Teaching Portfolio

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Note: this is a clean verbatim transcript. Filler sounds and stammered repetitions have been removed and abandoned sentences repaired, but nothing has been added, reworded for style, or summarised — the substance is exactly as spoken. An em-dash marks a point where a speaker was interrupted. Proper nouns misheard by the speech-recognition software have been corrected against published sources, and misassigned speaker turns reassigned.

Fiza: Hello everyone and welcome to Fiza Pathan's teaching portfolio for pgcrite.com. Today yet again I am with our favorite indie author, best-selling fantasy historical you name it fantasy author Andrew Beardmore a tech professional and author who has made his debut with the Nessemiah series which is a best-selling series, which we have already spoken about in our first interview with dear old Andrew and today, apart from that, he has won a lot of awards also for his Nessemiah series and his books so lots of things to talk about but also focusing on Derbyshire the continuation of the historical architectural remains places of Derbyshire especially for our IBDP students who are studying English history and also the famous Home of Robin Hood. That's at least how most millennials and Gen X kids remember Nottinghamshire. They remember Nottinghamshire for our dear Robin Hood who robbed from the rich to give to the poor. Friar Tuck and Little John and let's not forget Maid Marian etc. There's so much, therefore, to look forward to. Over to Andrew Beardmore. You can take it on from there. Andrew, as I said earlier before we started this interview, I've already reviewed the first two books of your Nessemiah series and I'm seriously looking forward to finish all my other ARC reads and some other weird reads that I'm having right now related to my theology, my AI and LLM work and studies and data science work etc and studies. I think it just can go on. Okay, so I'll just say lots of ARC and lots of books to read and then most probably by next month itself I'll be coming to the third book in the Nessemiah series something that I've been waiting for a long time and that is The Awakening but let's see what Andrew has to say and how he's surprising us today—

Andrew: Okay so I'm going to hopefully share my screen now and be able to share my presentation so bear with me Can you see anything at the moment?

Fiza: Not yet. But not to worry. Even I can share it right now. Everything is ready with me also.

Andrew: Hang on a second. Share.

Fiza: Ah, there it is. There it is.

Andrew: Okay. So, actually, I might step through rather than go slideshow, I'll step through the slides as you see them at the moment. Are they big enough for you at the moment? You can see everything on the screen.

Fiza: You can take a PowerPoint presentation which is to the bottom right hand corner of your screen. Bottom right hand corner of the screen. Yeah, right over there. Take a power make a PowerPoint presentation and then we have it.

Andrew: Is that this the icon?

Fiza: Absolutely. Absolutely, Andrew. Correct. Press it.

Andrew: There we go. Okay. I should have added some speaker notes. I can see where they would have appeared now, but it's blank. But you can see the whole slide now I take it.

Fiza: No, actually not. But not to worry. You can continue. You can continue. I can see the other. It's not coming in PowerPoint mode. Do you want me to share, I'll share it and you can continue and I'll tell you and you can tell me when to click along.

Andrew: It's probably best if I do that because the particularly what what's coming in the middle, you know, I need to control when I click sort of thing. Am I okay to continue with what you see at the moment?

Fiza: All right. No, no issues. No issues. You can continue.

Andrew: Okay. So, I thought it was worth doing obviously we did an interview three months ago now. It was largely focused on local history of Derbyshire, but there were you were in interested in my background because I've done 40 years work in IT and so you wanted to know where the historical and the geographical side of things came from and I so I think I'll just do a quick five minute recap and then that'll bring us nicely into Derbyshire Unusual & Quirky. So yeah I've worked for 40 years in IT but when I was at school my favorite subjects were geography and history. I should have taken history as a degree when I was 18 but I ended up having to get a job for various reasons. And because I probably wanted to earn a bit of money as well. So, and then my first job was at the tax office. And whilst I was there, I studied computer studies at nightclass. That's how I became acquainted with computing. That allowed me to get my first job in IT at Rolls-Royce. They then sponsored me to do a computer science degree and I ended up getting a first class honors. And also won the top prize that year for the faculty of mathematics and computing which I understand you guys called a topper in India. Is that Right.

Fiza: Absolutely. A topper. A full rank distinction topper. Whoa. Whoa.

Andrew: I read that in a book recently in a novel actually. I'd never heard it before. So I didn't realize I was a topper.

Fiza: You are a topper. A distinction ranking honors stopper. You are epic. Andrew continue.

Andrew: Well, thank you. Anyway, as I said last time, it was about 18 months later. I tried to understand why it was that I'd won that top award because I felt there were, you know, some of the programs like of course were wizards you know I was competent there were great software engineers but I was a competent in all spheres so I think that's why I got it but then I took a step back and I realized it was wasn't so much my knowledge my computing knowledge it was the fact that I could write and I'd never written before at that point but I felt I need to take advantage of this skill if it can you know drive me to heights such as this and then I this we then move into the next phase of well the first phase of my writing career which is from 1996 to 2008 and we talked about—

Fiza: The slides are moving I mean the slides are changing Andrew just to interject here they're not changing they're not changing yeah so we're still on your yeah we're still on so if you can just get out of your PowerPoint presentation and go back or as I'm saying if I can share I don't mind going I know the whole procedure so I can go ahead you can just keep on telling me and then we can go ahead is going to come out of this now.

Andrew: Okay, let's see. So, I've come out of there now. Can you see anything on the screen?

Fiza: Now, it's changed. Now, try to going to the next slide. Let's see whether—

Andrew: Okay. Okay. Well, I'll just step through this in the mode that I have at the moment. So, I'm just I'm now describing the period between 1996 and 2008. And you've got a picture of me looking quite young on the right hand side. Is that right? You can see that?

Fiza: Yes. As I said before, looking handsome. Cute, and really, just out of the — not monastery or convent or something like that, really — but still someone who's erudite and who has a lot of potential a lot of not only potential but who's going to make history and maybe the Nessemiah series the history of England books etc and what you're doing for your county and the areas that you are focusing on you are going to go down in history as someone who really looked at literature in a unique light something in a Tolkien sense I think Tolkien and you will go hand in hand very well I can't I can never call you a C. S. Lewis — but I will definitely praise you and put you on a pedestal and commend you at the same time with Tolkien so I can see you as the new Tolkien in indie fiction right now as well as for the way you describe your non-fiction, Andrew.

Andrew: Okay. Well, thank you very much for that high praise. You know, it's a very very difficult world to succeed in terms of writing, you know, so the chances of having success are quite remote, I think. But I really thank you for your kind words. Going back to the presentation, it was my getting that first honours, and getting that top award, the topper award that made me realize that I could write and I'd never written before. From 1996 onwards, I started writing short stories poetry and articles for newspapers, magazines, the small press, that sort of thing.

And this period culminated in the top left-hand corner here. So this is the Trowell and District Writers' Trust winners 2008. And that's me sat on the front row there holding that enormous trophy because I was deemed to have written the best piece of literature that year for this competition. And that was the first piece of literature I'd written that aligned to place names, etymology, and local history, I guess. So once again I'm taking a step—

Fiza: Making of history the making of his local history.

Andrew: It's definitely a turning point in my career. Yeah. So a pivotal point. I then took another step back and I thought, well, if this can come out top in this — it's sort of more of a national competition, and it has an international entrance as well. There must be something in this maybe there's a book in this I'm thinking. And so this piece is for Trowell, which is obviously going to come up later. But I live and you know I was born in Derbyshire. I've lived here all my life. So I decided I was going to write a similar piece about Derbyshire and then put all the local history around it to write my first book. This took several years. Did lots and lots of research. I traveled the length and breadth of the county. I must have visited a thousand places. Took several thousand photographs, and this culminated in getting a deal with Halsgrove Publishing in 2013 and they then published Derbyshire Unusual and Quirky in 2014. Within a month they were so impressed with the sales that they offered me two more contracts, one for Nottinghamshire unusual and quirky which we'll talk about later and also Leicestershire and Rutland Unusual and Quirky. And as you can see bottom right there since that point in time we've expanded the series and I'm currently three-quarters of the way through Worcestershire Unusual and Quirky.

Fiza: When it's over, please, before you even give it to the publisher, before it's published, at least do an interview with me and maybe we'll call some guests or some of my students along also, so that we can have a you know zoom meeting and a little bit of question and answering, interjecting and all that sort of thing. So do keep me in mind when that is happening. Continue, Andrew. Excited.

Andrew: We we'll do. Yes. Just to say I've got so many plates spinning at the moment though, so I don't know whether to do the fiction or the non-fiction. And of course I'm still working in it. So, so it might be a while before we get to the point where Worcestershire is ready. But back to the to where I am, you know, where I was between I guess this is the period now we're looking at between 2008 and 2019. Obviously, the local history element has enabled me to start delivering speeches and talks around Derbyshire and some of the neighboring counties. Some of these talks that I do, I tell 5 to 10 minute anecdotes or stories or legends from Derbyshire's past, similar to what I'm going to do today. But then I've written a song to accompany that story and I play the song as well. And a lot of those songs you can find on my YouTube channel which is called the quirky beardy. So this is the period 2008 to 2019. We then move into 2019 to 2026. And I've always wanted to write fiction. So I decided it was in December 2019. I came up with this idea. I mapped the whole thing out. I knew who all my characters were going to be. I even wrote

designed a Gantt chart to decide who was going to do what at which point where so you could see where they were interlocking.

Fiza: So organized. My lord, I like as a writer personally to say I let my characters take over. But I can see here you already were living.

Andrew: No, no, that happens. So quite often you've got this plan, but when you're actually writing, of course, you go down different avenues, you know, and wonderful avenues as well where you didn't expect to go and characters align where you didn't expect them to. But the other thing I did right at the start in December 2019, I designed all the maps for my countries, you know, which I've got quite a lot of really good feedback on to be honest. But yeah, so anyway, Halsgrove are primarily a non-fiction publisher, but they obviously believed in me enough to offer me a four book contract for the Nessemiah in 2023. Books one and two were published last year. And they've already both books one and two have won the Literary Titan Gold Book Award and the BookViral Golden Quill Award as well. And it's also been endorsed by you know well-respected reviewers such as LoveReading and BookBrowse and OnlineBookClub.

Fiza: So we're going in the right direction. Still haven't got a hundred reviews yet. So congratulations Andrew. And is that my line? Poldark meets Gladiator on another world. Is That my phrase?

Andrew: I'm sorry to disappoint you. That's something I came up with very early on.

Fiza: Okay. Very good.

Andrew: It's a clashing of two cultures. So the Poldark side is Regency Britain. So we have the four isles of the British Isles. But we also have a throwback to the Roman Empire, which is called the Empire.

Fiza: So yeah, that's the strap line the publisher is using. That is amazing. Amazing. Congratulations. And please everyone, I want I'm definitely waiting for The Awakening and I am getting The Awakening and then I'm going to go to the Kiss of Nessemi and y'all will have to also get the Nessemiah series. Start with The Strains of Malice. Go on to Cold Sanctuary. Please check out my reviews of the same five whopping solid star reviews for both The Strains of Malice and Cold Sanctuary. And I think the same is going to happen with The Awakening. I just I love drowning myself in this series. I love drowning myself in Andrew's literature. And I hope you all do so also especially after seeing the second interview that we're having today with Andrew continue.

Andrew: Thank you Fiza. So just to point out as well you I don't know whether you've missed this but the awakening is available in ebook format now from Amazon as is the kiss of so the paperbacks will follow next month or September.

Fiza: I will definitely get a copy. I always like my personal Kindle copies and I'm waiting actually when a nice omnibus collection or a whole collection will come out and I'll get all the

paperbacks or hardbacks together. Then I'll be I mean it'll be a nice collection for my library. As you can see, I have quite a lot of books over here. And I just 5,000. Just 5,000.

