

CitMods – Good or Bad?

By Saz

A couple of days ago I started a thread with a poll to find out what the general populace (or at least those who read the thread) thought of CitMods. The poll results, which ran from 12.30pm on Thursday 22nd June to 9pm on Saturday 24th June were as follows:

Overall, do you think the CitMods are doing a good job?

- Deffo! This is working so much better now we can interact with the mods – 14 votes (67%)
- They're okay, but do we need them? - 2 votes (10%)
- Uh? There's mods on here?? - 2 votes (10%)
- No, they're rubbish. I'd prefer if they weren't citMods – 2 votes (10%)
- I LOVE THE BBC MODS! BRING THEM BACKKKK!!! - 1 vote (5%)

(Total: 21 votes)

As well as the poll, people were asked to post comments on their views on moderation and the CitMods, if they thought it was an effective service. Those that had been moderated themselves were especially asked to give their views on what they thought, if the moderation had been fair and whatnot.

Chezzle was the first to respond, admitting to having one post removed, and one which she had reported, *"Both times it was dealt with quickly"*. She added that she was worried over any possible inconsistency between moderators, since each moderation incident was open to individual interpretation by the Mod around first to deal with it.

"When I asked a Mod (not naming any names) what was classed as a swearword-thinking there might be a holy grail kept on a dusty shelf somewhere. The answer I got was there was not a list of ones that were banned and so it was up to the individual moderator to make a judgement call. I personally feel that there should be some sort of guide the mods have to follow".

This is a good point, and one which may be discussed with moderators and Leafstorm, however in the meantime, generally only very severe words are the ones moderated, or those which are specifically complained about by others. Should one moderator choose not to remove a word which someone has complained about, then a recommendation can be made either by PM to another mod, or (preferred method, as it is open for all to see – unless the person reporting it prefers to remain anonymous) on the Mod Board.

QoR admitted having been a victim of moderation for saying a naughty word. She seemed pleased with the CitMod (ID/Harpo, in this case), who was a breath of fresh air, having sent her a message explaining that she had been moderated with a friendly warning against doing it in future, a far cry from the old BBC days where they *"would have shouted at me and would probably have told my mum"*. Plus, by replacing the disallowed word with

“cheddar” it had made her giggle, and overall she felt that knowing the mods was a benefit instead of the “*nameless, faceless Beeb employees*”.

This was a sentiment echoed by StatusFrustration, who has also had a “*cheese replacement*” in one of her posts (as well as an entire post deleted, which she admits being proud of – think we’ll have to watch her carefully in future...lol). By replacing only the offending word(s), most felt that this method of moderation was far more effective, as the entire message isn’t removed (unless it is required), and so there is not a break in the flow of the conversation or topic. Bear felt the same, approving of the personal touch that was used, and the inclusion of a bit of humour with cheeses and vegetables used to cover naughty words, instead of just banning the entire post.

The only comment which was left on the thread against moderators and their moderation techniques was by HS:

*“I think the new moderators have been far too trigger happy in deciding a thread is not relevant to a particular section of the message board. Sometimes they don’t even move it to a different place, they just delete it. This could be of particular concern closer to election time.
Sack them all I say.”*

Even with this negative comment, no complaint against moderation has been left on the Mod Board by HS (something which is encouraged to do, as the only way to solve any misunderstandings or problems is to have them discussed openly). It is possible that he might have felt victimised by having some of his threads deleted, but in some cases it has not been possible to just move them to another board, as there have already been similar threads in place. The moderation of any posts or thread should (and will) not have any influence on the upcoming elections, regardless of HS’s fears. Moderation is done to avoid offence, and hopefully make the forum a much happier place to be, and all the moderators have agreed that editing ability should not be used as a strike against other citizens in any personal disagreements. As all moderation is reported in a message on the Mod Board, the work that is done is open for all to see, and so complaints (if any) would be discussed and solved should they arise.

Another well moderated citizen is Pompey Gaz, who admitted that he was being foolish and immature (his words!) in trying to push the limits, but did not seriously mean to cause offence. He said: “...really the mods are cool, they’re better now than the BBC ones cause they tell you what you’ve done and have a laugh with you”. He added that mods were needed, as “otherwise everything would go to pot”.

Originally he had felt that the moderation was unfair, but on reflection realised that swearing and posting porn was a bad thing, and accepted the rulings against him. His final comment during his exclusive interview for the Guardian Angel was “remember kids, stay in school”. Wise words there!

As always, the GA (and the moderators) welcome your opinion, so if you have a story to tell on moderation on the new boards, either write a piece for the next issue, or post a message on the thread:

<http://88.208.205.232/showflat.php?Cat=0&Number=21094&Main=19034#Post21094>

Alternatively, complaints and specific questions to mods can be made on the Moderator Notice Board:

<http://88.208.205.232/postlist.php?Cat=0&Board=Language>

The IASA

An introduction

I_S_I_T

Director, IASA
Chief of Staff, DCHQ

As you may know, CTU/J-DIC was one of the largest bodies in Lovely. They carried out defensive actions in Micronations. However, as previous editions of the GA have pointed out, they weren't very good at it. As a result of several diplomatic incidents, exams, girls, infighting and boredom, four members (Trip, Ellie, Newton and Babs) of J-DIC left the organization, leaving it as a museum. This, obviously, left Lovely unprotected.

So, on June 1st at 00:01, I_S_I_T formed the 'Intelligence and Security Agency' (IASA) to replace CTU. In addition, 'The Council of the Forces' was formed to replace J-DIC. The later was re-named Defence Council Headquarters (DCHQ).

Currently, the IASA has four members - I_S, Cnut, Pirate James and IHorner - and DCHQ is made up of the Heads of the Armed Forces - I_S (IASA), Cnut (Royal Lovely Air Force - RLAF), Dr Strangelove (Lovely Army - LA) and Lord Montague (Royal Lovely Navy - RLN). As the name Defence Council suggests, we are here strictly for the defence of Lovely. Therefore, no active work is in progress against any Micronations or Governments.

DCHQ now has a motto - *A Deo et Rege* - *From God and the King.*

The aims of DCHQ are to ensure continued peace and stabilisation on both the national and Micronational stage, to protect all citizens of Lovely from invasion attempts, to Be Good and to Stay Lovely.

The IASA

Are YOU man enough?

By PirateJames90, IASA Head of External Operations

How often have you thought to yourself, "Hmm, I wish there was someway I could help protect Lovely from terrorists and general evildoers and help it prevent terrorists and evildoers from doing bad things" Well, now you can help! Simply join the IASA and you can set about protecting the country you love. All are welcome - Spies, Terrorists and other General Evildoers need not apply.

Just visit <http://www.iasa.uni.cc> for more info.

Help keep Lovely that way!

Spork & Rusk Security

motto: "You obey the spork. You respect the rusk. It is so."

By Saz

It all started as a bit of a joke. With the move away from the BBC to our new home, most of

the categories were empty... void of any messages... so I snuck into the National Security board and posted a message:

Subject: I'm just swiping the first post on this bit...
Message: Hehehe....National Security? I'm here, and I'm armed with a spork and a rusk. Bring it on! :D

And so it began. On the old boards I'd (for some reason I can't really remember, as with most Lovely related things) adopted the humble spork and the inoffensive rusk as my weapons of choice, both perfect for prodding those which I felt deserved it. It evolved, as most Lovely things do, to real life spork combats on Wommie Walkabouts, and the prodding of Razerbug in a shop once with a box of rusks... just for the heck of it you understand. Well, with the place all shiny and new, and with a cheeky realisation that I could effectively own the area even for a few minutes, the post was made.

Within half an hour there was a knock at the door. Suspicious (as you should be when you work in security) I peered through the hole in the door and enquired who was there. After a while, the Prime Minister responded saying he believed it was a major threat to international security! ARGH!!! I double locked the door and put the chain on to protect the base. Unfortunately, I'd underestimated the powers of a certain millionaire, who'd recently changed his name by deed poll from ID to Harpo, and he simply walked in asking if he could join as a spork assistant, bypassing my barriers. D'oh! This security lark was going to be tougher than I expected... I hired him on the spot, best keep his catburglar skills close. Plus he had his own private helicopter, which is just cool! Not only that, but it was piloted by "Bob" the fish. How could I not hire him!!

By now we had myself, a sneaky millionaire catburglar type, Bob the fish, and even the Prime Minister had popped in to see how things were going. Ahhh, I sensed good things.. When Razerbug stumbled on the thread and misread an innocent post as something a bit



risque, I saw a gap in the market, and the "eye washing service" was born (ever the entrepreneur, that's me).



