gala buzz

All the gossip from your Gala clubs

Issue 15
75p
FREE to members

Perfect partners

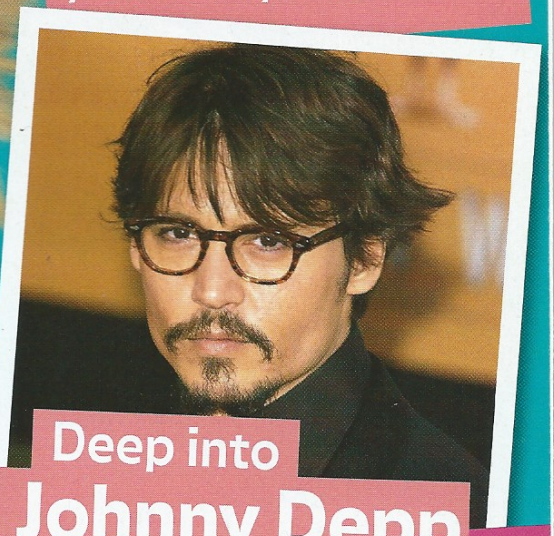
We sponsor Sharon Osbourne's brand-new chat show

Coming soon!

Gala TV – your new interactive channel

Relative fun

Find out how to build your family tree



Deep into Johnny Depp

Your chance to WIN a Memphis trip for two!

£££s of prizes up for grabs...

Gillian Taylforth

The Bill beckons, but she still pines for Kathy!



Family fortunes



Heart-warming stories



More chances to win

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Hello everybody!



What a great issue we've got for you, filled with some very exciting news. Firstly, we are very proud to be sponsoring the fantastic new ITV programme, *The Sharon Osbourne Show*, which started at the end of August (you may even have noticed our presence already) and, in other TV-related news, Gala Bingo will have its very own digital interactive television show on channel 841. Obviously, we are very excited about both these developments. Elsewhere, we have a good old gossip with actress Gillian Taylforth, who tells us why she still misses her mate, Kathy. And, for the budding genealogists among you, we find out how to go about building a family tree. Enjoy!

Sarah

Sarah Mercer – The Editor,
Gala Buzz

Gala Buzz is published by Square One Publishing for Gala Bingo

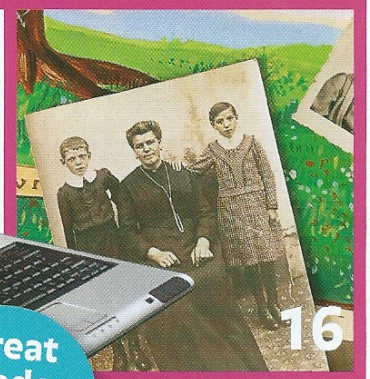
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Print St Ives

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COVER PHOTOS: WIREIMAGE, REX FEATURES. CONTENTS PAGE: PHOTOLIBRARY.COM, REX FEATURES

Gala proudly presents Mrs Osbourne

Gala Bingo sponsors Sharon Osbourne's new primetime ITV chat show...

If you've been watching ITV's brand-new chat show, *The Sharon Osbourne Show*, starring Sharon Osbourne (of course!), then you can't have missed the fact that both Gala Bingo and galabingo.co.uk have been sponsoring the programme.

The sponsorship deal, worth around £2 million, features Gala Bingo and galabingo.co.uk branding on 40 episodes of the show, which started on Tuesday, 29 August and runs until Friday, 20 October.

This includes trailers, interactive features, online tie-ins and mobile interactive sponsorship bumpers, plus exclusive competitions available through pressing the red button on your Sky remote.



Kate Howe, Gala Coral Group marketing director, said: "We're extremely excited to be bringing the Gala Bingo and galabingo.co.uk brands to television and we can't think of a better programme than *The Sharon Osbourne Show* for us to sponsor – it's as if they were made for each other."

We're thrilled with the sponsorship as Sharon, already a star through hits such as MTV's *The Osbournes* and ITV's star-making *The X Factor*, is a huge celebrity and very much up Gala's street.

The Sharon Osbourne Show is a fabulous mix of celebrity chat, heart-warming real-life stories, live music and audience participation, and it's already proving to be a big hit.

Rebecca O'Malley, associate broadcast director at media research company MediaVest, said: "*The Sharon Osbourne Show*, with its mix of great entertainment and the chance to win big money, matches the Gala proposition perfectly."

And, if you haven't yet caught sight of Gala Bingo or *The Sharon Osbourne Show*, then tune in now, weekdays on ITV from 5pm.





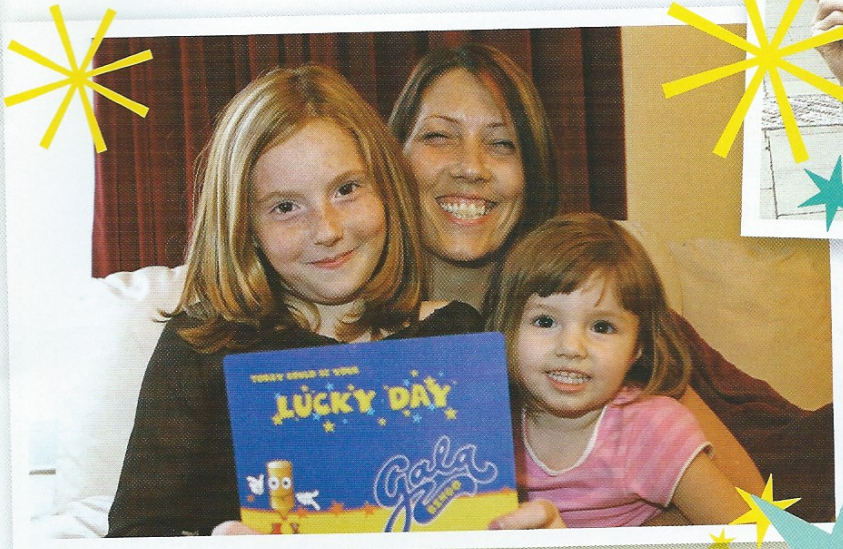
Gala Bingo and *The Sharon Osbourne Show* are a perfect partnership. Have you switched on yet?

Win!

We have five pairs of tickets for *The Sharon Osbourne Show* up for grabs, but hurry, as her show ends soon. For a chance to win a pair of tickets, send your name, address, club, membership number and telephone number to Sharon Osbourne, FREEPOST RLYA-CAXK-EBTC, Square One, 15 Prescott Place, London, SW4 6BS, by 6 October 2006. Tickets are subject to programme scheduling and no other alternative, cash or otherwise, will be offered. Terms and conditions apply – see page 30.

In it to win it...

Lady Luck smiles on Gala players up and down the country...





A grand win

Gala Glenrothes granny Louisa Brock, who's been playing for 40 years, picked up more than £101,000 recently. She's hoping to use the cash to try to find her adopted sister, who she hasn't seen for 55 years! Louisa, 60, who has two sons, two daughters and nine grandchildren, said: "I was fostered as a child, as was my sister, but I had another sister who was adopted."