Andrew: Just 5,000. Yes. I think I've got 2,000. And it's not very popular with my wife. So, she's always telling me to throw things out. So,—

Fiza: No. No. Don't listen to—

Andrew: I can't do it. No,—

Fiza: Mrs. Beardmore. I'm sorry. Don't listen to M. Please. You don't understand us. You don't understand us. But you will you already understand him now understand him fully. If you don't see this interview and know it can increase to 5,000 just say on you know on the positive side at least Andrew has only 2,000 or whatever this crazy woman who's interviewing him has 5,000 plus and probably by next week it may be 5 thou it's 5,045 physical hardback and U paperback books and I think by next week it'll be 20 plus. So I'm really in a miserable condition right now. Why? Because where to place them? Where to take them? Where to place them?

Andrew: Oh, exactly. Yes. Exactly. And bookcases go along with that, etc. But then the physical book, there's something always magical about the physical book. All mine are up in the attic. But my saving graces that I discovered I'd put off buying a Kindle for years and I bought one last year and Pretty much everything I've bought bookwise since then has been an ebook, which obviously takes up no space, but it's not the same, is it?

Fiza: It's not the same. At least not for me. It saves money. Yes, it saves space, whatever. Minimalism can be followed, etc. You tend to be in whatever in a zen after, whatever. But it's not the same. It's it doesn't do the same thing. And let's not forget the blue light. Let's not forget that blue light. I used to have this Kindle Fire. Now it I had to update. So, I had to go for another Kindle, which couldn't be a Kindle Fire, but the blue light problem, it never ceases to amaze me how it just penetrates to the back of my retina. Yeah. And then because of that, I just can't get sleep at night. And so therefore, I'm trying more and more to read more physical books than Kindle.

Andrew: Okay. But it's not going to happen because I just—

Andrew: I'll tell you one major advantage of a paperback book, and that's you know, my books are all front-loaded with lots of maps. All the areas that that the action takes place in. So that's the bit I love about fantasy books is that you can flick backwards and forwards in a book and you can't do that on a Kindle.

Fiza: Absolutely. Absolutely. Guys, this is something which all Harry Potter fans also know. All Tolkien fans also know physical hardback books especially coming directly from Britain London bookstores. You can flip you can flip and see the map. That is something else all together. Continue Andrew. Sorry. Very sorry I'm just—

Andrew: Okay so I think I feel we've diverged a little bit from the subject matter here so the next slide is going to bring us back online again back on stream so obviously I'm here to talk about local history on the whole with so there are the eight books that have been published so far we're going to be last time around I actually talked about the story behind the four pictures at the top of Derbyshire Unusual & Quirky I'm just going to do a very quick recap on those and retell the story of the hermit's cave because I've got some more photo for that one.

Fiza: Oh, okay.

Andrew: We'll then finish the rest of the front page and then I said I'd like to have some fun at that point. So, there's a poem I'd like to tell then which I'm sure you will enjoy—

Fiza: Definitely—

Andrew: With lots of that's why I needed control by the way of the slides and then we'll move on to Nottinghamshire unusual and quirky and we will cover every photograph on this front page as well. So, we're going to move Oops. I was meant to show you the front covers of both Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. That's where we're going shortly. We now return to the top tier of the photographs in Derbyshire and Quirky. Last time around I talked at length about this. This is probably the most famous structure in Derbyshire. It's known as the crooked spire. It's Chesterfield's Church of St. Mary's and All Saints. And I talked about why it was so twisted and warped. And I talked about how it was sort of rooted in the Black Death if you remember because that took a third of the population of England. So it was reduced from 6 million to 4 million. It meant there weren't many skilled crafts people around. They made mistakes and hence the crooked spire. And I also talked about legends as well. So if you want to know if you want to know more about those then look at the first interview that—

Fiza: Absolutely yes we had a first interview already where all this was spoken about and so especially most of the things on Derbyshire. So please check out my first interview with Andrew Beardmore. You will really really enjoy it. I can already see many eyeballs falling. On that interview over there. It's just picked up on every page whatsoever. So, please do look at that first interview.

Andrew: Okay. So, and continuing. So, we discussed mining, coal mining in Derbyshire the last time around. We've also got a big coal mining story in Nottinghamshire coming along and we're back on that one.

Fiza: And that's why a lot of mining — that's what attracted me to the Nessemiah series, the first book, The Strains of Malice continue. Thank you.

Andrew: I obviously also talked about this. This is a an east chancel arch or surviving chancellor arch from a 13th-century Premonstratensian abbey built at a place in Derby called Dale Abbey. And I also pointed out that across the back here there's a lovely valley. It's in southeast Derbyshire. And in this valley so at the top of the book there's this structure here which is known as the Hermit's Cave.

Andrew: I'm going to retell this I'm going to retell this story because I've got some more photographs that can sort of bear out the story that I told last time. So, this was all about a baker in Derby in the 1130s or the 1140s who was said to have had a visitation from God that told him to give up his baking and to go and live out the rest of his life in a place called Depedale because there was no abbey there at that point. The Premonstratensians hadn't arrived at that point. And live out the rest of his life in you know in as in solitary and this he did and he hewed this cave out of the sandstone rock there above the village of Deep Dale and it's only six yards by three yards this cave he had two compartment one was an oratory and the other was his living quarters and I went on to explain that the story has a happy ending because he gets discovered by the local Norman landlord whilst he's hunting and he takes pity on the hermit and he grants him the land on which the cave stands and he also grants him a tithe from one of his mills. And the legend goes that with this windfall, this financial windfall, the hermit goes on to go down the valley into deep dale itself and build himself a more ostentatious oratory and a more ostentatious living quarters. And that story possibly has some credence because down in Dale Abbey we have this structure which you didn't see last time I explained it. But now you can see it firsthand.

Andrew: So what we have on the left hand side here is a Dale Abbey All Saints Church. It's the only church in the UK that shares a roof with another structure.

Fiza: Yeah.

Andrew: So you can see there's his oratory and there's his living quarters. And this the stones to this church date from the 12th century. So it's thought, you know, it could genuinely be feasible. It may be more than a legend.

Fiza: Absolutely. Yes. I can see it. I can see it.

Andrew: Now on the right hand side, I mentioned that this have been a farmhouse at some at one particular time. It was also an infirmary for the abbey. And I also mentioned how it was once a pub as well, the blue bell in.

Fiza: Yes. Is that—

Andrew: And I explained how the clergy used to change in the bar.

Fiza: Yes.

Andrew: Into their clerical vestments.

Fiza: Yes.

Andrew: They went through an internal door into the church. And there was a strong rumor that the minister was largely married before he got anywhere near the communion wine. So—

Fiza: What a unusual—

Andrew: Great services.

Fiza: What an unusual Visual oratory come house come my lord—

Andrew: Yes—

Fiza: My—

Andrew: Yes—

Fiza: Yes—

Andrew: This is the high I thought it was worth resharing that story simply because you really needed to see this building there may well be some credence in the story—

Fiza: This is I'm definitely I looking at this especially the oratory and the stones even from my the distance over here definitely much older than what is on the other side at least my right to my right what is over there—

Andrew: Too young—

Fiza: Too real. I mean, too recent. That is ancient. It's That's old.

Andrew: And that's old. That's just ancient. That's old. That is—

Fiza: My lord, thank God you showed us this, Andrew. This is really edifying and amazing to see. This is taking the new England or just England adding of rooms to every space on a whole new level. It works. Yeah. But—

Andrew: I think you're right. I think this bit over here looks like it might be sort of Tudor, 15th 16th century.

Fiza: Exactly. That's we were talking about.

Andrew: Yeah.

Fiza: That was probably the structure that the hermit built.

Andrew: The original.

Fiza: Yeah.

Andrew: So, it's also, by the way, at 25 ft by 26 ft. That's the size of the nave of all saints church. It's the smallest one in England that's still delivering active services.

Fiza: It's ah yes, you did say it's delivering.

Andrew: Yes, I did. Yeah.

Fiza: What?

Andrew: Okay.

Fiza: Amazing. Amazing.

Andrew: So, anyway, so that's bit of a recap on what we talked about last time with a bit more information. We're now going to move down a row and we come to this sculpture here. So, I can tell you that is actually a sculpture. It's been sculpted out of the rock—

Fiza: There. Okay.

Andrew: It's actually meant to be a hand like so. And it's one of three.

Fiza: And it's—

Andrew: It can be located in a place called Rowtor Rocks. Okay. Which is high above the Druids Inn in Birchover. Okay. Okay. Now, I talked about Birchover last time and in particular the Nine Ladies Stone Circle, if you remember.

Fiza: Yes.

Andrew: Now, now since we last spoke, I talked about how atmospheric the place is and you've got these bells and ribbons tied to the trees and the circle is encircled by trees and it's just a wonderful, you know, therapeutic place to be. There's been a terrible occurrence since then, since we spoken on the 30th of March or whenever it was on the summer solstice.

Fiza: Well, Jesus, what—

Andrew: Somebody was murdered there, and it's thought that it might have been ceremonial sacrificial sort of thing. You know, the true details haven't been released yet, but it's thought that's what happened — a couple of lunatics with knives killed a man up there. So, it's got a whole different feel for me now, this area.

Fiza: But it is heavy with ancientism — it's got this druidic feel. It's happening a lot here also. It's happening a lot here in India. Remember my short story Until Death Do Us Unite. I don't think you've read that one but you've read My Sweet Lord and you've read Caste Metal. So such things are happening again even here Whatever Happened to Cacchar over there it's happening again over here in India it's so ever since I've spoken to you so maybe that's why also whatever is happening with our students etc as I spoke to you about when in the beginning so I don't know suddenly again this idea of a cabal and the idea of it's like going back to the dark part of the Middle Ages again.

Andrew: In all my lifetime, there's never been an occurrence like this in Derbyshire, you know. So, this is, you know, really quite shocking. But yes, anyway, I better get back to the back to the carvings. Okay, so these are quite old. They were carved in the late 17th century by the Reverend Thomas Heir, who was the he was the minister at Birchover, I think it's St. Michael and All

Angels Church. And it was to it was to commemorate the ascension to the throne of William and Mary in 1688. There I mentioned staunch Protestants of course—

Fiza: That's why I put the hearts very staunch but very historical and very rich in early reformation English history.

Andrew: Yes. Yes. So 100 years or so after. Yeah. And anyway let's move to the left now and to what I would say is the most controversial image on the front page of Derbyshire Unusual & Quirky. So, this is a pub known as the Quiet Woman, and it's in a little village called Earl Sterndale, which is a few miles south of Buxton, and it's close to the Derbyshire border with Staffordshire to the west. Well, I say it's a pub called The Quiet Woman. I went back there to Earl Sterndale a couple of years ago, and this pub sadly is no more. It's a private home. And this is a growing trend in the UK and in England in particular, that pubs are falling by the wayside. They can no longer make enough money to sustain themselves and they end up being sold to private buyers. And so the quiet woman is no more. It was actually I think it was about 400 years old and it had always been a pub and it had always been called the quiet woman. Now as you can see the image is rather controversial. So it's said to depict a former landlady who was rather talkative shall we say. Okay. And apparently the evil landlord decided on a rather interesting way to quieten her. You can see she's got no head.

Andrew: Do words turneth away wrath. It says above it where the head should be. So this obviously in this day and age this is a very controversial image.

Fiza: Yes. Soic but—

Andrew: But the way I reconcile with that is that I do tell this story as one of my talks that is aligned to song. So, I've written a song called The Quiet Woman, open brackets, Eva's Revenge, close brackets, and it's all about how, you know, poor Eva from beyond the grave exacts revenge on her evil husband. So yeah, so she wins in the end.

Fiza: Oh, c can you read the lines of that song for us over here? That poem for us over here. Do you have it with you?