For a while, only the moderators had dared venture into the thread, but with the thread renamed "Spork & Rusk Security", the ever fearless Peachy soon appeared, so eager to join the team that he'd made his own t-shirt. Ingenuity like that made him an instant recruit (after a lot of umm'ing and ahh'ing on my part, this is Peachy we're talking about), and thus the Rapid Mounted Spork Team (RMST) begun, spork weaponry and unicycles, the enemy wouldn't know what to do with themselves if faced with that. The Spork Wing of the team was growing stronger every day as Harpo pointed out, the rusk side still quiet, but with a lack of real danger this didn't worry me. Should there be real problems, rusk training would be put in place and the country would remain safe.

The general populous were keen to learn more of the team and it's work, some even suggesting expert spork handlers for roles, and it wasn't long before the team had its first ever assignment... defending The Last Post in the BBC wastelands which had formerly been known as home (see article by Harpo for details of this).



Veterans of spork battles soon heard the call to arms (I'm assuming after some prodding, possibly with sporks, by those who suggested them in the first place) and soon signed up to help with the battle, and the rusks were even shown some support by TheMilkMan. Soon we were joined by Lord Cog, when I took the opportunity to sign him up as he stood looking confused at the entire venture. Lovely's ever growing Security team soon had even more recruits, with Berty and Mr Flibble eager to pledge allegiance to the Unit and the security of this great nation, closely followed by Laird Si who joined as an expert ruskman.

For a brief moment in Lovely history, the Spork & Rusk Security Team was even part of the IASA, however as leader of the team I decided that our (not so) little group should remain an independent body. Our members would be free to join any organisations they wished, however I did not want there to end up with any clashes with other groups. The SARST was more than a job, it was something done for the honour of the country, and therefore should not be restricted by any rules (unless I thought of some, hehe).

Lhorner offered the services of his spifes as backup, Harpo introduced the team to knorks, and Babs came prepared with every possible weapon.

Which brings us to how things stand now. Should you wish to join our humble team, prepared to defend Lovely when needed, then sign up now. For the good of Lovely!

Join up here:

<http://88.208.205.232/showflat.php?Cat=0&Number=171&an=0&page=0#Post171>

Smileys

By Babs

A critical part of any forum. It's perfectly simple to upload our favourite smileys from anywhere, onto any forum provider, be it Ezboard, Exco or even UBB, as I demonstrated in Beaugium.

Then why doesn't Leafstorm listen to calls from us all, and get some decent smileys? I'm

sure we all would agree that the smileys currently at the forums are, well, rubbish. Smileys are an essential part of any forum, the only physical way of expressing emotion, or gut reaction. From the simple smiles to Doh's and bubbly's, they are needed, are perhaps its time we revived the petition for more smileys.

This was a short one, but nonetheless an important one, so don't let it run over your head. Get out there and rant. Do not just accept the fact that they're shocking. This is Lovely's home, we live in it. We shall decorate it how we like.

POLITICS

The future of Democracy

By Psychotic Mike

Democracy, we want it in Lovely, well some of us do, and to an extent, we have it. Many of those involved in politics want an improvement, most of those outside couldn't care less. Now how is that right? Those that are trying to get power in Lovely (albeit most of those seemingly for the sake of the country and their view of how it should be), are the only ones that put effort into the method they'll use to get power. It's got to the stage where some people even seem to be trying to gain power via the decisions for the methods for gaining power. Even worse, many of the parties and organisations seem to be citing numbers of members, many of whom seem inactive.

Me, I've changed my mind. I'm bored of it all. I don't want a long, complex, awkward process that discourages almost the whole of the country from taking part, whether it's the election method itself, or the process for deciding, or how everything works afterwards.

But then, I haven't, I've always felt that true democracy is the way forward, it's effectively what we've been using so far, it's what sorted the board move, and it's what the government's effectively turned into. It's simple and it works. Those that put effort in gain influence and satisfaction, those that don't, don't. If you express your opinion more, it's paid more attention. If you start a group to do something, and it's successful, it will be successful, and that's all that's needed. If it isn't successful but a good idea then someone else will probably make an attempt at it. There's your democratic system I promised all those months ago. Only two roles are really especially useful, organisers, who don't have to be official, and people to communicate citizens' issues to Leafstorm, currently done by moderators/government, which it should be doesn't really matter until the point at which things aren't properly communicated.

Does this leave room for politics, parliaments, and the ilk? Of course it does, go for such systems, if it turns out it's what's best it'll happen successfully. A good project will involve reaching out to every citizen possible, a great project will draw others' attention automatically. It isn't playing politics as people have described it, as it's people attempting to use a traditional method of having a positive impact (mostly at least). It's just not really sensible for anyone to expect their project to instantly be respected because it involves a certain part of the country.

So what's happening to me? What do I intend to do with my PM role? Will I stand again in August? Quite simply, to all of them, I don't know. I'm enjoying it, more because of the opportunities for scandal jokes than anything, and it's great that I'm getting support from all sorts of people, many of whom I probably wouldn't talk to otherwise, to my shame. Whenever I think there's a way I can use the role to improve Lovely, or even just for fun, I'll do so. I probably will stand, but I don't really plan on making election promises or anything, as situations change, and what seems good now probably won't in several months time.

Enjoy, be good if you want, and try anything and everything.

The Others political party

By Marie

Well I will start by saying that's the latest in a long list of names we have had so far. Who knows, it may change again soon. I'll let you know. Err, it kinda started out as Toaster's thing but he said he is just here for fun so Rev took over and it has gone from strength to strength. We may have a motto but I will have to get back to you on that one. I don't think anything was ever agreed. In fact, we may be the most disorganised party ever, but that's not going to stop you all voting for us now is it? Ok, the main thing you should know about our party is that it is all about fun and we probably won't work towards helping the country out in any other way than that.

Our manifesto is as follows:

MANIFESTO

1. We're only in this for our own amusement, we don't really care about making this a better country.
2. We reserve the right to not do anything we promised once we achieve power.
3. We demand fun and arguments and possibly straight to our pockets tax.
4. The policies, regulations, procedures, and taxes in this term of government are subject to change without prior notice or good reason, if necessary, to pay for nights out and or, to get ourselves out of bother.
5. We can, and will, offer any opinion we see fit on any person or group wherever they may be from.
6. We're here to make things fun again for you and us - anyone found making things dreary and boring may be shot on site.
7. Only we are allowed power of any sort, anyone else claiming power of any sort may be disappeared without warning.
8. Join the party and be free from tax.

Our list of members is:

- Revolutionary1 running for pm
- Toaster as deputy pm
- Biffa as chief of police
- Marie as PA
- Giddsey as sports minister
- Saz as spin-doctor (probation? Who knows) - *not a member anymore*
- Twist as minister without portfolio
- Razerbug as foreign minister
- phatmikem, science and technology minister
- Kael, defense minister
- Chuff, general henchman
- Harpo, general henchman
- Babs, PA's PA

So basically I can tell you we are here for fun. Our leader is in no way interested in moving the country forward in a beneficial way other than the way we see fit. We won't change our ways so don't be expecting us to; we are already power mad we don't need to change once in power. So finally vote for us because with us you always know where you stand.

History in the Making

By HS

The new message boards have been greeted with widespread approval for the most part and have brought many benefits to citizens. One of those benefits is the ability to hold polls and elections by secret ballot and free from interference by the board hosts.

The Lovely Electoral Commission has been working tirelessly since April to restart Lovely's democratic process after the March Parliamentary Elections were sabotaged by a combination of vandalism and heavy-handed moderation. This summer the LEC is putting into action a six-stage process which will not only give Lovely a Parliament but also an amended constitution, criminal justice system and government ministers with clearly defined roles.

The six stages of the road map to democracy are as follows:

1) Election Stage

The Parliamentary Elections will take place from 1st-14th July 2006. 14 Members of Parliament will be elected at this stage.

2) Committee Stage

Parliament will open on 15th July and the first business for the new MPs will be to debate the internal rules and procedures of Parliament as well as a code of conduct for members. The current Prime Minister is entitled to chair this debate as the Commission feels that the Government should have the opportunity to take part in the process. However, at all times during this stage the Commission will be in full control of Parliament and will set the agenda for committee meetings. This is particularly important in view of the fact that the Elections for Prime Minister will be taking place shortly afterwards.

3) Prime Minister Election

Lovely's new Prime Minister will be elected in a separate election held by the Office of HRH King Danny I in August. The LEC is advising the King on the format of this election in order for the process to run smoothly and fairly.

Once the new Prime Minister is elected, he/she will be offered a seat in Parliament. If the PM is one of the 14 MPs who already has a seat, then an extra seat will be made available in an immediate by-election. The end result is that Lovely will have 15 MPs in Parliament and the PM can choose his government ministers therefrom.