Galvinised

Ecstatic mum-of-three Lisa Galvin won £100,000 over at Gala Enfield recently. Lisa, 38, a branch manager of a courier company, said: "It was amazing – it was like it would have been if England had won the World Cup." As well as a house move, Lisa is planning a holiday abroad with daughters Shannon and Kelsea Buck.



Good Shrews!

A prize-tastic Gala promotion was great news for 98 lucky Gala Shrewsbury members recently, as they won £50,000 in a free prize draw and took home £510 each! "There was an electric atmosphere. We have a lot of loyal members and it was great to celebrate together," said general manager, Jez Fearn.



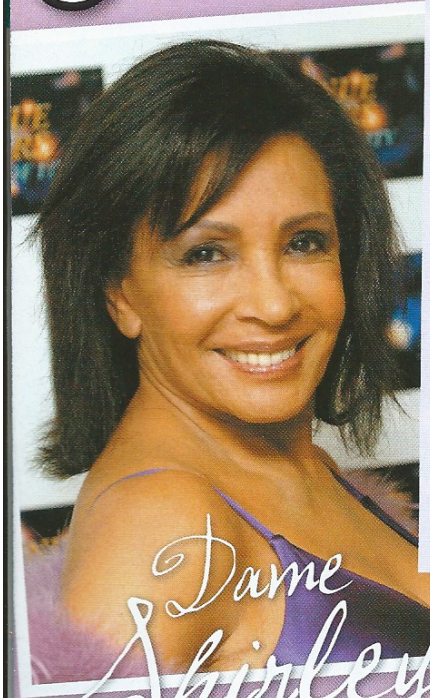
Exhibitionist

Gobsmacked granny Liz Giles, 63, scooped nearly £1,500 at Gala Gateshead and promptly split her winnings with her two older sisters and a cousin. "When they announced how much I had won, I made an exhibition of myself," she said.

In other news

A 22-year-old Gala Castleford member won more than £100,000, but her five-year-old boy thinks it's a hundred million! And a Gala Crawley animal lover will be pampering her five cats after she also picked up over £100,000!

5 minute interview



Dame Shirley turns 70 next January. The youngest of seven, she grew up in poverty in Cardiff and was 'discovered' as a teenager, singing in a working men's club. She's been married twice, is the mother of two daughters (one deceased) and has four grandsons. She lives in Monte Carlo...

Dame Shirley Bassey

Q Where do you get your drive?
A From my mother, Eliza Jane. She was very quiet and almost nothing ruffled her, but when it did you got out of the way. And that's true of me. She didn't die until I was in my forties, so she saw many years of my success. She was so proud.

Q You have a reputation for being something of a diva...
A And it's absolute nonsense. Yes, I'm a perfectionist. You don't stay in this business for over 50 years if you're not. I'm too busy being focused, though, to waste time on tantrums.

Q What did you do when you left school?
A I worked in a local factory as a packer. I'd sing all the time at work. The supervisor would come over and say: "Bassey, stop that noise."

Q Is it true that you sang at the Glasgow Empire when you were 18?
A Yes, it was like a bear pit. During my second song, the audience started hooting and hollering, so I stopped. "I've come here tonight to entertain you lot," I said. "If you don't want to listen then I'll go home. But you could at least give me a chance." I didn't have any trouble after that.

Q Tragically, your younger daughter Samantha died when she fell from Clifton suspension bridge...
A She was just 21 and it is my life's greatest sadness. I blamed myself. I felt she might still be here if I'd been a better mother. Her loss should have sent me round the bend, but it didn't. I lost my voice for a while, but somehow something told me to get up and get out again on that stage. Two weeks later, I appeared at the Carnegie Hall in New York. The audience gave me a five-minute standing ovation.

Q Do you have any regrets?
A No, because the good things as well as the bad have made me the person I've become. I've tried to use the bad things in a creative way. Whichever way you slice it, mine has been an incredible life.



PHOTOS: SILVIA BOARINI, DONCASTER FREE PRESS, FIFE FREE PRESS GROUP, PLYMOUTH EVENING HERALD, REX FEATURES

Surrey Quays calls it

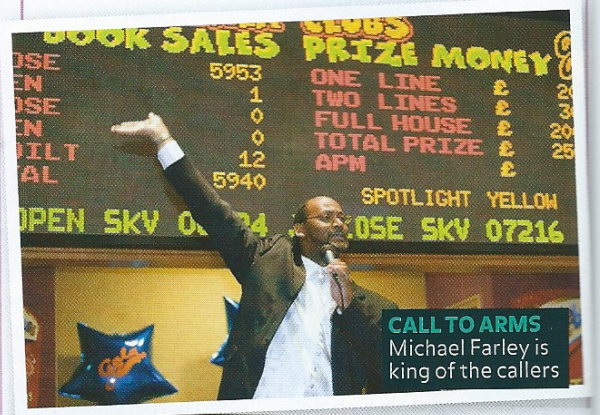
Gala Surrey Quays caller Michael Farley has won this year's coveted Gala Bingo Caller of the Year award. Michael travelled over to Gala Birmingham earlier this year, to pit his calling skills against eight other national finalists.

The competition was tough, with the judges paying particular attention to pace, pronunciation, professionalism and personality, but Michael shone through.

"He's a fantastic bingo caller and thoroughly deserves this year's title," said competition organiser Bob Smith.

The other eight finalists were Gala Bradley's Nick Bradley, Kilmarnock's Stephen Coyle, Newcastle's Martin Fairlamb, Maidstone's Scott Orpin, Harpurhey's Michael Ryan, Swindon's Lee Walker, Oxford's Kim Warren and Wednesbury's Peter Winterton.

Well done to everyone who took part!



CALL TO ARMS Michael Farley is king of the callers



WINNER BY FARLEY Michael and the runners up

Check it out

These gorgeous Gala Newcastle members, decked out in their city's finest colours, were the loudest bunch around at the Caller of the Year Final. They're pictured here, just before boarding the bus and heading on over to the Birmingham club to support their caller, Martin.



GEORDIE FANS Martin's army are on their way

Bright light city set my soul on fire

Gala Grantham member Shirley Morton didn't sleep a minute when she won a trip to the larger-than-life Las Vegas, as this was the holiday of a lifetime in more ways than one...



HIT THE JACKPOT! A prize draw took Shirley to Vegas

My brother, Tony, who's 53 in December, moved to America over 23 years ago and every year he says he's coming over, but he's never yet made it. When my local club held a prize draw, in which you could win a trip to Las Vegas, well, I know it sounds funny, but I had this feeling that I was going to win it.

