



Issue 150

March 21-28, 2025

# You're having a laugh!

Comic Relief is 40 today



**Today promises to be the funniest day of the year as the Comic Relief charity stages its annual Red Nose Day fundraising extravaganza.**

It is the 40th anniversary of the first Red Nose Day and the charity, originally started by comedians Richard Curtis and Lenny Henry, has raised more than £1.6 billion down the years for good causes at home and abroad.

Schools, companies and families across the country will be coming up with fundraising ideas and the

comicroelief.com website is full of suggestions for how you can help.

It says: "The money you raise means that, together, we can keep supporting projects in the UK and across the world that help children to be happier, families stronger, women safer, communities prouder and millions of lives fairer."

Celebrities will be doing their bit as well with Radio 1 presenter Jamie Laing running five ultra-marathons in five days to cover the 150 miles from

London to Salford where the annual telethon will take place tonight.

Meanwhile, breakfast television presenters Gethin Jones and Helen Skelton were taking part in a 24-hour roller disco.

Comic Relief has also brought back their favourite red noses from past events with the best from each of the charity's four decades back on sale.

**Comic Relief: BBC1 7pm-10pm and BBC2 10pm-10-40pm.**

♦ The two astronauts stuck on the International Space Station for nine months have returned to Earth.

Suni Williams and Butch Wilmore were supposed to spend only eight days aboard the orbiting laboratory but technical problems with the spacecraft that took them into space last June meant it wasn't safe to use it for the return journey.

Instead they became part of the crew already aboard.

They finally left this week when

a different spaceship docked with the station ahead of their return journey alongside another American astronaut and a Russian cosmonaut.

The craft reached speeds of 17,000mph before parachutes opened to make a soft splashdown in the sea off the coast of Florida.

Williams and Wilmore spent 286 days in space and travelled more than 120 million miles as the space station orbited the Earth 4,576 times during their stay.



Picture: NASA



Gentle lemur



White-faced saki monkey

# Beautiful baby boom!

Two of England's biggest and best-known zoos are celebrating a baby boom with the birth of several endangered species.

Keepers at London Zoo and Chester Zoo have been kept busy by the new arrivals, the result of vital work to increase the populations of creatures struggling to survive in the wild.

At London Zoo, the rainforest habitat has been the centre of activity following the births of a white-faced saki monkey, endangered golden lion tamarins and a critically endangered gentle lemur.

The two golden lion tamarins, male Pomelo and female Clementine, were born last year but have now been named after vets were able to confirm their gender this month. The twins join their older brother Kumquat.

Elsewhere in the tree canopy, a white-faced saki monkey has been named Fia, while a two-month-old gentle lemur has taken its first tentative jumps beyond the safety of mum Hazo and dad Rocky.

Daniel Simmonds, London Zoo's operations manager, said: "The little lemur was understandably a bit hesitant with its movement at first, but it has quickly found its feet and is



Golden lion tamarins

now jumping between branches in the paddock and tucking into leafy greens alongside mum."

At Chester Zoo, a different sort of endangered lemur has been born – the Coquerel's sifaka, which is one of the world's rarest primates.

They are often called 'dancing lemurs' because of their distinctive way of standing upright and bounding sideways along the forest floor.

The tiny baby, only around the size of a tennis ball, is one of only nine Coquerel's sifaka being raised in Europe, with four of them at Chester.

They are native to one corner of



Coquerel's sifaka or 'dancing lemur'

Madagascar where they are described as critically endangered, with the population falling by 80 per cent over the past 30 years amid the destruction of large parts of their forest habitat.

Nick Davis, Chester Zoo's mammals manager, said: "The new arrival has joined a small family made up mum, dad and their previous baby, Sofia. They're currently the only Coquerel's sifaka being cared for in the UK and the knowledge, skills and expertise our primate conservationists are developing will help to play an important role in protecting these precious primates."



◆ The first gorilla born at Blackpool Zoo has moved with her sister to a new home in India.

Meisie (pictured) was born in 2010 and was joined two years later by sister Moanda.

Now they have been chosen to be part of a new group of gorillas at a special unit at a zoo in the Indian city of Mysuru. It will be headed by a male silverback called Quembo from Frankfurt Zoo.

Western lowland gorillas are critically endangered in the wild and the European Endangered Species Programme chose Meisie and Moanda to be part of the new breeding scheme.

Luke Minns has cared for the sisters at Blackpool since they were born. He has travelled with them and is spending time in India to work with Mysuru keepers to settle them into their new home.







## WORD OF THE WEEK

## IRONY

Often used as a humorous device, irony is described as someone saying or doing something which is the opposite of what they might be expected to say or do. For example, a parent might say “well, that’s a nice tidy bedroom” when there are really toys all over the place.