4) Opening Session

The first session of Parliament will begin in late August or early September. At this stage the Electoral Commission will no longer have control over the proceedings and will in fact be directly accountable to Parliament. The object of the opening session is to debate the necessary constitutional amendments to enable Parliament to make laws.

In particular the amendments will define precisely the roles of the Prime Minister, Government and Parliament. It will also be appropriate at this stage to address the formation of Lovely's legal system and criminal justice system.

5) Referendum

Once Parliament is satisfied with the proposed amendments it will put them forward for public referendum. The Electoral Commission will invite members of the public to either accept or reject the proposals.

Although the MPs will prepare the amendments and it is their duty to do so, this is a matter so important that it is really for the nation as a whole to approve.

6) Royal Assent

The final stage, which is a formality, is for the King to confirm his agreement and sign the new constitution. Parliament will then have full authority to carry out its activities in accordance with the constitution.

Play your part - Become an MP!

If you want to take part in this political revolution then why not stand as a candidate in the Parliamentary Elections in July?

You have until midnight on 30th June to sign up as a candidate on this thread:

[MP Candidates - Sign Up Here](#)

Remember - you don't have to be a member of a political party or even actively involved in politics to participate in these elections. This is your chance to show you care about the future of your country.

If any part of this process seems unclear or confusing or if you have any questions at all, please leave a query or private message for me on the boards or send an email to lovelyelections@hotmail.co.uk and I shall endeavour to help you.

Thank you for your time.

Lord HS
Electoral Commissioner
www.elections.uni.cc

FFF

A glorious history, a glorious future!

By Sub-Commandante FFF President

The Fluffy Friendly Federation is Lovely's oldest party. Founded by Barcode in the early days we quickly grew in size and support. Our membership was broad containing democrats, liberals, socialists, conservatives and monarchists but we all shared the ideal of making Lovely a better and fairer place. Our leader Barcode came a close second in the elections of late 2005. As '06 drew on Lovely politics faltered, many parties disintegrating, despite this we held firm. Several months ago Barcode appointed me Vice President followed by Acting President as he began to step down from his active role in politics. On the eighth of July Barcode declared he was stepping down as President. We held a vote to determine the next President in which Fuhrer Flo and Cyanse each received 11% of the vote and I received 78% thereby becoming President. Since then, very sadly two of our ministers have found it necessary to resign. However, with the FFF recruitment drive we plan to reform and return to our former glory. If the party allows me I shall stand as Prime Minister and hopefully the FFF will hold the next government.

FFF - Always for Lovely, forever!

If you want to join then please apply on one of our many threads in the government or elections sections of the board.

OPINIONS PAGE

Elections

By Sir Konrad

For the past few months, the government that comprises the king, PM, and the various MPs have led us through dark ages.

We all know of the BBC's interferences, the various "rebellions," the new forums, and the hacking. Heck, there was even a war. They have all shown vigilance and virtue. Peace now (more or less) reigns in Lovely once again.

And now, in less than two months, there will be a new election, for MP-ship, and the chance to become PM. I have no doubt that the majority of them will once again lead us, but more people are being allowed to run.

We should embrace these elections, as they mark the coming of a new age of Lovely, away from the "darkness" that we have had to endure.

The New Moderation and Rules

By Lady Marie

Yay I get to do another rant. OH NO I hear you cry, but yep and here it is and it's all about the new moderation and rules system. No offence meant to anyone here and I apologise beforehand if offence is taken.

Right well here goes. When I first heard about the citizen mods way back when on our old boards I was one of a few people who disagreed with the whole idea and I haven't really changed my mind since then. It just makes me wonder how people got chosen for the job and on what grounds? How did one of the most controversial people on the boards end up as a mod? A person who has made quite a few people feel like they have signed in just because he/she felt like having an argument, been threatening towards other people and lastly followed others through threads with the sole intent of winding up and upsetting others? It seems to me that we get a say on some things but the day to day stuff that affects us is decided over our heads. To me it started with the choosing of citizen mods and is being carried on by them. Why should they decide if polls get restricted? Fair enough there is the concern of cheating by adding all polls on the same subject together for the result, but at the end of the day you get to see individual poll results when you have voted so how can that be cheated? Multiple threads on the same subject on different sections of the boards are being deleted. Good idea I say but why then are there still two Lost and Found Threads? aaarrggghhh I will stop being picky now I would just like to see consistency in everything.

Has anyone seen a copy of the rules and posts/threads that the citizen moderators are allowed to or supposed to moderate? I haven't. I know there is a list of house rules but this is as open to interpretation as the last set, for instance "You have the ability, as you register, to choose your username. We advise that you keep the name appropriate, you should not contain websites or email addresses or contain swear words." But does this mean our posts should not contain swear words as well? And if we do swear and it gets moderated are we able to complain without being told that common sense should apply here? Because the way I see it is if you want to do something and are constantly being told not to you will twist anything that is open to interpretation in your favour. I don't feel like anyone took the time to explain the new system. I mean do the moderators (or greenies as they are becoming known on the boards) wait for someone to complain about a post containing a swear word or do they just edit any swear word they happen to see on the boards? Everything just seems a wee bit inconsistent to me at the moment and I get easily confused by these things.

"You agree, through your use of this Lovely forum, that you will not post any material which is false, defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, vulgar, hateful, harassing, obscene, profane, impersonates another citizen, racist, homophobic, sexually orientated, threatening, invasive of a person's privacy, or otherwise in violation of ANY law. This is not humorous and legal actions can be taken against you."

As for this description of what is not allowed I think we all know where we stand on the 'hateful, homophobic, racist and sexually orientated' but what about the others? Peoples opinions on these things differ. Where is the balance found to which the majority of people agree? Does the moderation of such things rely on how many people complain or do we just need one person to complain? Maybe it is left to the discretion of the citizen mods. Who does actually decide what is offensive and what is not? For me swear words used generally in a conversation to describe something or just as a general curse are not offensive, it is when those words are aimed at people with the intent of hurting/upsetting/insulting someone it becomes an issue. Do we draw the line at all swearing or just minor words? I don't know because it just doesn't seem to be clear to me.

And lastly how and who gets to decide which rules it is ok to break? We already know for a fact the age rule has been broken and I am in no way complaining about this because the younger members of our boards are as much a part of it as the older ones and would be sorely missed if they were not here with us!!! From a neutral part of me the question is asked if we should be strict on swearing, hateful, vulgar, harassing and other rules that suit certain people. Shouldn't we be consistent and follow every rule to the letter? And I think I am safe in saying NO, because for one the age rule does not suit everyone and would be excluding. I just think that if we can go easy on one rule maybe the greenies can go easier on other rules like the swearing.

Anyways that's it from me for now. Sorry if I have offended anyone in writing this it's just my little rant please don't hate me!!!!.

Marie

No Man's Land

By PirateAsTheArtist

We were all looking forward to the move – the final nail in the BBC forum's coffin for many was that dreadful 3-minute posting delay. For many, this led to a temporary evacuation to alternative forums, and this time it was not the Government Refugee Camp, but the recently-instigated Beaugian Forum where most Citizens ended up. Set up by one of Lovely's youngest but most active Citizens, Rock4Babs, I am very proud to be associated with Beaugium's forum (as King of Beaugium), and it continues to be a popular destination for many, although at the moment it is somewhat less frenetic than the new Lovely site.

There, perhaps, lies a clue to the continuing popularity of Beaugium, with many of it's regular posters rarely, if ever, visiting the "new place" – many are former refugees of the old BBC Test Match Special forum that had decamped to Lovely several months ago, for various reasons. Shiny, sparkly, bright and new as New Lovely may be, with all its pictures and hyperlinks and coloured text (and frankly dreadful emoticons), it seems to lack the friendly, familiar face of its BBC forerunner, with a major gripe in many quarters being the lack of a decent "My Discussions" list; sure, you can add a thread to your "favourites" list (if you remember to), but it rarely seems to update itself if new posts appear on a thread in your favourites. This makes it much more difficult to know what is going on across all the boards, and is an obstacle to continuity between sessions online.

Maybe Leafstorm can address this problem, I don't know; maybe we will figure out a way to live with it, or find our own workarounds; whatever, at the moment, it makes me feel alienated from Lovely. Semi-detached. I don't feel a part of a community in the way I once did, and since for the foreseeable future, my only means of contact with others in Lovely is online, that is a worry.

There have been high points recently, when a sustained set of inspired posts by other Citizens encouraged me to join in the fun and explore new ground, it was like the early days again, but events such as this have only been sporadic, they never seem to lead on to establish long-lived classics like the old Pirate thread, amongst others.