I've been going to Gala Grantham for years. It's like therapy for me. I love it, but I've always had this attitude that if I win, I win, and if I don't, I've had a really good time anyway. I'll be 49 this year and I have never, ever been on holiday, not since I was a little kid going away with my family. When Tim and I got married, we didn't even have a honeymoon! Well, it was a second marriage for both of us and with six kids between us – Anthony, Vicki, Joanne, Andrew, Peter and Samantha – we just never found the time.

When I won the draw, the first thing I did was phone my brother, who lives in Maryland with his wife, Michelle. He instantly wanted to know all the details, such as flights, hotels and so on, because he wanted to book his holiday at exactly the same time and come and meet me there.

After spending a night in London, at the Hilton Hotel, we were to fly direct to Las Vegas and the Luxor Hotel, but by the time we got all the details finalised it was too late for him to book into the same hotel, so he booked into the Excalibur next door. He wanted to meet me at the airport, as soon as I got off the plane, but I didn't want him there. I was worried about the flight, as I had never flown before, and I didn't want him to see me in a state if I arrived in one. We had so much to sort out. I didn't even have a passport, as I'd never needed one before.

The first night of our trip, at the London Hilton, was fantastic. We kept telling John Waby and Rob Jones, who were

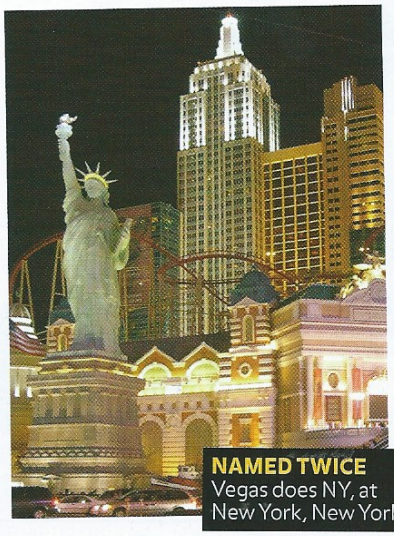
Some of the amazing, over-the-top hotels to be found in Las Vegas



PIRATE GOLD
Treasure Island is a top luxury casino



SPHINX IT'S GREAT
Sleep like an Egyptian at the luxury Luxor



NAMED TWICE
Vegas does NY, at New York, New York



BIG BIRD
The one and only Flamingo resort

representing Gala on the trip with us, that even if our stay in Vegas was cancelled for some reason, we'd have gone home happy, we both appreciated it so much. But I really did want to see my brother.

Tim was worried about me on the flight, but I psyched myself up for it and everything was fine – better than fine actually, because it was brilliant. I got a window seat just behind the wing, which was fantastic. So was the holiday. There was so much to take in. If I never have another holiday again, I'll still count myself lucky.

We landed in Las Vegas and went to the hotel. I'd arranged to meet Tony in the hotel's main bar. He's never really seen any pictures of me, plenty of the kids and the family, but none of me – I've never sent him any; I don't know why. I've seen plenty of him, though. When we spoke on the phone, he asked what I looked like and I told him I was 22 stone – I'm actually only eight. I just wanted to play a practical joke on him.

He's not changed a bit really – just tanned and a little greyer. So, there he was, waiting in the bar, looking for this 22-stone woman, when I went up to him. It was

> "There was just so much to take in. If I never have another holiday again, I'll still count myself lucky"

like all our Christmases had come at once. I can't really remember what we said. I met Tony's wife, Michelle, and they met Tim, and we just talked and talked and talked. We went for a meal and talked some more – well, we did have 23 years to catch up on.

It was Tony and Michelle's first time in Vegas, too. The place was amazing. We would definitely go again as you just can't take it all in with one trip. We visited many of the hotels and casinos, which are all amazing and differently themed. We walked along most of the Strip's 4½ miles at five in the morning because we just couldn't sleep – we were too excited.

The place was gorgeous, the people friendly and it really was the trip of a lifetime, but seeing Tony again was indescribable, and it went so quickly. He offered to pay the difference in the air fare and fly myself and Tim down to Maryland to spend some extra time with them, but, as my dad, who's 80, was poorly and because we had to get back to the kids, I couldn't accept his offer. I'm hoping to see him again. We did want to go again in August, but dad was too ill and we couldn't leave.

Leaving was so hard. I couldn't have said goodbye at the airport, it would have been too much, so we said our goodbyes at the hotel. The last couple of minutes were the worst – Tony couldn't let me go and we were all crying so much.

I really can't thank Gala enough, or describe how happy and grateful I was for this opportunity. And Tony, well, he never did get me back for that practical joke – I guess I've still got that to come.

PHOTOS: STEVE MORGAN

big interview

"I still miss Kathy"

Footballers' Wives has been given the boot and a starring role in *The Bill* beckons, but actress Gillian Taylforth's heart will always belong to Walford...



LOOKS A GILLIAN
Her role in *The Bill* means a rosy future

This year has been one of old doors closing and new ones opening for Gillian Taylforth. It's been six years since she left *EastEnders* (after 13 years as put-upon cafe owner Kathy), but the actress was still dismayed to hear her old character was being killed off. On top of that, it was announced recently that *Footballers' Wives*, in which Gillian has starred from the beginning, was being axed. This was not such bad news – her tenure had come to an end with the last series anyway. But she admits to being upset at no longer having the chance to play Kathy.

Name game
Gillian was named after the famous 1940s ballet dancer Gillian Lynne, who worked with Sadler's Wells and the Royal Ballet.

"They phoned me up last year to tell me they were thinking of killing her off," says Gillian. "I was a bit upset, not so much with the storyline, but it was like 13 years of my life and then it would be gone."

After Gillian's 13-year stint on the show ended in 1998, she returned, albeit briefly, the following year, but has since been busy with the WAG-tastic *Footballers' Wives*, as well as pathologist drama *Messiah* and comedy *The House That Jack Built*. The 51-year-old has certainly not been short of work, but admits that *EastEnders* and her role as Kathy always felt like career security.

"Initially I thought, oh no, the door's shut now," she says. "But, like they say, one door shuts and another opens, and new things have come up. I may not have got my next job at all if the door had still been open. People don't know whether to offer you stuff because you might go back, or because you're still known as your soap character. But once that door shut, other opportunities did come up, so it may have been a blessing in disguise."

The new opportunity she's talking about is a starring role in *The Bill*. From October we'll see her on the ITV cop drama as new recruit Sergeant Nikki Wright, a copper who'll be taking over from departing long-runner June Ackland, played by Trudie Goodwin.

"That's going to be a hard act to follow, isn't it? She's brilliant," says Gillian. "But I'm looking forward to joining the show. I know people on set as well, so that will help."