The adjective from irony is ‘ironic’ and that was used in many places to describe recent news that was far from funny.

A major conference on climate change is being held in the Brazilian city of Belem later this year and the authorities have cut a huge eight-mile swathe through the Amazon rainforest to build a new road there – despite the Amazon being the world’s biggest absorber of harmful carbon gases.

## COUNTRY IN FOCUS INDIA

◆ Millions of people in India have been celebrating one of the world’s most colourful festivals.

Holi, a Hindu celebration, is known as the festival of colours. Lasting a night and a day, it marks the end of winter and start of spring and celebrates the triumph of good over evil.

Millions return to their home

towns to party with families as people daub their faces with paint and dance amid clouds of brightly coloured powder thrown into their air.

Holi is marked on the night of a full moon during the month of Phalguna in the Hindu calendar, normally falling in mid-March in the western system.

## INDIA FACTFILE

◆ India, a huge country in South Asia, has the biggest population of any country in the world at more than 1.4 billion people, overtaking China in 2023.

◆ India gained independence from British rule in 1947. At the same time, religious differences saw two areas break away and these are now Pakistan and Bangladesh.

◆ No fewer than 447 languages are spoken in India, with Hindi and English the country’s two official languages.

◆ Around 1.8 million of the United Kingdom’s 67 million people are of Indian heritage.



## QUIZ TIME TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

## SCIENCE

- 1 What is the word which describes an animal that eats both meat and plants?
- 2 Name the famous British scientist who put forward the theory of evolution?
- 3 What is the force which keeps us on the ground and stops us floating about in the air?

## GEOGRAPHY

- 1 Which is the only country that has a border with Portugal?
- 2 Of which South American country is Montevideo the capital?
- 3 The official name of Thailand’s capital is Krung Thep Maha Nakhon – but by what name is it commonly known?

## FOOTBALL

- 1 Name the current manager of the Welsh national football team.
- 2 For which other country has England midfielder Declan Rice played international football?
- 3 Which Spanish club plays its home games at the Estadio Metropolitano?

## ANSWERS

- SCIENCE
1. Omnivore
  2. Charles Darwin
  3. Gravity
- GEOGRAPHY
1. Spain
  2. Uruguay
  3. Bangkok
- FOOTBALL
1. Craig Bellamy
  2. Ireland
  3. Atletico Madrid





## NUMBER OF THE WEEK



A woman in New York State had an unusual wish granted to mark her 104th birthday – going to prison!

Named only as Loretta, the woman asked for the 'treat' for her birthday as she had never been inside a prison during her long life.

The local sheriff's office arranged for her to be taken to a nearby prison where she had her fingerprints and a 'mugshot' photograph taken, met guard dogs and was briefly locked in a cell. She was soon let out to enjoy her birthday cake.

## HISTORY WHAT HAPPENED IN THIS WEEK

### MARCH 28, 1990

## Jesse's final medal

Jesse Owens' athletics career was marked by world records and gold medals – and also a fight against discrimination.

But it was not until March 28, 1990 – 10 years, almost to the day, after he had died – that his achievements were finally recognised by the United States government.

That was the day Owens was posthumously awarded the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest honour that can be given to an American citizen.

It was an award that marked an amazing career in track and field athletics.

Competing at an athletics meeting in Michigan in 1935, Owens set new world records in the long jump, 220 yards sprint and 220 yards hurdles and equalled the world record in the 100 yards – all in the space of 45 minutes!

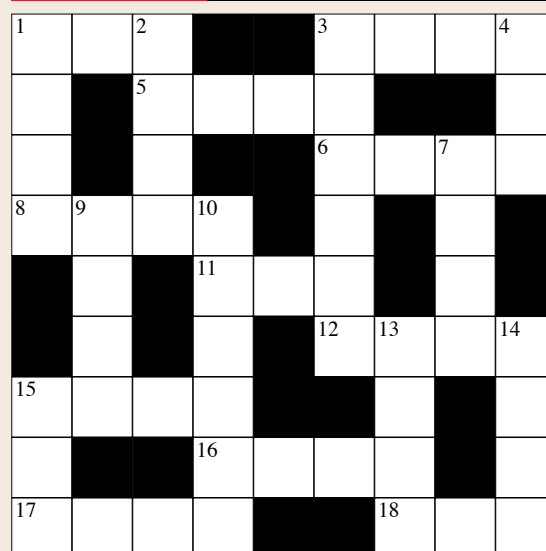


A year later he was in the American team for the Olympics in Berlin and at the centre of controversy as a black athlete competing when there was so much discrimination in Adolf Hitler's Nazi Germany as well as at home.

Nevertheless, Owens proved what a great athlete he was by winning four gold medals. He won the 100 metres, long jump and 200 metres on three successive days and then, four days later, was part of the winning American team in the 4x100 metres relay.