I don't mean to whinge, I think Leafstorm have done a truly wonderful job, and the facility to post pictures does open up new avenues to explore. Maybe it just needs more time for us all to get used to it, and exploit all the new features in the creative ways that Lovely has often shown its Citizens to be capable of before.

In the meantime, I shall alternate between Beaugium and Lovely as my mood takes me, braving the brash frenzy of Lovely when I feel brave enough, and retiring to the quiet backwaters of Beaugium in more reflective moments. They serve different purposes, and as such may turn out to complement each other well – in the true spirit of co-operation that is one of the Lovely ideals, mutual respect and tolerance between the Mother Country and her Grand Principality should prosper for the benefit of all.

Lovely: <http://88.208.205.232/ubbthreads.php?>

Beaugium: <http://excoboard.com/exco/index.php?boardid=19034>

© PirateAsTheArtist (King of Beaugium) 23rd June 2006

The new forums

By Babs

Hmmmz. So, new forums, I had high hopes, masterminded by the famous LeafStorm, and a great deal of ideas put forward by many people. I have to say I was massively disappointed. Fine, lots of you like it there, and that's great, don't get me wrong, but I think they're shocking, as do some others. The layout is phenomenally appalling, and awful on the eyes (yes I know the colours can be changed) All this gets on my nerves:

Re: The Others HQ [Re: Revolutionary1]#11706 - 18/06/06 08:13 PM

At the end of the day, you only want to stick a line on.

There's too much stuff floating, it needs to be clear cut and simple, quite a few people have deflected to the Beaugian Forums because they find the new forums complex and not worth the effort, notably the Cricket Orphans. So thanks for trying LS. And if you like it there that's great, good for you, but you won't catch me there often.

NB. For those who wish to accompany the Cricket Orphans and the citizens of Beaugium the address for our forums is

<http://excoboard.com/exco/index.php?boardid=19034>

Letter to the editor

Dear Sir,

On a recent stroll along one of the finer beaches in Lovely it was drawn to my attention that there have never been any fossilized remains found within our shores. This had one wondering – is it possible that those learned gentlemen of science who promote the theory of Evolution could be wrong all this time?

As a firm believer in the good book I have often wrestled with the conflict between the teachings of modern science, and those encapsulated within the pages of the tome that has set the standards for how we should all live. I speak of course of the Reader's Digest Anthology of 1954.

Within the beautifully bound covers of this volume are instructions on all aspects of life, from how to deal with the beginning of a new life, to laughing at one's misfortunes, to the sadness brought by the death of a loved one, and in between, the pleasure that can be gained from a good meal, and examples of some of the finer works of fiction of our time. One can find all one needs to live a life of true virtue and solace within these pages.

It has always been a source of concern, however, that the book by which I have lived my adult years describes the origins of man in entirely different terms to the accepted norm of modern science. Those men in white coats would have you believe that, by a process of natural selection, man has evolved from lower forms, which in turn were begat by even simpler life, stemming back to the dawn of time. The Reader's Digest, however, describes how human life on Earth truly came about. In an article by that esteemed author, Edward Van Halen, it is revealed that Man exists purely as a form created by an ancient alien species who visited our beloved planet some 83 years ago. These aliens have the power to mould the very substance of the Earth in to living beings, hence their informal title – The Gods Of Rock. It is mine, and most right thinking people's, firm belief that the Theory of Evolution is an outdated idea of pure bunk, from the addled mind of old fogies who cling on to their beliefs as a child clings to a security blanket.

I implore the Citizens of Lovely – look with your own eyes, see the lack of evidence for Evolution, question the learned wisdom of your youth, and listen to the teachings of Van Halen and the Gods Of Rock!

Yours Rockingly,

General (RetD.) Oswald T. Disgusted of Onebridge Tells

As you can see I've not even tried to edit this. It would spoil the whole thing. It's a comment on the new boards and being a moderator. Look closely and you might be able to make that out. I thought it should go in for posterity, and because I find it hard to believe it wasn't intentional. (ed)

Drunk and Lovely

By ID06

“Hello tis me, I love thew new plavce, yeah and the yellow look went right off form the start. Been at WEG's BBQ. thanks Cit locve for droping water on me while I am trey9ng to write my nonsense. Um yeah, yellow gone., I went for the WUIIILD colours right from start.

Modding is loveluy when you can just minimally remove the odd naughty farking word instead of deletion of an essay. Cheeeses - is the joke wearing a little thin? Boards, bored? not me. og hnpono no (if ion doubt, ask hobo to read this article, he's anexpert at reading my scribble) but basically I wanna say - we love you lot, we love everyone who made this [place hgappen, and yeah we miss a few poeple who havent found us yet.

Tales from the Dead Parrot

The Mystery of Devil’s Alley

By Captain Deadlegg

Gather rounds, lads, as I tell you a tale terrible in the telling. Gather round as I tell ye the fate of Devil’s Alley. For those of you not well travelled, Devil’s Alley was an independent port, surrounded by impenetrable forests with but a single road leading to it from the nearby land of Lovely. Now ye must understand; Devil’s Alley was not a nice place. The mayor was a corrupt tyrant, known for his insane paranoia and cruel nature, and the chief of police was but a thug in a uniform. The population itself was a mix of pirates, buccaneers and mercenaries out of work. In the woods outside o’ the town itself there were strange and mysterious cults. Even worse, the docks were said to be haunted by legendary great white turd Moby Shit, the horrible sea monster responsible for sinking many a fine ship. ‘Twas a dangerous city, but a rich one due to its position in the trade routes surrounding Lovely. However, a mysterious fate was to befall this vice ridden city.

Perhaps the first sign of trouble was the telegram lines to Lovely going down, but not before a few garbled transmissions warning of a mysterious enemy. The mayor, ever a suspicious man, ordered the militia to arms. The mystery begins here however, for instead of guarding the docks, the pirates and mercenaries which made up the militia were instead ordered to fortify an old log cabin in the woods, off the road out of Devil’s Alley. For the next week or so there was an odd peace to the city, as if the port was in the eye o’ the storm, so to speak. But what happened next is the true mystery, for no accurate account remains of the last few hours of Devil’s Alley.

Some say that the hand o’ God smote the wicked city from the face of the earth, although these people are generally mad in nature. Other, more rational souls believe that Devil’s Alley was attacked by Lovely armed forces, and claim that the evil king of Lovely could not bear a free haven on his border. They speculate that the first battle was fought at the log cabin, while a second force captured the docks in a surprise attack. Garbled radio transmissions do indicate that some form of conflict took place at these locations. The final stand, so they say, took place in the town hall, where the mayor and the chief of police lead the Devil’s Alley denizens in a desperate last act of defiance against the overwhelming numbers of the Lovely force.

This is just one theory however, and there are more. Some sailors of a superstitious nature believe the mayor was conducting secret rituals at the log cabin site, and awoke an ancient and unstoppable evil which laid waste to the town. Others believe the town was destroyed in a power struggle between the mayor and the police chief. Legends speak of a message in a bottle, thrown into the sea by the mayor, which reveals the truth behind the mystery. But no man in these parts knows if such a message truly exists. It’s possible that we will never discover what really happened, for all that exists of Devil’s Alley today is a barren wasteland, and in the centre of the wasteland, where the town hall once sat, there stands a great and terrible monument to Devil’s Alley, built by no mortal hand, built from stones and ship planks and logs from the cursed wood and blood and ash and the very bones of those unfortunate souls who once lived in Devil’s Alley.

The first ten minutes

By ID

Monday 12th June.

3.31pm - Nat registered.

3.32pm - Lady Heather registered. Then Ray. Then Carpy.

3.33pm - The first post ("hello!!!!" by Ray, in the King's thread)

3.34pm - Veer Soon For Marmalade registered. Then Twist. Then Berty.

3.35pm - The first Citizen's thread (The TEA Appreciation Society by Ray)

3.36pm - Schnips registered. Berty's first post.

3.37pm - (tumbleweed tumbleweed)

3.38pm - Lady Evilina registered. Twist's first post.

3.39pm - Meaghan registered. Nat's first post, starting the Guardian Angel newspaper thread. Ray starts the Bristol thread. Lady Heather's first post.

3.40pm - Saz registered. Lady Heather's 2nd post. Ray posts again, taking an early lead in the "who has posted the most" list.

<http://88.208.205.232/showmembers.php?Cat=0&sb=8&page=1&like=>

Tedious Stats

By ID06

At the time of writing (midday Friday 23rd June) we have 240 registered users. 27.5% of those have not yet posted on the message boards. At the other extreme, if we consider the top 10% busiest posters, they have collectively posted 60% of all the posts made.