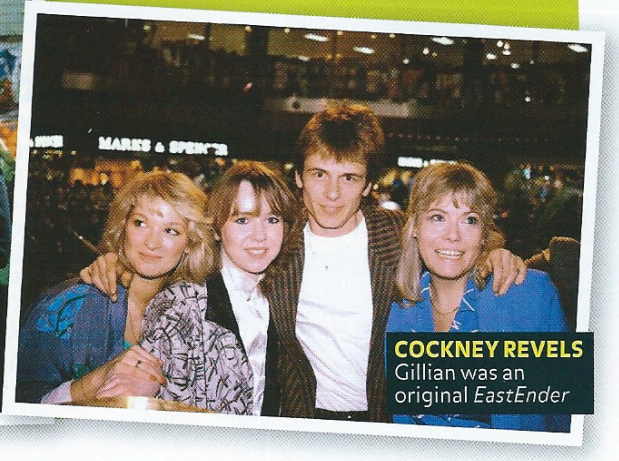
For a start, Roberta Taylor (who played Kathy's *EastEnders* sister-in-law) is already a stalwart of *The Bill*, plus Gary Lucy (who played her son on *Footballers' Wives*) is a fairly new addition to the show.

eastenders

Boat race
She was nearly refused the part of Kathy in *EastEnders*, as producers thought Gillian was too pretty.



BEALE LIFE
Gillian loved her time in Walford



COCKNEY REVELS
Gillian was an original *EastEnder*

PHOTOS: CAPITAL PICTURES, GETTY IMAGES, RETNA, REX FEATURES, SCOPE FEATURES, XPOSURE

"It's nice to go back to working with some old faces," she says, "and I can't wait for some good, nitty-gritty storylines to get my teeth into."

Gillian's also looking forward to being in something that her children can watch. She has two – Jessica, 14, and Harrison, seven, with her partner of 17 years, Geoff Knights – and while Harrison is yet to see any of his mum's more adult shows, Jessica had started watching *Footballers' Wives*.

"I never used to let her watch it," says Gillian. "But I think the last series wasn't as full-on as it has been. You know you're getting older when you start cringing at sex on screen."

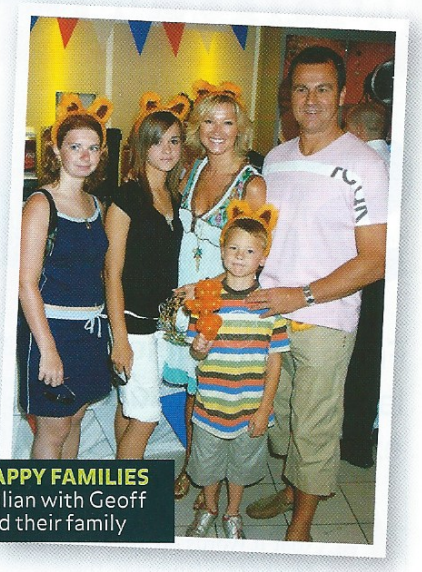
The actress faced a similar problem with drama *Jane Hall*, which was on ITV back in July. Made two years ago, the quirky series (in which a directionless young woman, played by Sarah Smart, heads to London and gets a job as a bus driver) featured a number of raunchy scenes involving Gillian. She played Mandy, a bus driver who worked with her husband, but somehow found time for affairs with two male colleagues right under his nose. In just the first two episodes we saw Mandy in compromising positions in the bus depot toilet, the snooker room and the top deck of a bus.

"I was a bit apprehensive about doing them at the beginning," says Gillian. "When I went to the audition I dragged a bit on it and said to them I was a bit worried about the sex scenes, what with having two children. But the director, Syd, was brilliant and he and the first assistant director, Eva, even went through it first to show us what they wanted. So that broke the ice."

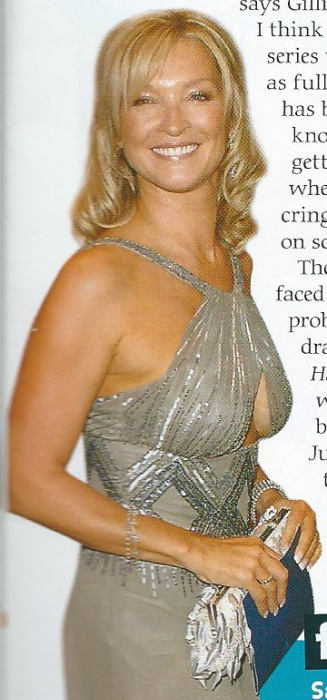
With *Jane Hall* done and dusted and a long-term role in *The Bill* in the offing, it seems Gillian may finally be able to lay the ghost of Kathy to rest. But it could still take a bit of time. It was only last month that a fan who saw her on the street called her by a character name other than Kathy.

"These two young girls, about 15 or 16, shouted out, 'Jackie!' [Pascoe, her *Footballers' Wives* character]," Gillian laughs. "I've never heard that before. But it's obviously because they're young and don't remember me from *EastEnders*. Most of the time it's still Kathy. And it's funny because some mums stop sometimes and point at me, and say to their children, 'That's Ian's mum – you know, the one who's dead'."

"You know you're getting older when you start cringing at sex on screen"



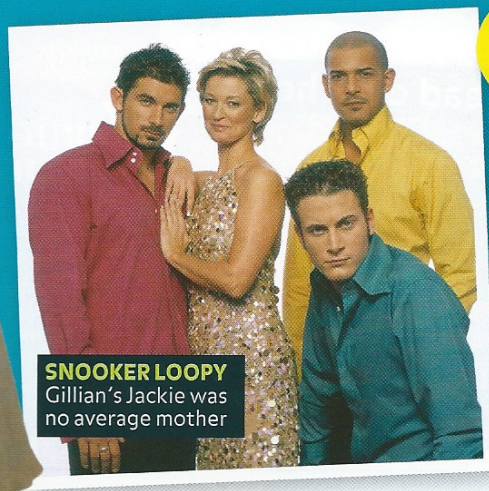
HAPPY FAMILIES Gillian with Geoff and their family



Uplifting
Gillian has a dim view of plastic surgery. "I nearly had a face-lift once," she says, "but I changed my mind. The nurse was like a double-glazing salesman."

footballers' wives

Saucy
In a Channel 4 poll of the 100 Greatest Sexy Moments, a scene in *Footballers' Wives*, in which her character Jackie has sex on a snooker table, was placed at number 49.



SNOOKER LOOPY Gillian's Jackie was no average mother



PREMIER LEAGUE *Footballers' Wives* turned on the glam

Say what?

From "cloud nine" to "seventh heaven", the English language is full of strange expressions. We find out exactly what some of them mean...

Author Robert Allen reckons that if words are the building blocks of a language, then phrases are its walls and windows, providing the English language with its shape and structure. He's collected a fair few of our more colourful expressions in his book, *Allen's English Phrases* (Penguin, £25), and worked out where they come from.



Armed to the teeth

Taken to mean fully armed. This is possibly because the teeth themselves can be used as weapons, but is more likely because pirates and brigands were usually illustrated as holding their knives and daggers in their teeth, which left their hands free to perform other nefarious tasks.