Andrew: I Yeah, some of it's quite irreverent actually. How she gets her revenge on him. But yeah, I do have the words somewhere. Maybe next time. So—

Fiza: Next time. Next time. No. No. But I definitely want to hear how she got her revenge.

Andrew: Oh, she Oh, she gets her revenge. All right. From beyond the grave.

Fiza: I love it when women or at least people who identify as women get their revenge.

Andrew: So the chorus goes something like now you may think that you're free of me, but trust me, revenge is nigh, for I will make all your fears come true. I'll haunt you till the day you die. And that comes in five or six times, but it's the verses in between that are some somewhat

controversial in how she gets her revenge because he ends up an absolute jibbering wreck in a lunatic asylum.

Fiza: Something like it's sounding a lot like our dear Mr. James a very sadistic and satirical take of what Mr. James would have done. Amazing with a hint of the American Edgar Allan Poe. This is a very fascinating place. I'm so sorry. It has since we've spoken gone away and this is the problem now with all these old places not only where you are but even where I am. Many of our places our bakeries etc are just disappearing and—

Andrew: Well as you mentioned the word misogyny I suppose a lot of people won't be sorry to see the back of this particular in—

Fiza: But I still would make the misogynistic statement here at this point that yes women do tend to be very verbose compared to men. I still would like to mention that. I know it's misogynistic and I can picture some people probably from my IBDP classes, especially IBDP at Podar saying, "Miss, you're being misogynistic and you're a hardcore feminist. How can you do this to us? Take up for feminism." But no, I have noticed in my life also that especially nowadays Gen Z, they can really talk very fast. At least you can see me because of my congenital disease or maybe you just because we are good speakers and we from the pre2000s era. We take a while, we pause, we speak, we enunciate each word, but they so fast. So, and the women,—

Fiza: Not just in India.

Andrew: Oh my gosh.

Fiza: Same here as well. So,—

Andrew: Yeah, everywhere. Everywhere.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: So, shall we move on? We move left to a very unusual and quirky, I guess, looking church. You know, most English churches have a tower and a spire. This one has a dome and a cupola on top of that which is extremely unusual.

Fiza: Vatican or Turkish or something happening over here.

Andrew: It sort of looks that way, doesn't it? But anyway, it's in a place. I'm not too sure how you pronounce it because some occurrences have one P and others have two P's. It's either Mappleton or Mappleton. I think it's the latter. I think it's Mappleton.

Andrew: Mappleton. It's Mappleton defin. Again, it's on the border with Staffordshire. It's just northwest of Ashbourne. And—

Fiza: That should explain that should explain Ashbourne. Continue. You tell it. You tell it. I will not stop on there. You're on mute or—

Fiza: No, you can. You explain it. I will not explain it. You should tell it to me. I'm just—

Andrew: Okay. So, I go for it. So, okay. This is, as you can tell, this is a beautiful day when this was taken. Was in the depths of the British summer. Beautiful green and blues. So, I want to I want to imagine if you going and stood now by those two pillars that are in front of the front door there and you turn yourself round so your back is to the church and you're looking out on a beautiful village green, an English village green. There's a lovely pub called the Okeover Arms to the left there, black and white. And the road runs alongside, in fact, sorry, right in front of you is the River Dove weaving you know, slowly through the countryside from north to south. Okay. There's a road that comes up from south to north and then directly opposite the church, it turns 90 degrees and goes over the river dove on a steep-sided bridge and it drops down into Staffordshire on the other side where we have the estate of Okeover, and Okeover Hall can be found there. Now, the reason I'm telling you this is because that steepsided bridge is the location of an annual tradition, an annual custom that goes back many years. And this is, bearing in mind, this is New Year's Day, so it's the complete opposite of what you're looking at now. It's cold and there are no leaves on the trees and what have you.

Andrew: And it's a traditional custom where people come from far and wide to stand on top of that bridge and jump into the freezing cold waters of the River Dove and then wade out of it, cross the village greens to the Okeover Arms, which ironically is in at Mappleton actually and they drink away all afternoon whilst they dry out. So—

Fiza: I remember this. Yes.

Andrew: So I'm a bit annoyed with myself. Every year I promise myself I'll go and take some photographs of this to demonstrate the truth of it. I haven't done it yet, so I must go this year. But just to show you that I'm not lying and this actually happens every year. I've taken some photographs off the internet, okay, of people jumping in the freezing cold water from a very high bridge. On the 1st of January, which over here is very cold on the 1st of January.

Fiza: Sure was.

Andrew: So, here we go. Here are some examples. So, I'm not kidding when I say it's quite a high-sided bridge. That's a long way down. They're all fully clothed. And here's another one. I like this one because you actually can't see the water cuz the people are blocking the water. So,—

Fiza: Has anyone gone in fully nude or fully naked by any chance? It happens here.

Andrew: No, not at all.

Fiza: Really?

Andrew: No. You get arrested here. So,—

Andrew: Okay. Okay. Okay.

Andrew: Not that I'm aware of anyway. But I would— It wouldn't surprise me. But I like that one because he can't see where he's going. He looks like he's dropping into the pits of hell or something.

Fiza: I'm going whether you like it or not. Whether you like it or not. Inferno, here I come. Dance.

Andrew: Notice how everybody's got thick puffer jackets on here and thick coats and hats and that's how cold it is, you know.

Fiza: I hope you're not planning only planning on photographing Not doing absolutely yes not doing the deb from a safe distance.

Andrew: We—

Andrew: I saved the best two photographs till last though. So what we have here on the right hand side this guy he's actually gone up before he's gone down. It's just like sheer wild abandon.

Fiza: Epic. This is—

Andrew: It's not the weirdest photograph though. This is the weirdest one. Okay. This guy is wearing a suit. Okay. I don't know if you can see that. So what I've done is I've blown this picture up. The fact that he's wearing a suit isn't the weirdest thing about this photograph. It's what he's holding in his left hand.

Fiza: In his left hand.

Andrew: So that to me I am certain I don't know if you have these in India but that's a doggy ball launcher.

Fiza: No.

Andrew: So it's a strip of plastic.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: With a scoop at the end.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: That you put a tennis ball in and then you launch the ball for the dog to go and fetch.

Fiza: Ah yes, we are ordering it from abroad. So I guess now I know where it's coming from. Okay.

Andrew: But what's concerning about this photograph is I've honed in on that on the internet. Okay. To look at the scoop, and the scoop is empty. So, the guy surely hasn't been hasn't come here with his dog.

Fiza: Uhhuh.

Andrew: And he's already launched the ball for the dog to dive into the river. I mean, who knows?

Fiza: What is going on? A dead dog or some demon dog or what's happening over here? I don't—

Andrew: Otherwise, why would you be carrying a doggy ball launcher and jumping into a freezing cold river in a three-piece suit. And yeah, we English like to think we're a sensible civilized race as well, you know, but this tells you otherwise.

Fiza: This tells me I mean it just tells me that you're a very eccentric but very interesting at the same time. I thought that earlier picture was crazy, but this is like on another level altogether. I mean this is creepy at the same time. It's laugh I mean it makes you laugh but at the same time makes you puzzle and think and could be very interesting for a T discussion at the IBDP level. A very good picture for a to discussion. What in the world was he trying to do? And after that murder which happened over there at that sculpture, you tend to wonder what are these people doing? What are these people up to?

Andrew: Well, maybe you should have a hand count with your students to see how many think they would do this and how many wouldn't.

Fiza: All would do. All would do. I'm telling you, all would do it. All especially All the boys even the girls are also quite daring they won't tell me the boys would do it and the ICS people especially my last years back first before the IBDP before ASA everyone the first will be all the ICS people we will jump we will just and they will take off everything they'll just put their tr maybe they'll just put their shorts their boxers and there we go and they'll—

Andrew: Wow—

Andrew: And they so they might have second thoughts when they're stood on the edge of that that is quite high. I think that's about 30 or 40 foot up.

Fiza: I don't think so. I think we are quite my children, my boys especially are quite daring. Yeah, but I would not even venture out on New Year's Day in such a cold day apart from going to church and that bundled up totally and then coming back. That's it. That's all I would have done. This is on another level altogether. Thank this is amazing. Andrew, continue.

Andrew: I hope you like it. So, yes, we do have a very unusual and quirky country over here with lots of history obviously. So we're moving down to the bottom level now. So this is the church of Bradley All Saints which is just south of Ashbourne actually. I'm not entirely sure why Halsgrove Publishing put this on the front page. It might have been because it was the only one that had snow lying around it. It does look a lovely contrast, you know. I think it might be

because it's described as a squat church because it doesn't have a tower or a spire. And this spire was hit by lightning in the 18th century and they never replaced it.

Fiza: Ah there—

Andrew: If you recall one of the legends of the crooked spire was that it was struck by lightning which is obviously rubbish you know but this one was struck by lightning and was never replaced but what I've done next is I've flipped the church round so you can see it from the other angle and there is a bell here that's under a cowl that's linked by an iron cable that goes in through the window and obviously they pull that to ring the bell to call people to worship.

Fiza: Whoa.

Andrew: So, it does still have a bell of sorts.

Fiza: Oh my god. This is a very we have never I've never seen something like this in India. This is something a bell outside. Oh my gosh. And people—

Andrew: And people still ring that bell and call people to worship every Sunday. Yes.

Fiza: Every Sunday. Amazing. And that bell is still functional. It ours would go off in one in India. I'm sorry to say in one year only it'll it would go off if it was out there like that. And in the winter in the snow It's functional. I mean, I have nothing to say. I just have to applaud I just have to applaud the ancients at this point of time. And why no t why no roof as it were? No dome or no you know why no roof as it were? Why squat? Why totally flat? Any reason for that, Andrew?

Andrew: Well, well, yes. So, so here it used to have a spire, but it got struck by lightning and they've just never replaced it.

Fiza: What about the roof? The like an elongated roof either—

Andrew: It's a fair It's slightly pitched.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: Slightly pitched.

Fiza: So, it's almost flat.

Andrew: It's almost You can see from here, can't you?

Fiza: Yes. AB slightly pitched.

Andrew: So, yeah. I've just noticed something that I wasn't planning to talk about, but that bench there, it's about six or seven miles from where I live. This place is maybe more. Might be 8 to 10.

Andrew: Every spring I cycle out there and I sit on that bench for about an hour with the daffodils all around. And, you know, know the cows in the field and the sheep and whatever and the birds singing. It's just very serene.

Fiza: I'm going to I'm feeling like living there. What are you doing to me, Andrew? Andrew, what is happening? What are you doing to me? And I was only thinking of Nottinghamshire. Now I'm thinking of holding up with you over here in this beautiful Derbyshire.

Andrew: More to come.

Fiza: Please continue.

Andrew: Okay. So we move on. So this is what is known in Derbyshire as a crinkle-crankle wall. Okay, so it was a technique in the 18th century to build walls in like this ribbon-like structure because it was deemed to add more strength to the structure and also from an economic perspective I don't think you needed to build them as deeply. So you use less bricks but what it also does so this is the north wall of Hopton Hall in Derbyshire. As you can see it's in shadow. It's also a photograph was taken in summer. I then visited it again in winter because this is the other advantage of a crinkle-crankle wall down here is that the concave face is a sun trap.

Andrew: Oh so you grow fruit trees in there you know so it's an ideal place for growing. And there is one final photograph for Hopton Hall actually. I don't know whether this is going to resonate with you at all but in the depths of winter we have these incredible displays of snow drops. Okay so the last week of January through early February to midFebruary. That really doesn't do it justice cuz where I'm standing taking that photograph, you could spin 360 degrees around and these snow drops absolutely everywhere. It's a beautiful site.

Fiza: Heaven. Heaven should look like this. Heaven should look like this. Oh my lord. I It was not made just by fluke. I'm telling you they did it with the intention of all this in mind. All this was especially what's happening in winter and then what would happen by the time spring would come. That's that was the reason really I my lord.