10.4% of those currently registered are members of the Ministry of General Debauchery.

7% are currently listed as candidates for the MP elections. The number of people in both these categories is Zero.

52% of currently registered Citizens joined in the first 24 hours of the new boards opening. The initial rush of 93 on June 12th, then 47 on June 13th, then 22 on June 14th etc has of course dwindled to a steady rate of "less than ten per day".

17.6% of General Chat threads are started by DAVID BLUNKETT. About half of his threads get at least 4 replies.

There are 14 threads which have been viewed at least 10 times but as yet have had no replies. At the other end of the scale, here are the 10 Longest Threads:

- 1 - 1383 - Toaster's Moving Castle
- 2 - 843 - The Official World Cup thread
- 3 - 788 - London Meets!
- 4 - 758 - New Place To Talk
- 5 - 563 - TEA Appreciation Society
- 6 - 417 - memoirs of a Wombat
- 7 - 377 - David Hasselhoff fanclub
- 8 - 376 - comment on the avatar above you
- 9 - 374 - What made you smile today?
- 10 - 373 - Either/Or game

By the time you read this, more than 90% of these figures will be out of date.

Sudoku

By Cpeachok

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

Puzzle 0008

Sudoku

Last issue's solution

By Cpeachok

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

Solution 0007

A LOVELY QUIZ

The Answers

By McMo

Q1. Who offered to duel with Schaf for the role as head quinger

A1. A Sneaky Weasel *FBI* (At War)(SCAR-H),

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/dannywallace/F2293115?thread=2999976>

Q2. Who wore party hats at the most recent London brunch walkabout?

A2. Wombat Trouserpress and ID

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/dannywallace/F2262799?thread=2670357&skip=320&show=20>

Q3. Who likes Ice Cream but apparently not tea?

A3. Angel

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/dannywallace/F2307505?thread=2078889&post=35344037#p35344037>

Q4. What was Kitizen Oscar's answer to the question "When is the best time to plant tulips?"

A4. If you're going to plant them so that they spell a rude word when they flower, i would recommend midnight onwards... Otherwise, Tuesday..

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/dannywallace/F2307716?thread=2643459&skip=140&show=20>

Q5. Who started the pictionary thread?

A5. Ray of the Rovers

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/dannywallace/F2262799?thread=1935789&skip=0&show=20>

Q6. What was the name of the camel lost by the ambassador of Bognor Regis?

A6. Panckybooboo

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/dannywallace/F2307508?thread=1175298>

Q7. Who restarted the strip club?

A7. Lady Heather

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/dannywallace/F2307507?thread=2513234>

Q8. When did BJC start the lovely beach? And what did she do there first?

A8. Dec 20, 2005 *slips along stones frozen together despite the salt.....crunches across icy sand to the water, skims a flat stone...plink..plink.....*

Q9. How did the Sentence Of Extraordinary Length start?

A9. One upon a time

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/dannywallace/F2262799?thread=2878546>

Q10. Who is the king of Clubs?

A10. Revolutionary 1

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/dannywallace/F2307503?thread=2588508&skip=0&show=20>

Q11. And finally. Where is Danny standing in the picture illustrating the security threads?

A11. Eel pie Island of course!

Yet another GA article

By Babs

After officially being declared as an official fantastic person, or something, I set about my next task.

The Date: 21st June 2006

The Task: Write a complete GA Article which is worth print space, oh yes, and that some people might read.

The Equipment: 1 Computer, MSN Hotmail, Mrs Hamlett (If you're reading this thank you for writing this in '95) and a wilting brain

The Environment: My room, complete with 1/2 inch layer of dust, actually scrap that

The Environment: Newport City Landfill

The Problem: Writers Block.

But then the idea hit me. Write an article... wait for it, about writing an article! Now, I know it sounds, well, the most idiotic thing you've ever heard, and by doing it I have

failed my task miserably, but read on, I've got you interested now, haven't I?

It's often a last minute bodge-job for a lot of people, the GA, including me, but this week, after my declaration of fantasticity, I thought I had to actually do something, something original.

It happens every other fortnight. You sit down, in front of the computer, at 9 o'clock and wait for Schaf to start the staff meeting. Sometimes you wonder why you've stuck it out so long, and why you haven't screamed down GA Central Office because of the nagging, knocked Nat's lamp over and deliberately slipped in Reception so the GA would have to pay compensation.

Actually, that's probably given a few of you ideas... hmm *runs off to GA central offices, a scream is heard in the distance* Anyway, once the staff meeting is over, about 4 hours later than planned, you leave, having promised, repeatedly, that you would do such and such an article, but actually weren't listening what so ever to most of the rambling as one eye's on Big Brother in the other corner of the room, giving a six socket extension cord a run for its money with half the electricity in South East Wales running through it and the other eye on the monitor, trying to wreak havoc and getting GA Editors as stressed as is physically possible. Sounds fun doesn't it.

So then, you're awoken early Monday morning by something or other and think to yourself, 'I've got an hour before I need to start getting ready, why don't I do that GA Article?' But you can't bring yourself to switch on the computer, so instead you reach for the remote, put on BBC Breakfast (Not forgetting to mute Natasha Kaplinsky) and put on the radio breakfast show, again, one eye on the extension cord fuse out light, the other on Kaplinsky and whatever images are popping up.

So the week passes through, often shockingly slowly, depends how much Father Time hates you I suppose, until suddenly, it's Saturday night, your watching Have I Got News For You (Hoping the guest host is either Sean Lock, Boris Johnson, Jimmy Carr or Alexander Armstrong) and the computer's buzzing in the other corner and you think 'Oh Cabbages! The GA!' And it is so that you scuttle to the computer, scuttle to Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo, Aol or whatever else and get your head down. Once more, your eyes become separate, one on Paul Merton shouting 'LULU!' the other on the e-mail, and your brain, half laughing at another dodgy Prescott comment, but very nearly actually trying to get this done before Nathalie comes on MSN and shouts at you.

And thus, Babs was pleased with what he saw, evening passed and morning came, that was Saturday. You awake early on Sunday, and scuttle to the computer (I'm loving 'scuttle' at the moment) to check out the GA this week, and, to your surprise, its still not there. In fact, you knew it wouldn't be there, you know it's delayed a lot at these turbulent times, and you curse yourself for worrying about meeting the deadline last night, but you know Sod's Law would punish you otherwise (and so would Nathalie!) You bash your head upon thy keyboarde withe greate disgute, but then it strikes you. It was worth it, somewhere deep inside there's a feeling that you've done something good, and it makes you feel good, maybe that's what the appendix is for, gut feeling and gut instinct (lots of people think it was for digesting cellulose, but was made redundant through evolution) And so you sit, browsing assorted forums (Visit Beagium! : <http://excoboard.com/exco/index.php?boardid=19034>) and someone comes online, saying they liked your article, and your apendix flares again, a broad grin spreads across your face, and you can grudgingly attend next weeks meeting without your head exploding.

I hope I've kept your imagination captivated, and actually fulfilled my mission objectives.

Codename: Agent Battery Hen, signing out.

Spork Wars

Episode One

The Random Menace

By ID06

Remember the old Message Boards? How busy General Chat was? (over 12,000 threads by the end.) As we waited for the new boards to begin and the old boards to end, several people started their Last Thread on the old boards, saying goodbye to our homeplace each in their own way. On Monday, the day of our move, the ever-reliable Rev started "The Last Outpost", which eventually was the last General Chat thread to be posted on.

It was to be the scene of the opening battles in the Spork Wars.

By Message 30 Rev had compared it to The Alamo ("al amo" is Spanish for "to the master" but I don't know if Rev is aware of that), by which time it was Tuesday, Wommie and Fiery Bad Girl had started posting there, and the old Boards were due to close that morning.

Meanwhile, on the new Message Boards, Saz had started the new Spork And Rusk Security thread within the first hour of Citizens registering there. I became part of the SARST team, with my trusty fish Bob, the highly trained helicopter pilot.

Back at the Alamo, an unfortunate Ozzy-inspired incident let to me being tarnished as a Mexican, closely joined by Saz (after a minor Vimto incident) and then events rapidly escalated.

First to fall (shockingly) was Rev himself, fiddling to the end. It was 4pm, and I went for reinforcements, since Saz had vanished for a moment and I was outnumbered by Wommie, FBG, & Cit Love. While I was away FBG cheated by bringing in 100 bears and saying we had 5000 mexicans on our side. Then Jango & Gwaar joined the Mexican side while Cricket Lovin Gal joined the "brave" defenders.