Every dog has its day

Shakespeare has given the English language a lot, and this expression is often attributed to him (Hamlet to Laertes: "Let Hercules himself do what he may, the cat will mew and dog will have his day"). However, it was already a popular Elizabethan phrase when he used it in 1601 and can be found in literature as early as 1545. It means good fortune comes to everybody eventually.



ILLUSTRATIONS: RICHARD DUSZCZAK



Tied to somebody's apron strings

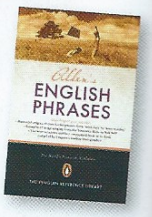
Usually applied to a man who cannot break free from the protection of a woman, the expression dates from the 16th century. Early connotations implied legal ties: a man had apron-string tenure on property if he held it through his wife, or for her lifetime only.



Head over heels

Typically associated with strong feelings like love, the original (and more logical) 18th-century version was "heels over head", and was used when someone was hurt in a particularly bad tumble. The order was reversed and became attached to emotions sometime in the first half of the 19th century.

Win!



We have one copy of *Allen's English Phrases* (Penguin, £25) up for grabs. For the chance to win it, simply send your name, address, club and membership number, by 20 November 2006, to: English Phrases, FREEPOST RLYA-CAXK-EBTC, Square One, 15 Prescott Place, London, SW4 6BS. Terms and conditions apply – see page 30.

Looking up the relatives

Providing you start small and work methodically, tracing your family tree is relatively easy and incredibly good fun. Plus, you might unearth a few surprising family secrets along the way...



BRANCHING OUT
Building a tree can bring the past to life

If you want to trace your family tree, the best place to start is with your family. That way, you don't even have to go far. Start asking your parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts pertinent questions, and get them to write down what they know, such as their full names, dates of birth and of marriage, as well as interesting anecdotes. Ask them not only about themselves, but about their parents and grandparents, too. Try to put together as much information about your family from your family as possible.

Next, start looking around your family for historical documents, clues, heirlooms, family Bibles and photo albums – you'll have a huge amount of material, such as birth, death and marriage certificates actually within the family.

Medieval historian and TV genealogist Nick Barratt reckons documents are a fantastic way of putting stories into context and building up pictures of who people were and what they did.

"Look out for things that tell you a bit more about them, such as photographs, war records, ration books, war service documents, medals and so on," says Nick, who fronts the popular show *Who Do You Think You Are?* on BBC2.

Once you've done that, you need to draw all this information together and start sketching out your family tree, which is a diagram that shows how your family relates to one another. You usually start in the present and work backwards in time. It's very easy to get muddled, so keep it simple and make it very linear.

"Start with yourself," says Nick. "Then add your parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and so on, doubling up with each generation."

To build a good family tree, add as much information as possible, including all the dates that you have found out already. Geography is quite important, too, so find out where events took place, as that will help you later on.

"Soon," Nick warns, "you'll come to areas where you're not sure of something, be it a name or a date." And that's where your research plan comes in – so draw one up, and detail who and what you need to look up.

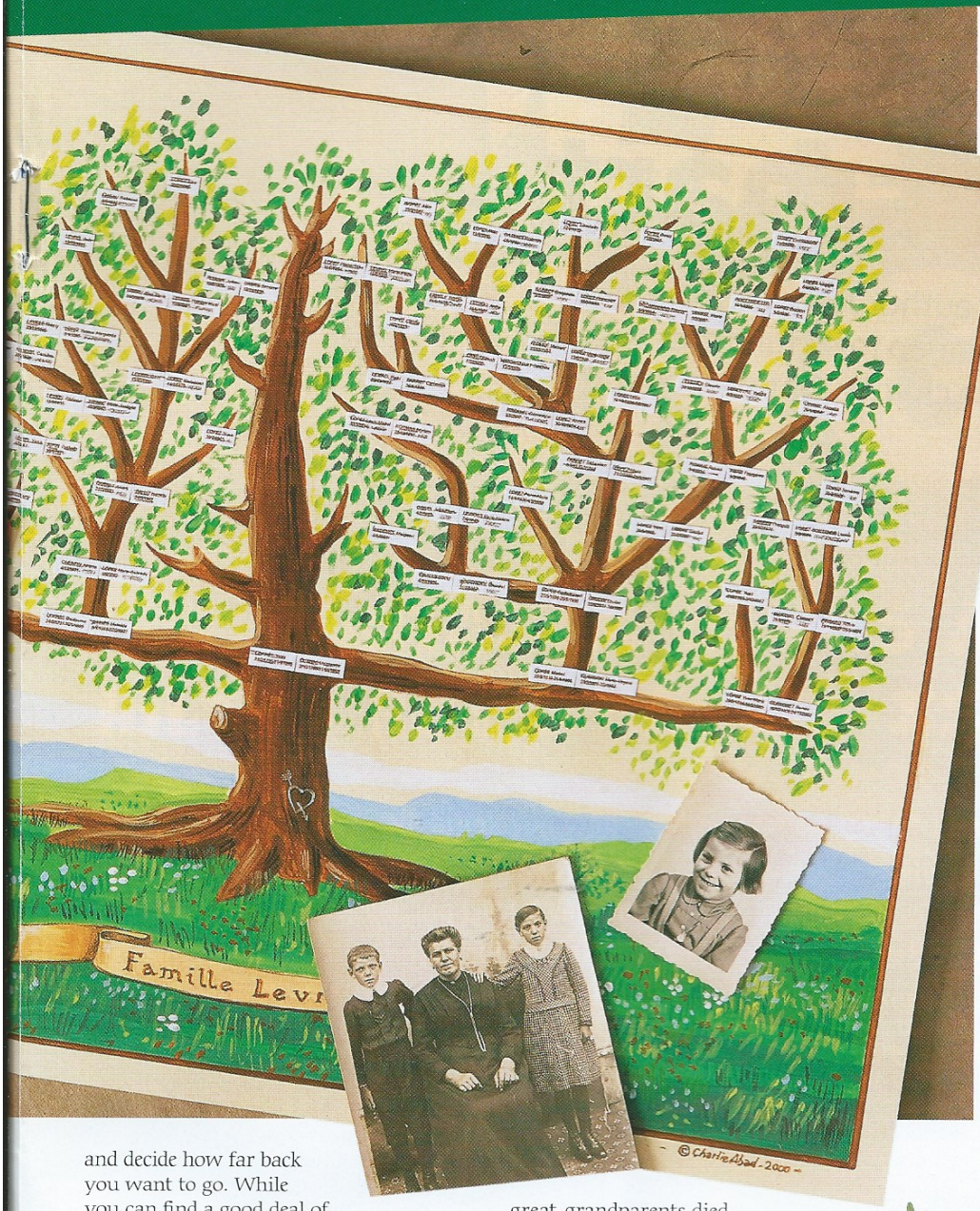
Once you've finished with the family, established what you do and what you don't know, and have drawn up a research plan, you'll need to start working with record offices and archives. First, choose who you want to research

Top 10 tips

Nick's essential handy hints...