Andrew: So I've just been talking about spring with daffodils and now it's winter with snow drops and actually this one down here is actually in the middle of their rose garden as well which so they're flowering at the moment in the middle of summer.

Fiza: All of those roses call me the rose garden. I'm crazy after roses. That's why anything with a rose a book that is.

Andrew: I'll remember that for next time. I'll find some roses. In the next one.

Fiza: Yes, please do. I'm crazy after roses. After that, jasmine's but roses are red, my love. Violets are blue. Sugar is sweet. But England is just sweeter and Derbyshire is sweeter than even the is sweeter than sweet. And I think sweetest is Andrew. Sweetest. So we're going degree of

comparison here. Sweet is England. Sweeter is Derbyshire. Sweetest is Andrew. All right, continue.

Andrew: Okay. Right. So, this is a very interesting building. This is called Thimble Hall and it's in a beautiful Derbyshire village called Yougholgreave where they're all most of the houses are made out of this Derbyshire limestone. Thimble Hall is in the Guinness Book of Records as the smallest hall in the world.

Fiza: The smallest. I was just saying what hall this is.

Andrew: Yeah. Hall. H A L. It's Thimble Hall. It's in the Guinness Book of Records as the smallest hall in the entire world. So it measures 8 ft by 7 ft. As you can see, it's a one up, one down. So there you get to the first floor via a wooden ladder inside. It once housed a family of eight varying times. It's been an antique shop, a butchers. I think it's obviously been a private home as well, but it was last lived in the 1930s or 1940s.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: After which it was abandoned.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: It then fell into repair and it was set to be demolished in the 1990s but there was a local outcry so you know it's obviously of historical importance—

Fiza: Definitely—

Andrew: And in 1999 it went up for auction with a guide price of 10 to 15,000—

Fiza: Okay—

Andrew: Now oh it was it's so quirky that it drew bids from all across the world including New York and Athens and even Tokyo one of the bidders I bet you don't know who Uri Geller is Do you—

Fiza: Pardon? Pardon?

Andrew: You ever heard of a chap called Uri Geller?

Fiza: I have, but now right now it's not clicking. I've heard the name. Can you tell?

Andrew: He put in a bid for this as well, but he was a big personality in the UK in the late 1970s and 1980s. He's meant to be a mind bender. So he could read people's minds.

Fiza: Yes.

Andrew: And he used to do this trick with a spoon where he would rub it.

Fiza: Yes. Yes. Yes. He would bend. He would bend it. As a child only, he used to bend it. Yes. Remember yes I used to have read about him over all my life I've read about him and now when you remind me I'm like I don't know I am too much in theology yes I used to see that and I used to get freaked out that with his mind and you know he had these big eyes you know in all his and like you know like this he used to hold the spoon and used to bend it so he also made a bid for it—

Andrew: Why okay—

Andrew: I don't think many people really believed it was genuine but you know—

Fiza: I believe—

Andrew: Who knows—

Fiza: I believe because it looks so he would only bend spoons and I think even forks and stuff like that. Forks also if I'm not mistaken or only spoons.

Andrew: Oh definitely. Oh no. Guess it might have been only spoons. I don't know. It's a long time ago when I read.

Fiza: Very long time.

Andrew: Yeah. When I read it I think then from spoons he went on to the other utensils. I mean the I mean dining utensils whatever you say. But then beyond that I don't think so. Beyond that I did not read any. But I remember him and I remember his face and like I'm so happy I've done this. Yeah. So,—

Andrew: Yes, he was one of the bidders anyway, but he didn't get it. It was purchased by the ice cream makers from Chesterfield called Frederick's who actually came from Italy originally. The guy in the 19th century walked all the way from Italy to set up an ice cream business in Chesterfield and then various descendants, you know, kept the business going and it's day who bought Thimble Hall and the idea they said at the time that they were going to turn into shop No. Yeah. Well, it would be a perfect ice cream parlor, wouldn't it?

Fiza: Yes. Yes.

Andrew: They were going to turn it into a Thimble Hall museum, which I think is a lovely idea, but I don't think it's happened. That photograph was taken 20 2011 2012, and as far as I know, it still hasn't been converted into anything.

Fiza: So, it's just standing over there. W—

Andrew: I think so. Yeah. I must go back this summer and have a look and see what they've done with it.

Fiza: Please do. And then share it with us. But the candyman gets it at the end. And always the Italian candyman. The Italian candyman will always It's always the Italian candyman. We always think of the American, but here the Italian candyman got it. But the candy man always gets it. I know that—

Andrew: Indeed. So before we leave Youlgreave, I wanted to pop this picture up. So you know, I've obviously I've done nine counties now. I've visited thousands of places and I've seen many hundreds of fonts, probably more than a thousand fonts. And this is the most is the quirkiest font I have ever come across, I think. To me, it looks for all the world like a stone beast with four legs at the bottom there and the stoop is like its head. But the strangest thing about this font is here on the on its underside there is a carving of an upside down dragon—

Andrew: With its jaws opening towards the stoop which is obviously where the child's head is baptized, you know. So, I'm not quite sure what kind of Christian symbology that is.

Fiza: That's the big idea.

Andrew: An upside down dragon on a font. Anyway, That must be unique.

Fiza: I think what they're trying to say here is that if you are a disciple of I mean when we talk about the epistle to James if you are becoming a disciple of Jesus then be ready for temptations. So because you have been baptized into the church whichever Protestant Anglican whatever you be ready for temptations because whatever you will never get especially adult baptisms also which of course now we don't have it often in India because it's technically banned. We don't baptize or convert anyone. But when there were adult baptisms I think and world over also we keep on referring to the epistle of James and we say if up till now even if you're 50 years old or beyond 60—

Fiza: If up till now you have never had any temptations or very few you know tests as it were now that you have become a disciple of Jesus get ready you will be tempted all over your enemy—

Andrew: Well it's not temptation and threat of course and you know—

Fiza: I know—

Andrew: And challenge No doubt.

Fiza: Absolutely. You're entering by you're already entering into the layer of the dragon as it were. And that has—

Andrew: That's what it's saying. Yeah.

Fiza: Yes. And that's what it's saying over here. And I would remember and if I would add to that at this point, you can even use it whenever you're talking about Derbyshire in your own talks in England in Derbyshire in your own home county that I think a father of the church in

this case it would be Chrysostom John Chrysostom who spoke a lot about this kind of idea. You're entering into the lair of the dragon when you become baptized into the church because temptations come your way. But if you resist, then you will also sit at the right hand of the father. You know that sort of thing with the first image of the father that is I mean the first image and son of the father and that is Jesus. So see all that I can see it all happening here. And if you notice it does have a little eastern look to it. Eastern Orthodox It does a bit. Yes.

Fiza: Lots of dragons always happening around over there. So you do—

Andrew: I don't know how old this font is. It suddenly occurred to me that if it was at the time of the reformation and that this was a Catholic church, then again that's another reason why you would be entering into the lair of the dragon, doesn't it?

Fiza: There we go. But then why eastern? And that is spooky. Why?

Andrew: Yes. Yeah, you're right. It does have an eastern look to it. That's why I picked it out as the quirkiest font I've seen in England.

Fiza: We have dragons in England. I mean, you all have dragons in England. Land and you know knights slaying them and all but—

Andrew: And George and the dragon of course our patron saint—

Fiza: Absolutely but this is totally eastern and Catholic so—

Andrew: I'm glad I showed it to you then because I was it's like an afterthought but I thought yes I must do that cuz it's so unusual—

Fiza: Thank you this is amazing and you can use that information amazing—

Andrew: We'll do—

Fiza: Continue—

Andrew: Okay, so finally for Derbyshire — And I think you'll like this tale.

Fiza: So I agree. I agree. You are not only the good Samaritan, you are Veronica. You're everything. You are the epitome of the good Samaritan. I agree. I mean I Sorry. Continue. Continue. Luke. Let's go on with the Gospel of Luke.

Andrew: Well, well, this is a historical tale about Derbyshire really. So, these are called well dressings. Okay. And this is the beautiful estate village of Tissington in Derbyshire. It always has the year that crater. So you can see that's 2013 there, the good Samaritan. And there are six wells in Tissington and they are dressed you know after Easter on Ascension Day. It takes three days to create these by the way. So there's a board a cardboard that's soaked in the local mill pond to give it the right consistency. They then create clay by treading it so it's the right consistency. That's pressed into the board. They then use I can't. So they certainly use coffee beans to outline

the picture and then they use petals these petals to press in petals to design these images you know to create these images. It takes about 3 days to do and there are six of these wells in Tissington and they all depict signs scenes from the Bible. However, this the custom of well dressings it's sort of unique to Derbyshire. I think there are some other counties that do but it's primarily Derbyshire and it's Derbyshire where it originated. From, but it actually goes back beyond Christian times into pagan times. So the Anglo-Saxons first created these well dressings to give thanks for the wells and the springs and the water, you know, the lifegiving water,—

Andrew: The pagan gods. Yeah. And then obviously when Christianity arrived in they adopted it. They adopted it and obviously it then became to depict scenes from the Bible, we then returned to the Reformation again and obviously anything that was associated with Rome before that point which included these was obviously frowned on and so you were risking your life by doing them and so the custom fell out of favor for 200 years. It was then refounded in the 18th century by the FitzHerbert family in Tissington who I'm pretty sure an old Catholic family and then it gradually spread from Tissington to lots of other towns and villages in Derbyshire and when I did my research for this which probably about 15 years ago now certainly 12 or 13 years ago I found a website called derbyshirewelldressings.co.uk and it lists all the sites where well dressings are created and there are over 100. So—

Andrew: 100 and I've got some to show you as well. So first of all more from Tissington. So Tissington always sticks to the scenes from the Bible. So we've got a scene of the crucifixion there. We've got a scene of the dove returning at even tide with the olive twig in her beak and various And these change every year, but they're always scenes from the Bible. The Noah one is beautiful. However, everywhere else does their own thing. Okay. Okay. So, I've got a montage here from 2012 now. So, the year before.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: And 2012 is a big year in UK history because that's when we had the London Olympics.

Fiza: Yes.

Andrew: Also, the Diamond Jubilee of the Queen Elizabeth.

Fiza: Yes. Yes.

Andrew: This is an interesting one to show you. It's not particularly pretty, but it's divided into four quarters. And each of those quarters has a number in it. So you can see top right it's got a 100 because it's 100 years since the Titanic 1912. 64 represents it 64 years since London previously held the Olympics.

Fiza: The Olympics. Oh yes. Okay.

Fiza: Sorry.

Andrew: 60 obviously is the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Fiza: Diamond Jubilee. Yes.

Andrew: And then here we've got 200 alongside Charles Dickens because 1812 is the year when he was born.

Fiza: Oh yes.

Andrew: And various other things on display here. One question for you though Fiza are you aware of Doctor Who in India?

Fiza: Doctor Who. We the BBC television series Dr. Yeah, definitely. We all used to watch it. We all used to watch it.

Andrew: You're aware of it, are you?

Fiza: I have not watched it that much. My uncle was a diehard fan of it. But everyone else from the 70s, from the 80s, and then he used to telecast it again in the '90s. So, they used to keep on showing it and everyone used to—

Andrew: It's still going now as well. So, it's been more than—

Fiza: Exactly. Exactly. So, what do you have to tell me? About it because we're now moving to Ashford in the water in 2013.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: And this is the well dressing that they did there. So they've got all of the there might have been 11 or 12 doctors there.

Fiza: My sorry, go on.

Fiza: My best friend and my uncle would have gone crazy over this. Crazy over this.

Andrew: It was to celebrate 50 years of Doctor Who. So it's obviously it's beyond 60 now. It's 63 years.

Fiza: Well deserved.