(Still with me? This is important stuff, y'know)

Gwaar succumbed to a sneaky tricky (juice tainted with TNT) and after he exploded his legs randomly marched around the battle zone kicking anyone within distance, but luckily the pink fluffy slippers cushioned the blow. Wommie proved himself to be very handy with a swung pillow (in slow motion) while CLG produced another secret weapon in the shape of an Ostrich feather. My rusk throwing was to no avail, and then I suffered a popgun wound to the shoulder. Luckily at this pivotal moment reinforcements from SARST arrived, AP being the finest Spork Duellist in the Kingdom was disarming all and sundry, while Saz was grateful to Wommie for finding her pillow (it had her name on it) I found a copy of the script and began rewriting the scene to our advantage, while the others were producing updated Spork weaponry (the Spok, the Spo, the Sok, and so on) with which to do battle. Lady Heather joined the ranks of the rank defenders, while Saz unleashed a devastating new weapon - marshmallows! But was it too little too late? For the pesky Firey Bad Girl had returned to the fray, bringing more bears and sherman tank that fired milkshake, rendering my good self utterly goood. A honeypot to the head was the final straw for me, and I fled the battle. (Exit, pursued by a bear)

Thus ended the first battle of Spork wars. The next day there was a second battle, which you can read about on The Last Outpost thread here

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/dannywallace/F2262799?thread=3150496&skip=0&show=200>

SARST was later briefly (very briefly indeed, cos saz said no) part of IASA, and after the old Message Boards closed, the future battles of Spork wars will take place on this thread:

<http://88.208.205.232/showflat.php?Cat=0&Number=5593&an=0&page=0#Post5593>

The diary of Kitizen Oscar

And his not so favourite companion citizen Honey

By Lady H

Friday 2nd June 2006

Well Dad has been keeping me locked in now for a couple of days. I wonder what it is I have done to deserve this sort of treatment! And that box of doom is still out, why hasn't it gone away I don't like this one little bit.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAEEEEEE I've been locked away in the box again... I refuse to go back to the vets; she stuck a metal stick thing in me the last time I went. No Dad no not the moving metal thing 😞

Well that's it I've been stuck in this box for ages now, from what I can see the world is going by quickly. I can't look too much it makes me feel sick. On a bonus note though Dad is feeding me those crunchy crisp thingies hmmmmmmmmmmmmmm.

Well we stopped and that female thing Dad calls Cheryl opened up the box. It smelt funny like doggies but I couldn't see them. Still I had a lot to investigate so I did! The Tweenies room being one of my favourites!

Sunday 4th June

Dad has just gone out with that thing. I don't like it when they leave me; they keep bringing lots of new things into the house.

They just came back again, they smelt all funny like lots of cats 😞 , and my box has gone! Cheryl came and took it and then they left again!

Oh no they came back and guess what they brought with them!!! Another CAT, no where near as beautiful as me nor as talented or fantastic but still another cat . 😞 And would you believe it she's a girl one too 😞😞😞 . They haven't named her yet; I guess she can stay for now, although I hissed at her to let her know who is boss!!!!

Tuesday 6th June

They've called her Honey; I mean that's a stupid name. She's not very well though, she keeps sneezing on everything and my food I've 😞 taken refuge on top of the kitchen cupboard although I keep getting shouted at for being up there! I tried to escape today but no good. I've been locked in now for far too long, it's getting to me. Mind you I keep getting lots and lots of treats so things aren't so bad!

Friday 9th June

That Honey creature is not very well at all, they've been fussing round her lots and lots! I don't get that kind of attention, oh and they put down my dish feeding thingy. IT means they are going away! I hate it when they go away! I'm left all on my lonesome. (well with the thing)

Saturday 10th June

Ok so they came back and they brought some more creatures with them! Some of them I had seen before but one with loooong loong hair I hadn't! Honey is much better now, and she's been milking being ill with everyone... pretending to sneeze and be ill 😞 . I wanted to join the bbq in the garden but 😞 no such luck

Sunday 11th June

I cannot believe Dad went home and left me here... with these two 😞 At least mum as I now have to call her is feeding me and trying to snuggle, I'm not interested though. I want to GO OUT!

Thursday 15th June

Dad came home today, I'm so glad to see him. It's been hell here with these two creatures *sigh* and she has been playing up... that Honey she seems to be much better now 😞 running around and playing with MY toys. I mean I never asked for her to come here, why should she play with my toys! AND she has been eating my dinner can't a cat of my stature get any rest.

Friday 16th June

I'm free, Dad let me out today 😞 finally some space I can call my own. Without having to listen to her meowing all the time. Went for a quick wander round and surveyed my new kingdom. There is so much to explore and I sense the presence of other cats in the neighbourhood!

Monday 19th June

Dad went home again today 😞 I'm alone with THEM again 😞 , on a bonus note I've found out that Honey can be quite good fun. She likes to run around and destroy things, which is also my favourite game. She still tries to steal my food. It doesn't matter how many times I bop her on the head, she doesn't learn. She went out in the box again and when she came back she smelt of the horrid place. I think she got a metal thing in her.

Friday 24th June

I've not had time to write much in here the past couple of days. I've been out defending my territory from other cats who have taken to playing in MY garden!!! I have also been defending my food from the monster that is Honey! All in all life is good up here in Brummyham! Dad promises me he won't be away for long. But I like this new house, the floors are shiny and my ball goes really far! I get fed on demand (although not biscuits)! I have many nice comfy places to sleep and a huge back garden to play in.

Honey's Diary

They picked me up from the home of many cats, I had to leave my kittens behind I 😞 sometimes still cry for them at night. I was also really ill 😞 but mummy took me to a man and he gave me things to make me better.

But I get to run, run, run and run around and carry toys around the house, hide in cupboards and under the bed, fight with Big Cat and snuggle with mummy whenever I want.

I get fed loads and loads and loads and big cat doesn't like eating lots so I get to finish all his food off. 😞

Things are good here in my new home, I don't ever want to leave 😞

A Travel Diary

By Curator Of Lovely Records

Before I launch headlong into this edition of my Travel diary, I feel it's only fair on this occasion to share some of my background with you so that you can give this weeks' destination - Ibiza - a fair trial, with no preconceptions. Ibiza has more to offer than the infamous San Antonio with its tanked-up northerners on stag weekends. Much more (there's the odd Hen Do too...).

Back in the day, when I only had six (Yes I counted them, I bet you did/will too) grey hairs and before I made the now obligatory grunt as I clamber out of bed/ a chair/ the car, I was a Rep in Ibiza.

There is a popular misconception that "Holiday Rep" is short for "Holiday Reprobate" and in some cases, from my own experiences, this is very true.

However, I feel I have earned the right as someone who has "been there, done that" as well as seen every "Essex Boyz On Tour" 'Comedy T-shirt' to shine the torch of explanation into the murky darkness of wonderment.

I can honestly say that before I started life as a holiday representative, I thought I knew what hard work was. Silly me. Let me furnish your good selves with an example.

On Friday at 9am, I would start work, and on Sunday at 8pm I would finish. Now obviously I didn't work every waking hour of Friday, Saturday and Sunday. That'd be both foolish and illegal.

Out of the first 24 hours (The day I used to call 'Friday' before days and nights became a mush of irrelevance) I was working for 21hours. Out of the next 24 hours that holidaymakers call "Saturday", I was working for 18 hours. And to top off my weekend, I'd finish with an 'easy' 12 hour stint.

Adopting my best Lloyd Grossman accent, "Let's look at the Evidence..." From a total of 60 Earth hours, by which we all abide, I was working for 51 hours. And that was just from three days. Reps only get one day a week off, and although the other three days of my week were mere ten hour days, that still adds up to an average of around an 80 hour week. Assuming there were no flight delays. And as we all know, there are ALWAYS delays.

Some workaholics reading this might scoff at me complaining about a mere 80-hour week, but then the coup-de-grasse is the wage. Appropriately named 'basic wage' of a hefty £70 per week, or 88p an hour, are not exactly footballers wages.

If you multiply the average working week over a seven month long Summer Season, I was probably working for a total of about six and a half months. I slept every other Monday.

It is because of all this that I know Ibiza so well.

And it is in spite of this that I still have great fondness for the Island that still has areas that even I haven't seen yet, notwithstanding the fact that since leaving the island in November 2003, I've been back on five separate occasions. If all the White Isle had to offer was San Antonio and 24 Hour parties, I probably would have left after my first week. Don't get me wrong, I'm a big fan of partying - I can party with the best of them.