**Fun fact:** Although he was known around the world as Jesse, that was not his real name. He was christened James Cleveland, which became shortened to JC, which in turn changed into Jesse.

## CROSSWORD TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE



### ACROSS

- 1 & 3 Massive avian member of The Muppets (3,4)
- 5 Egg-shaped (4)
- 6 Imperial measurement = 3ft (4)
- 8 Precious yellow metal (4)
- 11 Alien spacecraft? (1,1,1)
- 12 Tidy (4)
- 15 Exploding device (4)
- 16 Against something (4)
- 17 Large water-bird, usually white (4)
- 18 Plaything (3)

### DOWN

- 1 Show off (4)
- 2 Football target (4)
- 3 Enid \_\_\_\_\_, children's author (6)
- 4 Father (informal) (3)
- 7 Capital of Latvia (4)
- 9 Expression of dismay (2,2)
- 10 Large seaside city on South Africa's east coast (6)
- 13 Way out (4)
- 14 Very small (4)
- 15 Public transport vehicle (3)

## ABOUT US

- ◆ The News Shed is a digital news magazine, produced weekly in term-time to inform, entertain and educate pupils and to provide resources for their teachers.
- ◆ It is among a whole host of educational resources at: [www.literacyshedplus.com](http://www.literacyshedplus.com)
- ◆ For contact details please see the website.



Your teacher can find the solutions at [www.literacyshedplus.com](http://www.literacyshedplus.com)



# ROSES BLOOM

England will be aiming to equal one of their own records as the Women's Six Nations rugby union tournament kicks off this weekend.

If they come out on top it will be their seventh successive championship, equalling their run of titles from 2006 to 2012.

England, nicknamed the Red Roses and playing under new captain Zoe Aldcroft, will be hot favourites to start with a win in York on Sunday as they begin against Italy, who have only finished in the top half of the table twice in the last 10 seasons.

While the Six Nations will be the focus over the next six weeks, coaches will have one eye on the Women's Rugby World Cup, hosted by England in August and September.

In the men's Six Nations, France clinched the title with a 35-16 win over Scotland in Paris.

Although France, England and Ireland all finished with the same record of four wins and one defeat, it was France who came out on top

## WOMEN'S SIX NATIONS

### Opening fixtures

- ◆ Ireland v France..... Saturday, 1pm
- ◆ Scotland v Wales..... Saturday, 4.45pm
- ◆ England v Italy..... Sunday, 3pm

## MEN'S SIX NATIONS

### Final positions

	P	W	L	PD	BP	Pts
France.....	5	4	1	125	5	21
England.....	5	4	1	74	4	20
Ireland.....	5	4	1	18	3	19
Scotland.....	5	2	3	-16	3	11
Italy.....	5	1	4	-82	1	5
Wales.....	5	0	5	-119	3	3

PD: points difference

BP: bonus points

thanks to the bonus points system.

They picked up four by scoring four or more tries in their four wins and, crucially, an extra one for losing by fewer than seven points in the 26-25 defeat against England.

Wales, who have now lost 17 Tests in a row, finished rock bottom for the second successive year.

## FOOTBALL IN BRIEF

### INTERNATIONALS

England will tonight begin their campaign to qualify for next year's World Cup.

They take on Albania at Wembley in the first game under new manager Thomas Tuchel. The German, a former Chelsea manager, succeeded Gareth Southgate on January 1. England are then at home to Latvia on Monday.

Newcastle defender Dan Burn and Arsenal full-back Myles Lewis-Skelly are both newcomers to the squad hoping to make their international debuts but Chelsea's Cole Palmer has been ruled out by a muscle injury.

Wales are at home to Kazakhstan on Saturday and away to North Macedonia on Tuesday but have been hit by an injury to captain Aaron Ramsey.

Scotland and Northern Ireland do not begin their qualifying programmes until September.

### EUROPE

England's two remaining teams in this season's Champions League face tough tasks in the quarter-finals next month.

Arsenal must take on 15-time European champions Real Madrid while Aston Villa are up against Paris Saint-Germain, the team that put Liverpool out in a penalty shootout in the first knockout round.

In the Europa League, there are three British teams still standing. The quarter-finals see Manchester United face Lyon, Tottenham take on Eintracht Frankfurt, and Rangers up against Athletic Bilbao.

In the third-tier European Conference League, favourites Chelsea will meet Legia Warsaw.

### CUP FINALS

Newcastle United have won their first major domestic title for 70 years after beating Liverpool 2-1 in the League Cup final.

It completed a miserable week for Premier League leaders Liverpool, who were knocked out of the Champions League five days earlier.

In the women's League Cup final, Chelsea beat Manchester City 2-1 with a Yui Hasegawa own-goal the decider.