1. Talk to family members
2. Look for heirlooms
3. Organise the data into a family tree
4. Prepare a research plan
5. Start to work back through certificates
6. Take your research further back with census records
7. Try to look for additional records, such as wills
8. Go even further back by using parish records
9. Never assume a link between people; always verify through records
10. Always work backwards in time from the present

PHOTOS: PHOTOLIBRARY.COM



Websites

Log on to these handy sites...

- **www.ancestry.co.uk**
  Fab for family records and census returns
- **www.sog.org.uk**
  Website of the Society of Genealogists, which is great for advice, with an amazing research library
- **www.ffhs.org.uk**
  The Federation of Family History Societies' website
- **www.nationalarchives.gov.uk**
  For all your UK government record needs
- **www.bbc.co.uk/history**
  Has a good family history section
- **www.stick.org.uk**
  A research agency that's great if you're stuck and need help
- **www.1837online.com**
  An online record of births, deaths and marriages from 1837 and on, as well as military and census records
- **www.familyrecords.gov.uk**
  Official government records, plus additional help

and decide how far back you want to go. While you can find a good deal of information on the internet, not everything can be traced there and you may need to travel. If you want to try online, though, you need as much verification as possible, in the form of official registration documents. And that means birth, marriage and death certificates. In England and Wales these began in 1837 and, in theory, you should be able to find every birth, marriage and death in your family that took place from that date onwards.

"When you are further up your family tree and you've got grey areas, you can use this information to work back," says Nick. "If you know when, for example, your great-grandparents died, but you don't know when or where they were born, you can use the death certificate to get the age, which will then allow you to look for the birth certificate."

The birth certificate will also give you the names of their parents, allowing you to go back another generation.

"It's like stepping stones in time – you use one source to get back to another and another," says Nick.

Census records are another valuable source of official information and these too can be found online, going as far back as 1841. Using official documents, then, can get you as far back as the mid-19th century, which should give you a really good historical context for your family. And you never know what you might find. "When I began researching mine," says Nick, "I discovered that a great-uncle was a Soviet spy in the 1920s and 1930s."



What's next?

What you do next is really up to you, depending on what you have found out and what you are interested in. You might want to follow one character and go into a bit more depth about them, or you might want to go back even further in time, in which case you have to use locally created sources, such as parish registers, wills and occupational material – it's great fun, but things will get a little more complicated from here on in.

Charitable acts

More of your fantastic fund-raising efforts...



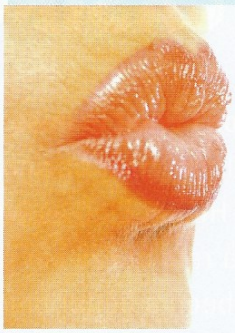
GO GET 'EM TIGER Wendy Lewington, Tony Ferguson and the Community Forum

Bingo pals

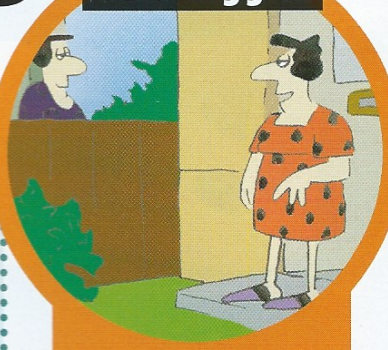
Gala Weymouth partnered up with the local Waterside Weymouth Community Forum and immediately helped raise over £600. The event's organiser, Wendy Lewington, is pictured here with staff member Darren Kinsey and Gala Weymouth's general manager Tony Ferguson.

Pucker up

Gala Paisley raised more than £1,620 in a charity week for the local ACCORD hospice. As well as bingo games, one staff member sold smackers in a 'kissing booth'. Well done to all the Gala staff who got involved.



Gala Giggles



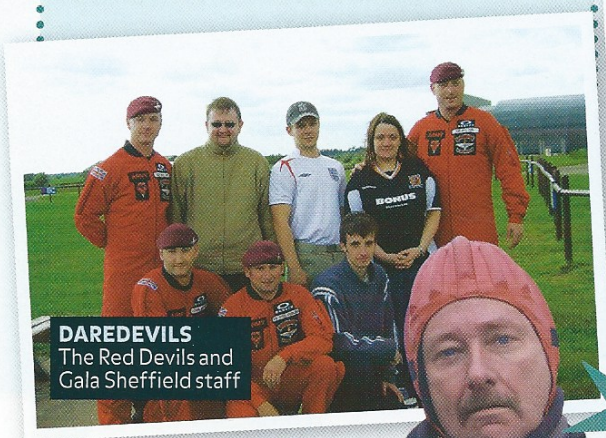
I would have had a go at him for coming home late last night if I hadn't come home later from bingo

Ho, ho, ho!

Gala Colchester helped raise more than £1,500 for radio station SGR Colchester and its Operation Santa Claus charity earlier this year.

Wheeeeee!

Five daredevil staff members from Gala Sheffield Wadsley jumped 12,000ft from a plane recently, raising nearly £3,000 for Sheffield Children's Hospital. They were Sam Codd, Jamie Shelton, Russ Coggan and general manager Chris Greville.



DAREDEVILS The Red Devils and Gala Sheffield staff



RED HEAD Chris Greville prepares to jump



CHANGING ROOM The team get to grips with DIY

Got it licked

Gala Plymouth Charles Cross staff volunteered to help revamp a kids' unit at the local Mount Gould hospital by giving it a fresh lick of paint, a new laminate floor, a new sofa and furniture suite, plus refreshed toilets. Well done to the club's Claire Pritchard, Marcus Mee, Chris Goad, Louise Brennan and Sam Jarman!



THE BIZ: Gala Carlisle general manager, Steve Longstaff, holds on to his Wiz

Gee Wiz!

Lucky members at certain clubs may have noticed a piece of hi-tech wizardry going round in the form of a brand-new handheld electronic gaming system called the Gala Wiz.

Exclusive to Gala Bingo, the Wiz brings bingo into the 21st century and gives members even more opportunities to win fantastic cash prizes.

With it, heart-racing multiple games can be played and special offers are available to members who buy their tickets for these handheld gizmos.

Gala Wiz terminals can currently be found at Galas Basingstoke, Colchester, Ashton, Possil Park and Carlisle, with most clubs featuring them by the end of November.

Gala Bingo managing director Steve McKenna said: "We're proud to be pioneering electronic gaming and giving our valued members that little bit more. We are leaders in the gaming industry and embrace new technology wherever possible."