(There were, on more occasions than I dare remember, times when I would go out on a Tuesday and wake up on a Thursday. Sometimes I'd still have both my own shoes in the morning. Sometimes I'd have a combination of other people's footwear. On one instance I woke up on a boat that was making its way to Formentera).

It's just that when I'm abroad, I like to try and integrate as much as possible with the locals. This doesn't involve wearing union jack shorts cleverly teamed with a checked Ben Sherman shirt and ankle-boots. Whilst I'm on this subject, can I ask who wears shorts with shoes? And WHY?! It always seems to be people who shouldn't have been allowed to leave school until they'd learnt how to tie their laces properly. Instead they improvise by tucking the loose bits down the side of the shoes, allowing the swagger between British Pub and British All Day Breakfast Café to be punctuated by an annoying scrape of heel on pavement. What is the point in going to the trouble of booking a foreign holiday if you're not going to do anything foreign whilst you are there?

In a bid to avoid as many British people as possible, I booked our flights through the Spanish national Airline, Iberia Airways. There are several advantages to doing this. Firstly, it was cheaper than any of the so-called "budget" airlines like Easyjet, ThomsonFly or BMI. Second, the flights were at a civilised hour, rather than 4am check-in for a 6am flight, or a long wait on your final day for a flight that departs at 2am, we flew mid-afternoon, and returned on mid-morning. Admittedly, we did have to go via Barcelona, but this only added 40 minutes to our total travelling time, and when I'm saving money AND not losing sleep, I can cope quite comfortably with the extra reading time.

In Ibiza, on a Sunday afternoon, there is only one place to go. That place is Space. (The club, not the outer atmosphere) Space is a club that is open during the daytime, because partying at night is just, like, So passé darling.

Whilst we used contacts from previous visits to secure ourselves a place on the guest-list, others have to pay the princely sum of €30 to enter, and then the drinks will set you back a small fortune – I paid €12 for a Vodka and redbull, and even when I went all tight-fisted and switched to water, I was still robbed blind by €8 for a 300ml plastic bottle, the same bottle that costs 35cents in the shops opposite the club. It's little wonder Space bosses can afford to pay their resident DJ's anything up to €10,000 for a 4 hour set!

Opening at 8am and staying open until 6am Monday morning, Space has often been voted "worlds Best nightclub" although in my opinion, there are better venues and better DJ's elsewhere in Ibiza. The reason Space is revered by so many is because of the Terrace. The Space Terrace is the stuff of legend, giving an outdoors feel to what is ordinarily an indoor experience. Add to the mix the aircraft that fly low overhead on their final descent to the nearby Eivissa Airport, and you've got a recipe for a guaranteed great night.

However, I've said already that I'm not going to go on and on about the clubbing, because all I'd be doing then is adding fuel to the argument that Ibiza is full of Binge-drinking, drug taking drop-outs.

After leaving Space and heading over the road to Bora Bora Beach – a free entry pre-Space/post Space meeting place, my recollection of the afternoon becomes somewhat patchy because the weather was nice and the drinks were cheap. Sorry. Don't worry though as Mrs Curator kept an eye on my shoes for me.

Monday morning arrived in the blink of a bloodshot eye, and after clearing up the mess left by the visiting beer monkeys (those pesky creatures who steal all your money, take a crap in your mouth and ruffle your hair whilst you're sleeping) we headed to the beach for some well-deserved rest and recuperation. More recuperating needed by some of our party than others. Not mentioning my name anywhere. At all.

Beaches in Ibiza are plentiful. There are officially 55 public beaches to choose from, from the 3km long beach in Playa D'en Bossa on the south coast, through to the plethora of tiny Cala's that stretch round from the rocky north west coast to the salt flats in the south.

Which beach you choose also dictates how rich, cool, or brave, you are. There's Cala Jondal, the beach beside Jade Jagger's Ibiciencan mansion for the calibre of sunbather who doesn't mind paying upwards of €30 for the hire of their double-bed sized sun bed. Did I mention that was for a half day? No? Socialites don't do all-day sunbathing by all accounts. Then there are Cala Comte and Cala Bassa beaches, as featured in the Multi award-ignored film "Kevin and Perry go large and drag a three minute sketch out for two hours". Even though these two beaches are tarnished forever by their immortalisation, they happen to be my favourites (not least because a sun bed is €5 for the entire day).

It was on one visit to Cala Comte in 2003 that a friend and I learnt a very important lesson in life. A lesson I have never, and will never forget. No matter how hard you try, it is absolutely and positively physically impossible to run and laugh at the same time. A light jog and giggle, yes. But jogging is not running and giggling is not laughing. To Sprint and Guffaw? Not a chance.

I learnt this invaluable lesson as a fellow rep and I had cleverly, but not entirely deliberately, managed to avoid catching the last bus back to San Antonio after spending a day at the beach. As we were gearing up for a five-mile cross-country yomp to get home, Simon (my fellow Laugh/Run struggler) spotted one of our Hotel's staff, Jenny, leaving the beach car park in a cloud of dust. We ran, and in an attempt to catch her attention, we ran and we shouted. No problem there. Running and shouting is easy. The science started when I heard exactly what it was that Simon was shouting, in his attempts to charm us a lift home. It wasn't

"Jenny, you're lovely, I love you, please take us home!"
Nor was it the normal shout-for-attention

"Jeeeeeeeeeeeeennnnnnnnnyyyyyyyy!"

No. Just as we were reaching full-speed, Si screamed with every ounce of strength in him:
"JENNY, YOU FAT LESBIAN! STOP THE CAR!"

Because Jenny was indeed both a lady of the lady-loving persuasion and had enjoyed a hot meal or three in her time, I could quite see the logic in Simon's attempts to personalise his shouting to leave Jenny in no doubt that it was she who we were shouting for. But before we could catch her, I could feel my legs giving way beneath me as an inner-monologue battle raged inside my head along the lines of:

"Hello Legs, Diaphragm here. That's a funny thing to shout"

"It wasn't funny, keep running, idiot"

"No, no, we can't run, because I want to laugh"

"You can't laugh, we're running"

"Laughing is far more important than running"

"Aah..... fuck,"

"Note To Brain: Disengage Legs, Diaphragm needs to convulse uncontrollably."

The dust cloud got smaller and I'm sure that Jenny actually accelerated (she denied we were ever there), and we were faced to lament our discovery over the long walk home. Incidentally, another lesson I learnt whilst living in Ibiza is that there's nothing Casual about "casual sex". It is equally as hard work as regular sex. But that is a story for another time.

The sun sets spectacularly on our Tuesday with the sky melting from deep blue into deep ochre, oranges, and reds as we are sitting at Café Mambo drinking 'Café Con Leche en Basso' on the famous "sunset Strip" in San Antonio listening to the tenth edition of a chillout CD that has all the same songs on as the first, fourth, sixth and eighth editions, only in a different order, after a day spent catching up with old friends and acquaintances. The colour of the sky contrasts nicely with the red hue emanating from my chest after too long at the beach on Monday.

On a Wednesday on Ibiza, there is a market that trades under the title "Hippy Market" and is sold by reps all over the island for day-trip excursions on the promise that there are "Original Hippies" selling "Trinkets, Jewellery and Bongo drums" amongst other items, under the pretence that these Hippies are some of the original Hippies who settled on Ibiza in the 1960's. It's complete Tosh. If you go to the Hippy Market on a Wednesday (the only day it runs) then you'll be there alongside half the island's tourists, as they look round what are a few nice arts and crafts stalls, interspersed with Hundreds (yes, Hundreds) of identical stalls staffed by Lucky-Lucky men and women who apparently believe that because their fake glasses and watches are for sale on a stall, as opposed to for sale from inside their jackets on the beaches, that the tourists will trust them more.

The sad thing is, they're right, and you see row upon row of Timmy Wholefinger bags, Channel 5 perfume, and Christine Door sunglasses, being bought by someone from Durham who then goes on to say at the top of their voice

"You can't tell it's fake, can you?"

No dear. Of course you can't. Is there really a 'D' in Louis Vuitton?

If you want to go to the proper, un-commercialised Hippy Market in Ibiza, then jump in your Hire Car (essential for independence, and probably cheaper than paying for Taxi's everywhere) and head for the East Coast, above the town of Es Cana (where the Tourists S(h)it(pp)ty market is), and look for a tiny village called "Las Dalias".

Although not entirely untouched by commercialism – you can still buy the Bongo drums here - this market has a much more rustic, local feel to it. And you're less likely to get your pocket picked too.

Thursday, our last day, and I've saved the best until last. We head into Ibiza Town, known locally as Eivissa. Ibiza in olden days was a very important island, being one of the last known locations for the Phoenicians and more recently, the Carthaginians. A quick history lesson, to save some of you from Googling 'Carthage': The Carthaginians were the race of people from whom Hannibal built his army that fought the Romans and who Hannibal then set off across the Alps with his Elephants.