Andrew: So but yes, so we got all of the doctors there in petals, you know. In the foliage basically a few Daleks down here and some of it some of his enemies as well.

Fiza: Oh beautiful—

Andrew: Including K9 if that means anything to you.

Fiza: Yeah and that that is all but so beautifully done. It's amazing.

Andrew: And then the final one I've done is the major oak because that's the probably Britain's most famous tree and it's in Sherwood Forest and I'm going to talk about it shortly when we discuss Robin Hood. So—

Andrew: There we here we have come the main look. That is everything in terms of Derbyshire except you said I could have a bit of fun, didn't you?

Fiza: Of course.

Andrew: And I could tell you a poem. So all of the books in the unusual and quirky series are structured the same way. So Derbyshire has the first half is conventional Derbyshire where we discuss the history of the county's territories back in prehistoric times all the way through to the 21st century. The second half, Quirky Derbyshire, appears to be a random selection of 77 places from number one Ashover to number 77 Youlgreave. Okay, so hold on to that thought for a minute. In the middle of these two is always what I call a Shire-Ode. Okay, and the Shire-Ode is that piece of work that I did for the Trowell and District Writers' Trust back in 2008. And a Shire-Ode is a poem told in rhyming verse about imaginary inhabitants of the county in question. But it also has place names from that county woven into the flow of the poem. Okay. And so we move down a slide and here we have the historic county of Derbyshire. We got the places named here in this table from number one Ashover to number 77 Youlgreave and then we pinpoint where all of those places are located within the historical county of Derbyshire. Now today the county looks a little bit different. We've lost some ground to Sheffield here in the north-east, and to Greater Manchester in the north-west.

Andrew: Well, they are all, you know, proper Derbyshire places or they were at some time or other. So, I thought it would be a bit of fun to recite the poem of Brad and Mel Brad and Mel for you with some useful images to help.

Fiza: All right, go ahead. Go for it.

Andrew: So, here we go. They were born in the 40s. Notice that 40s down the bottom. In fact, 43. Melbourne in Cromford and Brad in Lee. Though Brad was the kinder, there was great hope for Mel, who excelled in the kitchen and sure could bake well. In youth, our Bradley was a bit of a clown. He liked to pepper his speech with Derby Village, Dale, and Town. But his jokes didn't wash. Folks had flag him as odd. Hence the Bradway meant spending more time on his Todd. Then a job with Pete Forest Commission bore fruit and by 30 he'd become a tree surgeon of repute. In his job he had faves preferred ash over oak and oak over birch but still birch over folk. By 40 a recluse he'd speak only to tree in his oak wood or birchwood or hazlewood at Lee. You see the brushes with past loves had sent him halfway to hell. So for him, only trees would now treat Brad well. Meanwhile, Mel's cooking led to the expected role, though she'd never cooked fish, neither trout, cod, or soul. But she made marvelous soups, which with crouton were blessed, was inspired with a bramly. Her pies were the best. So she opened a shop at a diner on apt named Glutton Bridge, where flocked to her door for delights from her fridge. And though the gutter press critics tried to so knock her down, her business did flourish and soon spread to

town. Determined to thrive and carve a career, she opened a new shop on Pie Bridge that year. You just couldn't curb her fervor for food, and the banks were impressed with the profits accrued. By 50, she'd become a name big in food, though she sorely mislaid but couldn't find the right dude. Though her parents despaired, they did truly believe if you don't find love soon, we fear that you'll grieve. Now a little over 50 himself, Brad was low. And why? Alone Woodside, he missed ladies. So you see, he'd not took a bird home since brash Fernie Lee, who with large wiggly rear was too common for he, so he marked out his foundry put a bolt on his door and hence falling in love was unlikely anymore. Then his daily scotches intake hit the three then four mark. Yet he'd hopped on the wagon as life lost its spark. Plus he'd not use his wit well. He went back more and more to the bar. He'd eat less and he'd drink a little more. With so little eaten, his belts became slack. His skin became callow. His moods became black. Then his diet got worse. In fact, breads all he'd eat. But do not despair, for Mel he'd soon meet, though neither he nor her were looking for love. It came at first sight by a ford on the dove. With Brad being so burly, Mel's knees became weak. When she smiled, he just fell for that dimple on each cheek. They were wed in six months at the foot of Christ stand said their vows at the altar with a cross of the hands. Mel's parents were there that's Shirley and Cliff she had her best hat on he quaffed his best quiff the bridesmaids wore ochre with bows of oaks green whilst the best man that's Stanley wore a woolly suit of cream at reception Brad swore there'd be no more the clown no woodville drink or speech full of town. Then with scotches raised in toast, he winked at his wife. He said, "What stand well today, love, shall last us for life."

Fiza: Epic. Ep was the best. Epic—

Andrew: Saying the best till last. Yeah.

Fiza: Epic. Epic.

Andrew: Every single unusual and quirky book of mine has got one of these Shire-Odes in the middle.

Fiza: Oh my god.

Andrew: So, Nottinghamshire is called Arnold's daughter. Arnold is a suburb of Nottingham to the northeast. And his daughter in question is Kimberly. And Kimberly is a suburb to the northwest.

Fiza: If you really want to know local English history and know it well and thoroughly in a fun way, I think you have to get a hold of all of Andrew Beardmore's non-fiction books on local English history. And you have to get them Now I'm just enjoying it and I'm and we yet have to come to Robin Hood and we yet have to come to Nottingham shy. I'm just all splits over all smiles and I was just roll I mean I thought my urine would be coming down at this point of time. It was so this is so British and so gorgeous.

Andrew: Well, it is British for sure. Yeah. So yeah. So my books aren't down and stayed you know they do have moments of light-heartedness in them. So my non-fiction books are is so are we ready to move on to Nottinghamshire?

Fiza: Absolutely. Absolutely. At last at Nottinghamshire.

Fiza: Not— I thought I would remain in Derbyshire forever because I was already in love with it and I was thinking of rooming now with Andrew. Maybe I'll get a manor near his home or something or an apartment or something or if nothing else I would go into the hills or you know under a tree and—

Andrew: Once he lives in Derbyshire—

Fiza: I know absolutely but let's not forget there is Nottinghamshire and therefore Robin Hood. Let's continue.

Andrew: Okay. So, we're going to start in the top left corner. Okay. And this is an armillary sphere. It's known as an armillary sphere. It's a sundial. Okay. So, it's made of those interlocking metal pieces which sort of forms the celestial sphere. Running through the middle is like an arrow.

Fiza: Astrology says astrology.

Andrew: Correct. So, so the arrow runs through the middle and it casts a shadow on the horizontal or equatorial band there which tells you the time and this design dates back from the second century. So it was created by the Greek, Ptolemy. Okay. I've got it — Ptolemy. Yes. It was his creation. It was his design. And that particular model there is standing outside a place called Upton Hall.

Fiza: Uhhuh.

Andrew: So there are two Upton in Nottinghamshire. Okay. Okay. Okay. This one is towards the east, so it's near Newark. And Upton Hall was built in 1828. It's actually replaced the original manor and it was adopted in the early 1970s by the British Horological Institute. Okay. Hence the sculpture. So they've obviously at Upton Hall, they've got a museum and a library there. They've got a lot of the long case clocks, the antique long case clocks. It's I think it's one of the biggest horological museums in the world. And this sculpture stands outside. What else was I going to say about this? Obviously it's where they train horologists, you know, that's where they go to learn how to make time pieces, so clocks and watches, and it's where they learn to repair them as well. So I thought that was I think that's I'm glad they put this on the front page because it's a very interesting design and with a good story behind it. There are actually two Uptons in Nottinghamshire. I don't know why Halsgrove put this on the front page, but it's actually played to my advantage here because you'll notice that it's actually in a parish called Headon. I checked this pronunciation earlier. It's not Headon — it's Headon cum Upton. And this is a parish actually on the same longitude as the other Upton. So the two Uptons are sort of on a north

south line. And it's a parish that contains two villages, one called Headon and one called Upton. That's the only thing I can say of any interest about this picture except that that's my old car there. So, it's nice.

Andrew: Lovely to see it again after all these years, but they've cut it off on the front page there.

Fiza: Lovely. However, this place looks very very peculiar and very different compared to our Derbyshire, our very orthodox and very prayerful derby. Do continue. Do continue. I'm thinking of—

Andrew: Well, I mean the countryside is totally different. Nottingham is quite flat and it's obviously forest. With Sherwood Forest and that but yeah and so anyway Upton does have some interesting stories. So before we leave the two Uptons we're going to go back to the one where the British Horological Institute are and Upton Hall is and this is the Church of St. Peters and St. Paul. It's got a very fine 15th century perpendicular tower there as you can see.

Fiza: Beautiful.

Andrew: It's got eight stunning pinnacles around here but it's also got a large ninth pinnacle in the middle there. And the it's actually known locally as the nine disciples. As I say, Upton in Nottinghamshire is largely flat. So, and it is around the Upton area. You can see that church for miles around 360°. But it's also got a very interesting feature in it. About 30 ft up, there is what's called a priest's room. So, it's highly unusual. Usually, you just have spiral stairs that go to the bell tower where they pull the bells.

Fiza: Bell tower. Exactly. Yeah. Why is he up there? Yeah.

Andrew: So I don't I think it was for visiting priests. It's where they could stay. It was their quarters sort of thing. I did wonder for a while if it was similar to like the priest holes that they built into the old mana houses where Catholic priests had to hide when they were being hunted, you know.

Fiza: Yes.

Andrew: But I don't think it is. I think it was purely like a quarters where they quarters, you know, when they were traveling around because even if they were hiding, they wouldn't make it so obvious by having—

Fiza: It's too obvious. Yeah.

Andrew: Yeah. It's so obvious that somebody's over there. So I think it's—

Fiza: What a strange, interesting thing — And especially here in India. Yeah, it's rare.

Andrew: It's very very rare, very rare to have a room in a tower. And it's actually got a fireplace in there as well. But what what's really odd is in the 17th century, it was converted from a priest's room into a dovecote, a dovecote.

Fiza: What is that?

Andrew: And there were 86 nesting boxes for doves. Doves.

Fiza: Yeah. Yeah.

Andrew: There were 86 nesting boxes. And it's still that today. It's still a dovecote today, with 86 nesting boxes. So you quite often see doves flying around there. We then go to this Upton again in parish of Headon cum Upton. And this is the church of St. Peter's.

Fiza: Ah, there we go.

Andrew: It's the only one in I think it's the only one in the UK. I wouldn't imagine it's the only one in the world, but it's the only one that has a crown of thorns where the thorns have all been taken from the location of the trial of Jesus with Pilate.

Fiza: Oh.

Andrew: Somebody has actually gone over there and collected the thorns, created a crown, and that's one of its prized possessions.

Fiza: Who was that? Queen Helen or somebody like that? Oh my gosh. Oh goodness. Do you have a picture of that? Not yet.

Andrew: I don't know. So I didn't get inside. So the problem with this is in these days. You used to be able to get inside all churches. They were always open at all times. Well, they're not anymore because we've had a terrible problem with lead theft off the roof and theft from inside, you know, of artifacts from inside the church as well and damaged. So, so you can't get into a lot of churches. It's luck of the draw really.

Fiza: Our gold gets money boxes, etc. Exactly. Everything gets robbed. Everything including the cross of Jesus, everything gets robbed nowadays. So, even we close up we close up.

Andrew: Nothing sacred. Yeah. Nothing's sacred anymore.

Fiza: No.

Andrew: So, yeah. So, both of those churches at the two Uptons have got some really interesting tales to tell. We're now moving along to this structure. So, Would you like to hazard a guess what that is comprised of?

Fiza: Viking. Viking. Beehive. Beehive.

Andrew: It's a good guess. But if I give you a tip, look at the top.