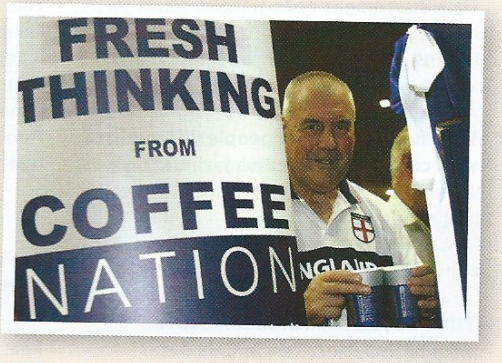
Break on through

Breakthrough recently beat off stiff competition from the likes of Marie Curie and Lloyds TSB to win the Institute of Fundraising Award for Most Effective Corporate Partnership, a result most definitely helped by the efforts of Gala staff and members!

bingo for breakthrough

Don't forget, this year's Bingo for Breakthrough week runs from 22 to 29 October, which will also be supported by galabingo.co.uk this year.

Swindon joins the coffee nation



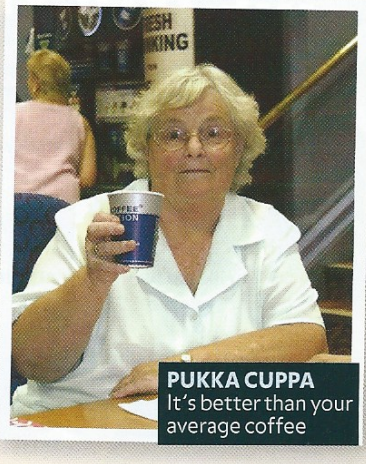
Members at Gala Swindon have been enjoying better beverages than usual, thanks to the trial installation of a swanky new Coffee Nation coffee machine.

The machine, installed back in July, is a premium, bean-to-cup drinks machine, similar to those found in garage forecourts up and down the country.

It whips up top-quality lattes, cappuccinos and Americano coffees, albeit at slightly higher prices than the general tea, coffee, soup and hot chocolate drinks dispensers.

The plan is for the new machine to augment, rather than replace, the cheaper options, thereby giving members more choice.

"At the moment the trial is only at Swindon," said Gala's regional food and beverage manager Christophe Bew, "but, if it works, we'll roll it out further."



PUKKA CUPPA
It's better than your average coffee

Celebrate 15 years of full houses!

It was the year that Brian Adams became the longest running UK Number One with *Everything I Do (I Do it For You)*, we flocked to the cinemas to see *Thelma and Louise* and the year that Gala Bingo was born. Yes indeed, Lady Luck has been smiling down on members since October 1991 and to celebrate Gala's 15th birthday, staff and members across all the 174 clubs will be celebrating in style on 17 October. Each club will be organising special birthday activities, so just pop along to your local Gala to find out how it will be marking the occasion.



WOW!

Crash cash

A Gala Maidstone member who had her car stolen, crashed and written off went to play bingo the next day and scooped over £100,000 on the National. We wonder what she'll be spending her money on!



house!



Things you didn't know about... Johnny Depp

We dig up some buried treasure on this buccaneering actor and one-time wild-card turned family man...

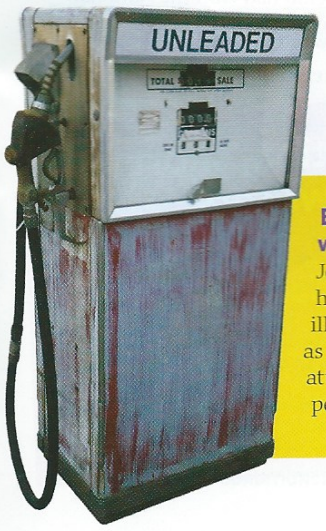
An introduction
Born John Christopher Depp II on 9 June 1963, in Owensboro, Kentucky, USA, to John Christopher Senior and Betty Sue, Johnny Depp is 43 years old and a Gemini.

No 'na'
While engaged to Winona Ryder, he had 'Winona forever' tattooed on his arm. After their break-up, he had two letters surgically removed. It now says 'Wino forever'.

Name fame game
Johnny and Vanessa Paradis have two children: a girl, Lily, and a boy, Jack. Lily and Jack are the names of the lead characters in Ridley Scott's fantasy, *Legend*. The couple were played by Mia Sara and Tom Cruise.

Little Johnny
When he was a kid, Johnny's nicknames were 'Dipp' and 'Deppity Dawg.' When he was eight, he loved anything to do with motorbike stuntman Evel Knievel and with the Second World War.

PHOTOS: REX FEATURES



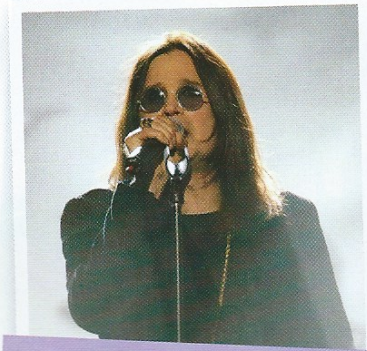
Rebel, rebel
Once the co-owner of infamous LA nightclub The Viper Room, Johnny has trashed many a hotel room and been arrested for wrecking a New York apartment in 1994 and for brawling with the paparazzi in London in 1999.

Before he was famous
Johnny has held down such illustrious jobs as petrol-pump attendant and pen salesman.

Supersonic
Johnny originally wanted to be a rock star and plays in a band called P. He has recorded tracks with Oasis – twice – and has even played with Irish rockers, The Pogues.

Not so fast
His favourite TV show is comedy *The Fast Show*. He used to take tapes of the series on tour with him to keep himself amused. He even made a guest appearance in the last ever sketch of the last ever episode.

Brazen apology
He once used an award ceremony as a confessional, apologising to celebrity pal Nicolas Cage for having once stolen money from him.



Ozzy, Ozzy, Ozzy!
He's fascinated by wild rocker Ozzy Osbourne, would love to play him in a biopic, and calls him "deeply fascinating".

Heathcliff!
After being asked if he was a romantic by a US journalist, Johnny replied: "Am I romantic? I've seen *Wuthering Heights* 10 times. I'm a romantic."

And finally...
He's addicted to that gooey dessert, sticky toffee pudding.



Not funny
He suffers from coulrophobia, which is a fear of clowns. Symptoms include nausea, rapid breathing and feelings of dread.

Many loves...

He's been married once, to make-up artist Lori Allison, whom he divorced in 1985, and has been engaged to actresses Sherilyn Fenn, Jennifer Grey and Winona Ryder, as well as to troubled supermodel Kate Moss. But he's been in a steady relationship with French singer and actress Vanessa Paradis since 1998.



your shout

Star Letter



Prized memories

My love of bingo started 40 years ago, when I was 12 years old and on a family caravan holiday to Devon. The weather was beautiful and, on the first night, we decided to walk around the local village. When we saw a sign advertising a bingo night outside a Scout hut, we thought it might be fun to try our luck. We couldn't believe it when mum won the first game and collected a 2lb bag of sugar. Then dad won a bag of tea on the next game. My older sister and brother won the next games, picking up a bottle of Camp coffee and some biscuits. But when I won the star prize of a 3lb chicken, we decided to leave before the locals got nasty.