Ibiza Town was founded by these ambitious Carthage folk in the year 654BC, and although most of the original features of the town are constantly updated and modernised, the D'alt Villa (old town) part of the city is a world heritage site, and is simply incredible.

From the top of the hill that dominates the skyline, not only is there a fabulous looking Cathedral (which I have yet to get inside, mainly because it's only open until midday, and I don't do mornings) but there are a maze of narrow and winding cobbled back-streets with a mix of independent and well-known shops that cater for absolutely everything a shopaholic could ask for and more. The More being the ironically named "Calle de Virgen" or "Virgin Street". Ironic because if you were to walk up this street after midnight, you get to have a glimpse into the life of glittery and glamorous gay folk who bring their own unique sense of fun and style to their little quarter of town. Just be careful not to accidentally stumble into any "dark rooms", as these are not places for people who are faint of heart, or

unsure of sexuality!

Friday Morning, and we hand back our hire car, complete with full tank of fuel that cost us all of €15 to refill, and the only thing left for me to do is sit on the aeroplane, diary in hand, trying to work out when I can come back to carry on discovering new reasons to love this place.

Comments and questions can be sent to Curator_of_lovely_records@yahoo.co.uk

SPORT

The World Cup

By Lady Marie

Ahhh one of my fave subjects in the world, that is other than make up and male movie stars. Oh yes, back to the world cup then. Hmmmm what can I say other than I am definitely no Statto (Lars), or Giddsey, or Ray but I'll try my best.

Firstly I have to say well done England into the last 16 and looking good for the quarter finals *crosses fingers*, and for anyone who does like football and wants to chat to others about the world cup we have an official world cup thread here

<http://88.208.205.232/showflat.php?Cat=0&Number=54&page=0&fpart=1&vc=1>

Convo strays a bit sometimes but we do have a laugh. Ok so what can I say other than Germany have started their campaign really well winning three out of three games as have Brazil even though they have played no where near as well as we have grown used to over the years, but there was glimmers of that in their last game in which Ronaldo even managed to score twice without having to run for the ball at all, he must be so grateful to his team mates for covering for him during the three games we have seen. Err, Argentina have looked impressive so far but were very lucky to win with a wonder goal early in the second half of extra time, personally I was cheering for Mexico who played sooo well and were a bit unlucky with decisions going against them.

Umm Holland are out, England aren't, Germany went through Ivory Coast didn't, so no real shocks in this tournament yet. Don't think there will be now though to be honest, but there have been some really good games. Granted none of them have been England games yet but just you wait and see, we will find our form. I don't know how without Owen in the team but at least we have a nearly back to his old self Rooney.

Oh and before I go I have to mention something that set the football world into overdrive. Have you guessed what I am on about yet? No? Okay I will tell you. Well Graham Poll our very own and apparently one of the best English referee's decided he was just going to forget all the rules and give one player three yellow cards before he reached for the red, wasn't that nice of him to give the player an extra chance before he sent him off? Well no actually it was a bit silly and will probably ensure he never ref's another world cup again but oh well we always knew he was a bit rubbish.

Anyways that's all from me on the world cup so I will end it with what I think are some of the funniest things said by commentators and players so far courtesy of the BBC:

"We can barely sleep because of the croaking. We are going to hunt them."

Ukraine defender Vladislav Vashchuk has a novel excuse for the 4-0 hammering by Spain - mating frogs near the team hotel keeping the squad awake.

"It was really difficult for us playing in the midday sun with that three o'clock kick-off."

David Beckham interviewed on BBC1.

"It was a worry to pick up a booking, but I'm not going to change my game, although I may have to adapt it a bit."

Peter Crouch, "A miracle to be here? No, we just came by plane."
Trinidad and Tobago Coach Leo Beenhakker

And lastly the best one ever thanks for posting this one PirateJames90
"And it's a footballer... WITH FEET!!!"

Talk A Good Game Football Club

By Giddsey

Squad list 2006

Ok lads here's the team so far.

I'm still waiting for a couple of lads to join us on the thread. So:

Lars 'the bung' Dudley
Mrs Mop
Babs
Piratejames90
Marc Evans
Pompey Gaz - Capt
Ray of the tagg
NickNack
psychoRev
Biffa
Marie the physio
Bovinejumpsuit the tea lady.
Pirate cat the mascot

Still looking for players.

There ya go Pompey!

coach giddsey

BACK PAGE NEWS

NEW SKIPPER AT TAGG FC

Pompey Gaz formerly 'crack addicted badger' was handed the captains armband today.

Coach giddsey decided Pompey Gaz's efforts over the last few weeks deserved the skippers role.

Babs in an emotional ceremony was said to be gutted, but totally understood the coaches reasons.

Well played Pompey you are now the skipper
coach giddsey

TAGG BOYS MAKE DIFFERENCE

England Tagg 1-0 Paraguay

Sven was glad that the Tagg boys had come to Germany after a lackluster performance from the first 11.

A lucky O.G. saw England take the lead early. They then proceeded to play like a bunch of o.a.p's.

Anyway the Tagg boys made there debut with piratejames90 coming on for Owen and showing some silky moves.

Pompey Gaz came on late for J Cole and showed why he is the Owen Hargreaves of Tagg FC

The game was rubbish, nuff said
coach giddsey

RAY OF THE TAGG IMPRESSES ON DEBUT

England Tagg2-0 Trinidad and Tobago

Late goals from Crouch and Gerrard lifted England to a win, but the talking point of the game was debutant Ray of the Tagg.

With England struggling to make any headway, Ericsson played his wildcard. Having already sent Rooney into the fray, he added Ray to the mix.
It was Rays introduction that sent England into overdrive.

With plenty of skill, Ray showed that if Becks is injured we've got the perfect replacement. Busy and skillful up the right wing the day belonged to Ray. A late appearance from Piratejames90 added to the Tagg Faithful on the world stage.

Ray was reported to say after the match:

"This was one of the greatest days of my life, and thanks to all at Tagg for their faith in my abilities. Mines a Stella."

Well played Raymundo, we are proud.

see ya in the bar.
coach giddsey

OWEN INJURED NICKNACK WAITS ON CALL UP

England Tagg 2-2 Sweden

England face Ecuador in the next round as they finished top of the group.

In a stop start performance England limped into the next round. The first half saw Owen injured in the first minute, disaster for England but a glimmer of hope for young Tagg Striker nicknack.

Joey Cole spanked one in from 35yds to compete for goal of the tournament and England went in at half time 1-0 up. A solid display from the reliable Pompey Gaz kept the Tagg Faithful happy.

The second half England fell apart. Woeful passing and pathetic defending saw Sweden equalize and except for a skillful Joe Cole, a tough tackling Pompey Gaz and an energised Ashley Cole, Sweden would have won the match.

Gerrard came on late for a tired Rooney and put England into an undeserved lead but justice followed after Sweden made it 2-2 in the last minute. An utter shambles in defense, the worst player on the pitch, Jamie Carragher, let the ball float over his head from a throw and a goal straight outta Sunday league football was scored.

2-2.

Well played Pompey and nicknack get ya boots ready.
Why is it that we are through but I'm still depressed?

See ya in the bar lads.

coach giddsey

"We are as good as You say we are"

Talk a good game FC can be found here:

http://88.208.205.232/favlinker.php?Cat=0&Entry=353&F_Board=FoodAndDrink&Thread=80&partnumber=1&postmarker=

The F1 Thread lives on!

By Babs

So the new forums, eh, you tried, but you haven't lost us!

With the Canadian Grand Prix taking place today and Britain a rousing success, I thought I'd give us a plug.

We have two games, the LGP (Lovely Grand Prix, don't get it confused with the other one) which involves each person who joined back in January, February to have their name and a drivers name pulled out of a hat on the Thursday before the race, their names are matched, for instance, this week my selected driver was Montiero (Goddamit!) so whatever results Monteiro gets, I will get in the LGP Table.

The second game is the predictions game.

You predict who will get pole position and finish in places 1-5. Your predictions must be in before the start of qualifying for the race weekend otherwise you will receive default selections, which gives Pole and 1st place to the current driver at the top of the Championship Table, 2nd place to the 2nd and so on.

Big thanks go to Ray for setting up our new thread which can be found in the sports section (Yes Formula 1 is a sport) and to Laura for setting up the F1 Thread in CR.

All slots are filled now for the LGP. You are all perfectly welcome to come and join in next season though!

~ Next issue due out on Sunday 9th July 2006 ~