Fiza: The top. Is it horse dung? Is it?

Andrew: It's a horseshoe.

Fiza: It's a horseshoe. So,—

Andrew: This is a structure made up of 50,000 horseshoes.

Fiza: Horseshoes? Oh, I thought horse dung for a moment.

Andrew: So, you find this another beautiful Nottinghamshire village in the southeast of Nottinghamshire called Scarrington.

Fiza: It's giving me a Viking like feel. But now thinking about it quite because they love horses. Just it's a place where they loved horses. They trained horses etc. The best horses came from Nottinghamshire if I'm not mistaken. So probably because of that. I don't know.

Andrew: Well, I like your Viking analogy because obviously this Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire were very much in the Viking territory, you know, a thousand years ago, but it's nothing to do with that. It's simply the local blacksmith at Scarrington Forge between 1945 and 1965. He built this pile from 50,000 horseshoes. It's the only one in the world or it's the biggest one in the world anyway. Don't even know if there are any other horseshoe towers like this. But yet what then happened is so he must have been the resident blacksmith from 1945 to 1965. It was then taken over by Nottinghamshire County Council in 1973. Three. And the reason they did that was because an American visitor was very interested in taking it lock, stock, and barrel. He was in the USA. So they obviously came in and took ownership of it. So they blocked him doing that.

Fiza: Very famous, especially after the war, all the Americans coming all over including to India to take any London Bridge of course.

Andrew: Yes. Yes. London Bridge — Let's not forget that.

Fiza: Coming everywhere and taking our things, taking our statues, idols in Nepal, going over to Nepal.

Andrew: They wanted to take this. Ha — Nothing. Okay.

Andrew: Yeah. So, so Nottingham County Council bought it and assumed ownership of it and then obviously over the next 20 to 30 years it's subject to weathering and rusting and what have you and a really sad problem as well which is treasure hunting. People used to go and just dip their hands in and take a horseshoe out probably put it on their mantle piece back home. And obviously I don't know do you have the game Jenga in India at all? Pardon? The game Jenga. J E N G A. No,—

Andrew: It's where you build you have a tower of blocks. Okay. And the aim of the game is, you know, if there were four people playing it, each in turn have to take a block out without collapsing the tower.

Fiza: Oh, yes. Okay. That's what it's called. That's—

Andrew: Well, this is what was happening to this. People were taking treasure, you know.

Fiza: Oh, no.

Andrew: Taking it as treasure and it was becoming you know, unsustainable. So, they—

Fiza: Unstable. Yes.

Andrew: In 2006, they had to dismantle the whole tower and they reconstructed it again with another 50,000 new horseshoes and then they put that steel pole right through the middle, you know, to give it more strength, stability. That's where we are today and it's still there today. Although that photograph would have been about 2014 when I took that.

Fiza: Oh my lord.

Andrew: So, but yeah, definitely interesting.

Fiza: Same similar things happened to our like our s St. Francis Xavier and other saints whose bodies are preserved. Served here in India people come devotees come especially where St. Francis Xavier was concern is concerned in Goa and they with their mouth you know they you're bending down to you know—

Andrew: Okay—

Fiza: And they used to bite pieces of his flesh you know or pick it with their fingers you know and put it in keep them in the mouth and then take it out for you know m miraculous purposes or whatever so now they have sealed him up they've sealed him up so that nobody can go down and you know take pieces of his body out.

Andrew: Yeah.

Fiza: Otherwise, he was quite fine. Now he's quite eaten up. And it's not just him. Every single saint literally eaten up.

Fiza: Yeah. Eaten up. Exactly. For I mean to preserve as a saintly artifacts etc. So this is nothing at least this is these were horseshoes in that case they actually taking the pieces of the body. Yes. Let's continue.

Andrew: Yeah. Okay. So well this is what you've been waiting for. So we're moving on to Sherwood Forest and Robin Hood. I thought before I talk about Robin Hood and the legend and everything associated with it, I just wanted to talk a bit about the fact that when the Romans were here 2,000 years ago, pretty much all of Britain was forested. And certainly when the

Anglo-Saxons then came, they had to clear spaces before they built their towns and villages. And that's why a lot of places in the UK end in the three letters L E. Y lee l e a h is the Anglo-Saxon word for a woodland clearing you know so there are many places called that we then come to the Norman conquest and obviously we have these huge forests but what the normans do is they convert large areas of forest land into what are called royal forests okay and only royalty and the upper nobility are allowed to hunt in these forests and if anybody else is caught doing it the laws are really harsh So certainly up to and including death in fact but certainly a common punishment for hunting or poaching even in a royal forest was to have your eyes put out.

Fiza: This would have solved the poaching problem.

Andrew: Well, yes — no more hunting.

Fiza: Yeah, no more hunting. Bengal tigers would have been saved in India, the black rhinoceroses, etc. Continue. These Normans — my gosh, they turned out to be worse than ours over here. All right, let's continue.

Andrew: So anyway, that all precedes Robin Hood. So what I'm going to do is I don't know if you can see that. So this is my copy of Nottinghamshire unusual and quirky. I thought there's so much information, an important part about Robin Hood, and I did a lot of research on this because obviously it's almost certainly a legend. There may be a tiny hint of truth in there somewhere. So what I thought I'd do is—

Fiza: It has to be true at least Indians and Gen X and millennials want it to be truth even.

Andrew: I hope I'm not going to upset you now then. So,—

Fiza: Oh no,—

Andrew: Let me read out to you.

Fiza: All right. All right. Let's see. Let's see.

Andrew: My research and what eventually was published in Nottinghamshire and Quirky. So, so I start off by saying of course it would be impossible to complete a review of Sherwood Forest without considering the legend of Robin Hood and which is usually dated at around the late 12th century during the reign of Richard I. So that's 1189 to 1199. Alas, there are certain anachronistic flaws in that theory. One being that his band of merry men included Friar Tuck. Okay, because friars weren't they were no they didn't appear in England until the 13th century. Okay, so that's an anachronism for starters. Also, it appears as though Robin Hood was not actually associated with Richard the first. Legend until the 16th century. Okay.

Fiza: Whoa. Okay.

Andrew: Early ballads such as A Gest of Robyn Hode named Edward as his king. Now, the first King Edward was I think it's 1272 to 1307. So that's much later. Sorry, it's 1272 to 1307. Yeah. So, you know, even if it was him, it's a long time after Richard the First.

Fiza: After Richard—

Andrew: But even if you're too young, okay, that's it. That said, there are records of a certain Robin Hood in the pipe rolls of 1225, 1226, 1228, 1230, and 1231. So, you'll like this bit. The pipe rolls are annual records of financial owings to the crown. And in fact, they ran from about the 1150s all the way up to 1832. So, it's a good source of history and trying to discover whether somebody was real or not.

Fiza: A lovely primary source or an amazing primary source for him.

Andrew: Yeah. But those five references in the pipe rolls, he's actually called Robert Hod. H O D. Okay. It's close. It's close.

Fiza: Close. Absolutely not.

Andrew: And he'll like this. And he appears to be a fugitive from the justice administered by the sheriff of Nottingham, Yorkshire.

Fiza: Oh, Yorkshire. There we go. We got caught.

Andrew: Yes. So, Robert Hod was a fugitive from the sheriff of Yorkshire. So, but again there might be some you know element of truth in here that's birth to the legend you know—

Fiza: That that is one thing which never happened in India and that's what the British who were in India in the East India Company used to say we have more legends in England in our counties than you all have here even though you all have legends and stuff you all consider them to be truth and there is you know that sort of thing. But our legends are epic. And then we used to come and we used to read in those days about Robin Hood and stuff like that. But my gosh that it they were actually speaking about something which was so extraordinarily you know covering so many centuries.

Andrew: There are snippets of truth here, aren't there? There's a man called Robert Hod. He was on the run from a sheriff of the neighboring county of Yorkshire. Well, there's more. Anyway, so appearing to back this controversial shift in county location the early tale originally called A Little Gest of Robyn Hode and which is thought to date from the 14th century sees the action take place in Wakefield and Wakefield is in the smack bang in the middle of Yorkshire.

Fiza: Yeah.

Andrew: So again, there looks like there's a bit of a shift in geography here. However, there is another twist for that particular tale which was called the A Little Gest of Robyn Hode that sees Robin kill the sheriff of and it is Nottingham this time. This is—

Fiza: Nottingham other—

Andrew: I would have loved to have said the sheriff of Lancashire but no it was the sheriff of Nottingham at last but again so we come back full circle again there's a Robert Hod there's a Robin Hod and then there's a murder of the sheriff of Nottingham—

Fiza: There was somebody at least that much we know there was somebody roaming around there was somebody—

Andrew: That last tale which was 14th century so that's the 1300s That also includes the characters of little John, Will Scarlet, and Much the Miller's son. Okay,—

Fiza: There we go.

Andrew: But Friar Tuck and Maid Marian, they only appear to have been added at a much later date. Okay, to add myself, so for example, Friar Tuck's character starts to appear regularly in the play Robin Hood and the Sheriff from around 1475 onwards. And then it also I go on to surmise that that he might be based prior to on a genuine person called Robert Stafford. He was a Sussex chaplain but he assumed the alias of Friar Tuck as in brother Tuk.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: Okay. And what's but what's interesting about him is the most recognized background for the character of Friar Tuck. This is that he was a former monk of Fountain's Abbey and that's back in Yorkshire again.

Fiza: What?

Andrew: So there certainly seems to be Yorkshire between Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire. You know you Robert Hod, you know, appearing in the pipe rolls. He was on the run from the authorities. This was the sheriff — The sheriff of Yorkshire in this case. We've got Robert Stafford who has an alias of Friar Tuck who was a renegade from Fountains Abby. So, it's highly likely he could have headed south into Nottinghamshire and could have met up with a renegade called Robin Hood in Sherwood Forest. So, it could well have been could well all be true, but I don't think we'll ever know for sure.

Fiza: We'll never know. We'll never know sadly. But lovely to think about it and lovely to research about it and maybe someone in the future will dig up something. Do you ever have the remains of this individual, this so-called Robin Hood, especially at Nottinghamshire, or do you only have the sheriff's the sheriff being done in his body by Robin Hood or nothing at all? Or nothing at all in another story. Yes. Yeah.

Andrew: Anyway, so I still got some more about Robin Hood. So obviously he's he appears in statues all around the county of Nottinghamshire. So this one at the top right is below Nottingham Castle, actually. Down here, this is at the Sherwood Forest Visitor Center in the center of Nottinghamshire. That's the famous scene of Robin and Little John fighting with staffs

on the bridge. And of course, Little John knocks him into the river, doesn't he? Sticking with Robin Hood. Okay, this is probably the most famous tree that this is the major oak. Yes, the most famous tree in England in the UK, I would say in India also. We remember England because of this because of this tree we remember and Robin Hood.

Andrew: This one here is in the town — I think it's the village, actually — Of Edwinstowe. And this is Robin Hood proposing to Maid Marian. And the reason it's in Edwinstowe is because the legend or the story says that they got married at St. Mary's Church in Edwinstowe.

Fiza: So yeah, so cute.

Andrew: Well, I've got a very very sad story interesting sale to tell you now then. So that so yes, brace yourself. So obviously the legend is that Robin and Marian hid because this is hollow. You know the major they hid from the sheriff's men when they were being hunted. That's the story. Anyway, I've got some statistics to do with let me just read them out to you. So the major oak, it weighs 23 tons. Okay. Its girth is 33 feet. So that's about 10 mters. The branches spread to over 92 feet. Which is that's 28 mters. The plaque alongside it suggests it's as old as 1,150 years.

Andrew: So that that so that was when I visited this 14 years ago and took that photograph. It was thought to be 1,150 years old. It's had cutings sent all over the world. There's actually a plantation in Dorset that's planted 260 saplings that are grown from major oak acorns. So it will live gone beyond its own lifestyle.