Yours sincerely, Valerie McQuillan

STAR LETTER wins £25 Gala Vouchers

ILLUSTRATION: RICHARD DUSZCZAK

Win £25 Gala Vouchers

Got something you want to share?

Send your letters, with your address, club and membership number to: Gala Letters, FREEPOST RLYA-CAXK-EBTC, Square One, 15 Prescott Place, London, SW4 6BS. Every star letter printed receives £25 in Gala Vouchers.

Firm footing

I've always loved my bingo and my local club is just down the road from me. I can walk there and back again, so it's good exercise. But I broke my foot a little while ago. A friend offered to take me in her car one day, but couldn't pick me up as she had to collect her daughter from school. I decided to hobble there and get the bus back. At the club, I sat next to a lady I'd never met before, we got talking about my foot and, at the end of the session, she gave me a lift home. I thought that was so kind, considering she didn't know me and, not only did I make a caring friend, I won £50!

Yours sincerely, Christine Dorman

Pennies from heaven

After laying my three-and-a-half-year-old son, Rhys, down to sleep, I just made it to my local Gala club on time to meet my mum. Before leaving, Rhys said, "Bring home lots of pennies, mummy." After a great night out, but with no winnings, I crept into his room to give my sleeping beauty a kiss. To my surprise he rolled over and said, "Did you win?" When I quietly replied, "No, goodnight," he said, "You never bring any pennies home do you mummy?" And all this without opening his eyes, bless him. At least my mum and I aren't the only ones who eat, drink and sleep bingo!

Yours sincerely, Rebecca Townrow

Viva España!

Hola! This is me, Ann Shields, the Diner DC at Gala Ashton, fronting our Spanish diner/cantina display throughout the National Game 'Shout House to Win a House' promotion. I hope you like it.

Olé, Señorita Shields





Result!

My grandson got a great Gala Buzz when I won an England goodie-bag earlier this year. Here he is showing the prize off, including the watch I received for going on three Fridays. It's a great picture to keep for all time – thank you Gala!

Yours sincerely, Mrs C Jones

Warm welcome

I would like to welcome Gala Bingo to Coatbridge. When we heard our local bingo was being changed to Gala, we were a little apprehensive about all the changes, but, to our surprise, we all received new memberships, our hall is getting a facelift, the staff are lovely and we have a lot of nice promotions going on. So, well done Gala!

Yours sincerely, Margaret Stewart



Memory making

My nephew and his friend came to visit our family from the USA recently, and one of his first requests was to visit our local club. His last visit was in 1978 and a lot has changed since then, but they were so excited to be going. On top of that, they both won a game and the staff were happy to help me make their visit a memorable one. I'm pictured here with my niece, my nephew, his friend and a popular caller, Anthony.

Yours sincerely, Ethel Devine

rhyme & reason

Star Poem

Gala Crawley's C Brown is running with the OAP pack:

Gran's groupies

When I go out
With my gran
We usually wind up
With her clan
Of greying ladies
Full of sauce
Who descend on me
In full force
They talk so loud
And laugh a lot
Shout and say rude things
And call me 'Tot'
I fetch and carry
And help them up
They drink gallons of tea
Cup by cup
They wear woollen cardies
And sensible skirts
With stories of aches
And pains and hurts
And though they embarrass
And make me blush
Hugging me close
With a great big crush
Always trying to set me
Up on a date
With someone
I'll probably hate
They always find time
To tell me a joke
And listen to me
And buy me a Coke
They can cheer me up
When I'm feeling blue
So, ladies, guess what?
I'd be lost without you

STAR POEM WINS £25 GALA VOUCHERS

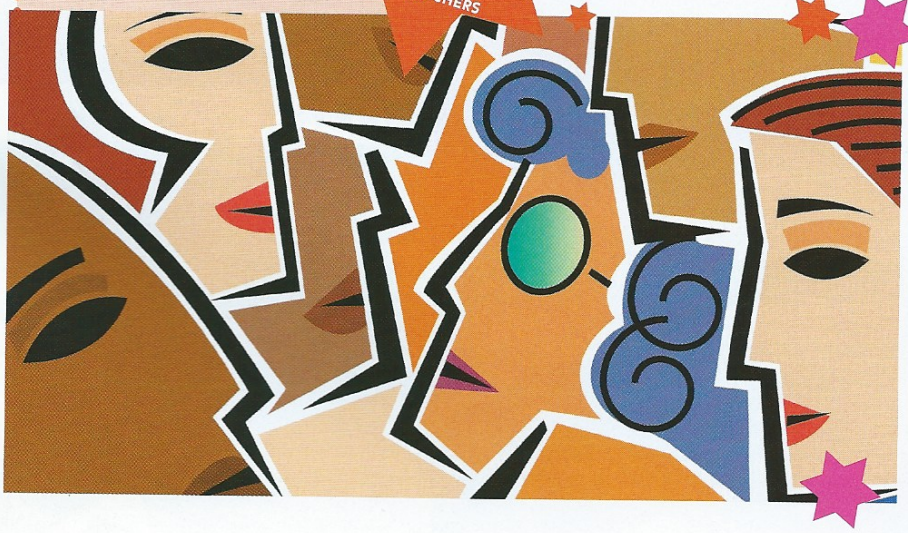


ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES

We love reading your poems and limericks so much, do please keep them coming...

Gala Barnsley's Barbara Weston knows a good thing when she sees it:

Good old game

Things have changed over the years
But one thing remains the same
The good old game of bingo
So, no one can complain
You have to play to win it
That's exactly what I do
I'm off again tomorrow
To win a bob or two

While Gala Doncaster's Andrea Carr has a friend who's got the Buzz:

Bingo maniac

My friend won on the lottery
Three weeks in a row
I said: "It's a lucky streak
To Gala we must go"
She was a bingo virgin
She'd never been before
But bingo fever caught her
When she walked in through the door
She loved all the excitement
The friendly Gala scene
All the fun and laughter
And the chance to win the dream
As time went by winning
Still on that lucky streak
She's now a bingo maniac
And goes five times a week

And Gala Harpurhey's Janice Taylor counts her blessings:

By the numbers

One, two
We're going to bingo
Me and you
Three, four
You buy your tickets
At the door
Five, six
Clickety-click
It's all on number 66
Seven, eight
It's getting late
But it's OK, I'm with my mate
Nine, ten
Holding tight to my lucky pen
I hope we meet some hunky men

Finally, Gala Tooting's Sam Warren wants you out of her seat:

Lucky chair

This is my lucky chair
It's where I always sit
I have an ample bottom
So it's a perfect fit
I really wouldn't sit there,
If you know what's good for you
You see I really need it
To make it to the loo
Someone took it last week
I gave them such a stare
It made them feel uncomfortable
To take my lucky chair
I know you're very new here
But take my kind advice
Me and it go way back
To take it isn't nice
I'll let it go just this time
But please do have a care
I just want you to remember
This is my lucky chair

Got a poem to share?

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