Fiza: I want—

Andrew: And there are half a million tourists come to see this every year and in my book I've named this the major oak and these are saplings here that have been taken from again acorns from the major oak. So I call this one the minor oak here. That's the major oak and that's the minor oak.

Andrew: But I'm sorry to have to finish with a really upsetting story I'm afraid. So literally in the last four weeks it's like the terrible thing that happened in nine ladies stone circle.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: The major oak has been formally declared as deceased. So last so it look it's healthy there in 2014, isn't it? Lots of foliage. 2025 there was limited foliage on there and 2026 nothing at all. So it's been declared formally dead and it's still there. You know you can still go and visit it.

Fiza: They can Why should it still bring it back? Back. They shouldn't just let it go.

Andrew: It's nearly 1,200 years old, isn't it? You know, nearly 1,200 years old. It's concerning. Oh dear. And what this means is I don't know if you saw some other news about trees in England, but there was a scandal about three years ago. There England probably has two favorite trees. The major oak is one.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: The other is called sycamore gap. Does that mean anything to you?

Fiza: Not right now. Not coming.

Andrew: It's in Northumberland which is very pointing up here. That's why I'm pointing. It's towards the north. Northumberland. It's in the Cheviot Hills. And it there's this wonderful dip that comes down from one hill to another and then rises up like so. And in that gap there was this beautiful sycamore tree and it was known as Sycamore Gap. And people would take photographs of it all year round showing all the seasons particularly at night with the stars at the back. And two idiots three years ago visited it with a chainsaw.

Fiza: No.

Andrew: Yeah. So, in the last three years, we've lost the two most loved, most famous trees in England. At least one had a long and healthy life. But yeah, that's unforgivable what those two guys did.

Fiza: I want to die. This is gone. Well, at least the saplings are there, but the original is gone.

Andrew: Well, so the syced sapling they've taken saplings and I think they they've tried to plant another sycamore, a new sycamore tree beside it. But this one, of course, will still be around for many years they but it's just dead.

Fiza: Oh my.

Andrew: In fact, I did read recently you can probably see there's all these support structures here supporting the boughs. They've actually been in place since Victorian times. So about 140 years they were. So it was struggling even 100 but then it was 8 850 years old then wasn't it? So for a more 900 for a minute I thought it had become a banyan tree and aerial roots were coming but then I realized now looking closer that they were trying to hold the poor thing up. They were trying They are—

Fiza: No horti— No horticulturist can do anything about it. Nobody. Nobody.

Andrew: Well, I've not read I don't think so. No, I don't.

Fiza: We are quite famous for keeping our trees and then they fall on us and kill us because we just Yeah. In India people are Ashoka Sisle etc. We don't cut our trees. They we don't mind dying but we won't cut our trees and therefore we have ways and means to revive old trees. But yeah, I guess if Everyone has been notified and everyone came and tried their level best since the Victorian.

Andrew: You would have thought. Yeah, they would they've been aware of it for two or three years cuz the foliage was decreasing each year. I mean it still looks healthy there, doesn't it? But that's 12 years ago now.

Fiza: It looks better than my trees over here in Bandra West. My even what is down there, the sapling is not what the Bandra West trees look like. We are in a very pitiable condition right now this rain this rainy season.

Andrew: Well, we've obviously we discussed earlier we've got raging droughts over here, raging fires in Spain and France. I mean, Madrid and Bordeaux are on the verge of being evacuated.

Fiza: I know. I was reading that and I'm like, "Oh my gosh, I hope it's not going towards Andrew and all my friends in England, etc."

Andrew: Well, we do. We We've got the moorland fires that have been burning for weeks in Derbyshire, I'm afraid. And one of them was started by some woman with the firework.

Fiza: My What was she doing over there? What was—

Andrew: But really, I mean, yes, I know. On, haven't we? Should we move on from the depressing stories? I've got a funny story for you now.

Fiza: All right.

Andrew: Okay. So, this is the—

Fiza: Oh, they were punished. Yeah.

Andrew: And it's situated in the suburb of Bulwell in Nottingham to the northwest. And that's the River Leen that you can see behind it. L E A N. And these stocks were built in 19 or they were created in 1828 by a chap called Bob Piggin. He was a wheelright. And they replaced the original medieval stocks which were obviously had fallen into—

Fiza: Disrep. I was just going to ask that why they why he had to do it and whether the medieval ones get to—

Andrew: It was a replacement basically a replacement in 1828 and this is still the 18 which is almost 200 years old now then. Anyway, Bob Piggin was so proud of his creation that he immediately went over the road and celebrated with a couple of pints which became three or four which became a lot. He ended up being arrested for being drunken and disorderly and he became the very first incumbent of his own stocks the next morning.

Fiza: Epic.

Andrew: Epic. It is epic, isn't it?

Fiza: Epic. And my earlier Gen Z people would have said the ones who are working now savage. Misavage. Savage.

Andrew: He went through all this he went through to make it and then he only turned Could life get any more demeaning, do you think, than that? Your first victim in your own stocks.

Fiza: And to think of it, even witches in Salem, I mean, worse things were done to them, but the first of the things that were done was this.

Andrew: Yeah. It's just a bit of rotten vegetable, this is.

Fiza: So, yeah. Yeah, I know. And they used to be stripped nude. So, while they were doing that in American America at that time, I'm thinking that maybe I will end up one day.

Andrew: I think they kept the modesty here. He was probably stripped to the waste.

Fiza: I know England always keeps modesty always which is something I'm sorry to say so all my USA students sorry but Britain has always kept its modesty and all that sort of thing was just about clinging on to that now just clinging the British way the British you know gentlemanly way aha now we have an arch of—

Andrew: Well, I'm sorry, this is a bit of a non-story, because I have no idea why Halsgrove put this on the front page. So this is the remains of the former church of St. Helen's in a village called Thorney in East Nottinghamshire.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: And it was replaced in 1850 by this much newer structure. So you can see that's quite modern although it's will soon be 200 years old I guess. And yes and there are some other arches in the grounds and I've literally got nothing else to tell you other than—

Fiza: So many arches maybe fires during the reformation or something.

Andrew: Well they would be internal you know—

Fiza: I know—

Andrew: Maybe dividing there would have been nave and the arches would have divided you know to the would it be the east from the west channel. Yeah—

Fiza: Something like that happening over here—

Andrew: I would imagine and there probably would be the same on the other side as well—

Fiza: Absolutely very—

Andrew: So yes nothing much more to tell there okay but I did promise you another mining story didn't I so this is Thoresby Colliery and I took this photograph in 2014 And sadly it was the last remaining coal mine in Nottinghamshire. And even then it was serving notice. So all the miners knew that it was going to be disbanded in 2015. But the story I'm going to take you back because mining in Nottinghamshire is a very painful subject in this country as anybody who was around in the 1980s will be fully aware of because it was on the news every day. But I need to go back a little bit further than that. So obviously coal mining was a major industry particularly in the industrial revolution. So in the 18th century, 19th century and the first half of the 20th

century obviously then we started to fall victim to competition from the far east particularly China and it was becoming cheaper to import coal than it was to pay our miners to dig it up in our own country. And what happened was a lot of mines started being closed in the 1950s and 1960s particularly in the northeast of England. And a lot of those miners when their mines were closed down Well, they came down to Nottinghamshire for the very reason that in the 1960s the National Coal Board started building super modern mines, you know, with some of the modernist mines in the world, you know, with leading technology and very very deep shafts, thousand feet down.

Fiza: The BBC used to show images, I mean, videos and documentaries about that. Continue. Yes, I remember.

Andrew: And the depth of the shaft shafts were far deeper than they were in the northeast, you know, and they all sorts of modern technology. And so there was an influx of families from the northeast into Nottinghamshire. And then and the coal board built these like mining villages and mining towns. This is all in the 1960s, bear in mind. But obviously it's getting cheaper and cheaper to produce coal abroad and more expensive in Britain. And this resulted in I guess there were pay disputes and then the mines were being closed. So it led to a lot of strikes by the National Union of Miners in the 19 7s and particularly in the 1980s. Okay. Yes.

Andrew: And a lot of these northeastern miners who came down to Nottinghamshire in the 1960s that that industry only survived for another 18 years or so. And then the mines started being closed by the conservative government of Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s. Okay. And it led so it led to a national strike. Okay. So we're talking South Wales which is heavy coal mining country and particularly Yorkshire and all of those miners ers didn't go to work for nearly a year. And nobody crossed the picket lines in South Wales or Yorkshire, but it was different in Nottinghamshire. Their members voted by about 20,000 to 7,000. They claimed that the strike was unconstitutional and they couldn't feed their families, you know, they couldn't put food on the table. So, they decided, well, not all of them obviously it was maybe 50% of them or whatever decided to work and they had to cross the picket lines. And this led to a lot of violent disputes and there were hundreds of police were shipped in, you know, to try and keep order. And then you got Yorkshire miners coming down to join the striking Nottinghamshire miners to, you know, to give solidarity to their brothers and what have you. And it led to some terrible battles, running pitch battles between police and miners and one Yorkshire miner was killed at Ollerton Pit. And it was all to no avail because Maggie Thatcher had her way. You know, the pits were closed down. By 1997, there were only six pits left in Nottinghamshire and as I said Thoresby Colliery was the last one in 2015 was when that disappeared and yeah so there's hardly any coal mining in the British Isles anymore so I think—

Fiza: If anything happens if anything happens then especially with external trade etc I don't know what's going to happen then we'll have to find alternatives alternative—

Andrew: It's not beyond the bounds of possibility that we could end up opening the minds again you know I mean it's one of Donald Trump's bug bears is that we stop drilling for oil in the North Sea as well and that's being looked at in earnest now. So if they're looking at reintroducing that you know so this drill baby drill thing isn't it? So you know sort of—

Andrew: Sorry environmentalism seems to have gone out the window.

Fiza: Absolutely. Because we're forgetting that's another way of looking at it that we are always talking about u environmentalism etc. But then at the same time how are people and how is a country going to produce their own fuel just right Now as we speak in India we were trying to change our fuel our car fuel with ethanol but you know what has happened I you may read in the pap not only the car stopped functioning blew up etc. So right now our youth after this NEET exam thing has happened and the education minister may resign whatever is on his way to resigning etc and so they were successful etc. Now they are fighting for the ethanol issue the ethanol issue in cars that you said that we can put it in our usual cars. It's not happening. It's spoiling our cars and in India to buy a car a simple car like a Maruti or a Mahindra it I mean you have to take a loan in India you know in most people most middle class lower middle class people or even the poor or even let's say someone in a ch etc if they have to buy a car they have to take a loan which they—

Andrew: It is the same here incidentally my cars are loans as well so they're too expensive to buy outright.

Fiza: But I think you have a Mercedes. You have a Mercedes?

Andrew: No, I don't. I have a Japanese car actually.

Fiza: Okay. Okay. But ask even for a cheap Indian made Maruti or Mahindra or a even if you say a Tata, we have to take a loan and sometimes it 15 to 20 years go just paying that loan and just paying that loan and then we take it for the house and stuff.

Andrew: Well, that's different. Yeah. Exactly. So in our situation it's—

Andrew: That's different. It's this Yeah. Yeah. Sorry. Are we all right for time? Cuz I've only got two more to cover anyway. So, it'll be about 5 to 10 minutes. Is that okay?

Fiza: All right. No issues. I have plenty of time. I have plenty of time.

Andrew: Good.

Fiza: But if you're in a hurry,—

Andrew: This one before we leave coal mining, I thought I'd throw this one in. This is very interesting. So, this is Clipstone coal mine close to Mansfield. So, it's right in the middle of Nottinghamshire.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: The reason I put that in again, I took that photograph in 2014.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: Because of Obviously, there's a lot of people who want to see this dismantled. They want to build houses here instead, you know, and obviously there's a need for new housing, etc. But this is British heritage here. You know, these are the largest headstocks in Europe, the tallest. They're 200 feet high.

Fiza: Oh my gosh.

Andrew: So, so there are and they are the third highest in the world.

Fiza: What?

Andrew: There's no way that they should be dismantled.

Fiza: Don't dismantle them.

Andrew: Yeah. Build around them, but don't dismantle build around and make a feature out of it. I think you probably can't see from there, but all the windows are broken around here. So,—

Fiza: And earn from it and earn from it. That's what I would say.

Andrew: Yeah. Yeah. But yes, mind you, I suppose it would be dangerous, wouldn't it? You can imagine kids climbing up there 200 ft. So, about 67 m if that makes more sense.

Fiza: That is very very high. But still, if we could build around it and this could be a tourist spot where the county or whichever this area could earn money, then that saves the situation and it saves a national heritage structure. That's what we do here. That's what—

Andrew: That's exactly what it is. National heritage structure, you know, whatever. Whether you like it or not, whether you like coal, you don't like coal, that's apart from it. Like how we teach at the IBDP level in to apart from—

Andrew: I don't think it's— I don't think it's ugly. I think it's magnificent.

Fiza: Even I feel it's magnificent. I mean, I would have loved to stand there and just look at it and think that it fed a lot of families. Think what it did. Yeah. Absolutely. Yes. And I'm guessing that they were very deep shafts as well. Absolutely.

Fiza: And so the amount of coal they would have produced would have been extraordinary, I would imagine.

Andrew: Absolutely. So yes, so I thought I was moving down here. So what we've got here with the final two are in Nottingham, by the way. And you you'll notice both of them have got

sandstone behind them. There's this big sandstone plug of rock and Nottingham Castle stuck on the top of it. Okay.

Fiza: Ah,—

Andrew: At the bottom of it, you've got this Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem, which and underneath that, you won't be able to read it, but says founded 1189. And it's one of about 20 ins in England that claim to be the oldest in England.

Fiza: Oh my.

Andrew: But that said, this facade is about 300 years old. It's the foundations that probably date back to 1189. And then they they've actually built it, of course, the Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem, that's a nod to the Crusades in the Holy Land, which is around about 1189, but they would have been in full swing then, wouldn't it?

Fiza: Yes, the Crusades. Absolutely. And yes, well, what they have done here, as you can clearly see, they built the structure into the rock.

Andrew: Yes. Into the sandstone rock. And then they've then excavated inside there. They've created drinking rooms on the same level there. And then underneath there's a network of tunnels and caverns which used to be a brewery that dates from 1068. So there is some credence to this being the oldest in England.

Fiza: I'm quite sure. Hiding people and stuff like that.

Andrew: Yeah, for sure. And the rest and there's more on that to come actually about secret passages and hiding. But before I move on to the final one, the Ye Olde Trip to Jerusalem is the location of what is called the cursed galleon. Okay, so this is a model of a of an oldfashioned galleon.

Fiza: Whoever touches it dies or something like that.

Andrew: The curse is anybody who cleans it will suffer from a mysterious death. That's the exact wording. Yeah. So therefore, as you can imagine, over the years, it's piled up the dust higher and higher to the extent that if there was ever a shift of a breath of air in the room, it would tend to blow toughs of dust off and they ended up landing in people's drinks. So, it's now been put into a glass bottle to safeguard that from happening.

Fiza: Yeah. Keep it there.

Andrew: But that's not the last weird thing about this place. There's also a chair in there, an antique chair that it said that any woman who sits It will increase the chances of her pregnancy. So—

Fiza: I better not sit. I by the Holy Spirit I'll get pregnant. Oh my gosh. This is I was just thinking I'll come and visit this place and now I'm thinking like I rather stay away. I'd rather go to Derbyshire. The cursed galleon as well. So—

Fiza: I the cursed galleon and I'm very fond of cleaning everything, you know. I'm always cleaning. So—

Andrew: It's a glass bottle. So you could clean the bottle I guess.

Fiza: I hope so. I hope so. There was a time you know when I used to wonder when I was a kid how did the you know ship enter the glass bottle and that sort of thing—

Andrew: Compressed—

Fiza: I know composted in posted in and that's sort of rubbish I used to and stuff like that but no I was just thinking of coming here now I'll think better of it I'm staying with you Derbyshire no Nottinghamshire for me Robin Hood only in books but for me derish only continue yes continue—

Andrew: So yes so we move on to the final piece It's probably the most significant piece that I'm going to talk about. So this is what's known as Mortimer's Hole. Okay. And it's the site or the scene of one of the most pivotal moments in British history.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: So I'm going to take you back to the time of Edward the First. We mentioned him before. So I think he's 1272 to 1307. Edward the was the hammer of the Scots, by the way.

Fiza: Yes.

Andrew: Is the one who built all the castles and then went to war with Scotland. And he's portrayed in Braveheart. You must have seen Braveheart.

Fiza: No, not Braveheart.

Andrew: You've not seen Braveheart,—

Fiza: But I've heard and I know the history of Edward. That's the thing.

Andrew: Well, in Braveheart, there's a scene where so Edward's son, Edward II, is deemed he's not deemed to be a strong person at all. And Edward the first sort of despairs of him, and he's got a very close male companion as well, who comes to an unseemly end. Edward the first pushes him out of a high window basically. Edward II succeeds him in 1307. Okay. But in 1327 his wife Queen Isabella.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: And her lover Roger Mortimer.

Fiza: I'm hearing this. I remember this.

Andrew: They murder Edward II.

Fiza: Yes.

Andrew: And I think it was Berkeley Castle or something like that.

Fiza: Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Now I—

Andrew: And they assume the regency because Edward III so that's Isabella and Edward II's son is only 15. So he's still in his minority.

Fiza: Yes.

Andrew: So they assume the crown in 1227. Okay — 1327, sorry. And yeah, so Edward though, Edward III eventually obviously not very happy about this. And in the meantime, Queen Isabella and Roger Mortimer tend to reside in Nottingham Castle. Now, I'll just tell you a little bit about Nottingham Castle here because this isn't actually Nottingham. People call it Nottingham Castle, but it's no such thing. Nottingham Castle was home to Royalists in the English Civil War—

Andrew: Between 1642 and 1651 and it was and because of their siding with the royalists it was slighted at the end of the English civil war it was destroyed basically and the Duke of it's the Duke of Newcastle bizarrely who were located in Nottingham so it's Newcastle in Nottingham the second Duke of Newcastle rebuilt what was called a duke mansion between 1674 and 1679 and that's a little bit of it that you can there. Well, people refer to that as Nottingham Castle.

Fiza: No.

Andrew: And what there is here, this is called Mortimer's Hole. Okay.

Fiza: I thought the above. I thought for a minute it was the one above that hole which was there above.

Andrew: Well, it's all sort of the same thing. So, remember Roger Mortimer? He's up here with Queen Isabella. And Mortimer's hole gives on to a 150 meter passage that goes up through the rock.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: To the outer bailey, I think up here. Okay. And Edward III by 1330 has turned 18 and he wants this crown.

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: And so he's obviously got the Dukes are rallying around him. They want to overthrow Isabella and Roger Mortimer. They want the true king on the throne. And they learn of this secret passage from Mortimer's Hole up to the Nottingham castle. They also get the Castellan on

side and he guides them. Through the passage. He's got somebody else on side in Nottingham Castle to leave the door because there's usually a locked door at the top in the Bailey. He leaves that unlocked and obviously they then go in and they arrest Queen Isabella and Roger Mortimer. Roger Mortimer is sent to the Tower of London where he's hanged a month later and she's sent into exile at Castle Rising in Norfolk and Edward III assumes the throne. So, as you can see, this is a real pivotal moment in British history. If Edward III hadn't come to the throne in 1330, history could well have panned out differently.

Fiza: Absolutely.

Andrew: So I think that's quite a powerful message to finish on there that by you know tiny thread sometimes the future of history hangs.

Fiza: Absolutely. Including the in this case even the colonial history of India on this mortimer—

Andrew: Might never have happened.

Fiza: It wouldn't have happened at all. Nothing would have happened. The British wouldn't have come to India. We wouldn't have been modernized etc. Maybe we would have still been having this sati and this going on etc and we wouldn't have been anglicanized and so much else so much else and just because of this whole this because of Mortimer's whole can imagine beautiful continue to end—

Andrew: Well that's it I mean that's the last photograph the last image on front of Nottinghamshire unusual and quirky I was just going to finish by you know saying if you got any questions about any of the facets you know that I've been involved with which is the history or the talks or the quirky beard.

Fiza: I want to know when I'm going to have you again maybe with some guests so that more people can question you because I understood everything and because I normally have a background knowledge of all this and where can we get all these beautiful books by you and especially the Barmy Derby, the Barmy Derby because everyone yeah—

Andrew: That's a football Barmy Derby — It's about the history of Derby County football club but that's available on Amazon and—

Fiza: Okay.

Andrew: The unusual and quirky should all be available on Amazon.in.

Fiza: Okay. All right.

Andrew: Obviously the Nessemiah books are now available on Amazon.in as well. So—

Fiza: That everyone does know. And yet if you all have forgotten, I'm going to remind you please do get not only the non-fiction books of local English history by our wonderful in-house

historian, local historian and speaker and stellar author Andrew Beardmore, but also get his Nessemiah award-winning multiple award-winning series. Now, now we can happily and proudly call it the Nessemiah multiple award-winning series and I'll be coming to The Awakening. I hope I think the next time that we should have an interview based on the fiction books of Andrew Beardmore and maybe compare it with some of the contemporary or even the Victorian and earlier classics maybe. Don't worry, you don't need to be scared about it. I will do most of the theoretical work and I'll just compare it and then we'll talk about strains of malice maybe first Cold Sanctuary and then you can give us some caveats for The Awakening and the Kiss of Nessemi etc just because I think this is a series this fictional series tells you more about the local history of England than even the non-fiction books of Andrew Beardmore believe me on that if you read it carefully if you read it carefully you will realize that the fiction books tell you more about England.

Andrew: I also have to intercede here and say that in between books one and two and three and four coming out, I released another book called Decoding the Hidden World of Thera. There are lots of Easter eggs in there for people to discover and a lot of them are historical. A lot of them are geographical. But Decoding the Hidden World of Thera reveals all the—

Fiza: Then I should get that first. Then I should get that first review it probably on this very same portfolio blog ex first in a written form. Maybe I can do a video of that because this is something that we should focus on most Indian and even Asian students whether be it IB or IGCSE or A levels we don't focus on English history much and I think we should because we have a lot of caveats and as you said Easter eggs over here and things which are interesting it's not just all the color and the religion and the culture there are legends even in England there are legends there are mysteries there is beauty is Especially not only in architecture but also nature in nature that looks like sculpture that looks like nature and then current its association with our current period sometimes good news but sometimes a lot of bad news but at the end of the day we know that Eng local England and all its counties its countryside has a lot to give us not only for those in Britain but also those of us here in Asia and in India. Thank you. So much Andrew.

Andrew: Very, very welcome.

Fiza: It was lovely having you, and we are going to have you again this time with guests maybe from our student from our students as well as probably some other professional colleagues. So I hope you're going to accept that from me. I hope you're going to accept that.

Fiza: Absolutely I will. Yes. Thank you.

Fiza: And we'll focus on your fiction series this time. We will focus on the Nessemiah series. All right.

Andrew: That would be great. Perfect.

Fiza: See you another time on Fiza Pathan's teaching portfolio for pgcite.com. God bless you, Andrew, and we'll see you again soon.

Andrew: Thank you very much, Fiza. Goodbye.

Fiza: Goodbye. Have a great evening.

— End of transcript —