

SATURDAY 04 DECEMBER 2010

SAT 19:00 Life (b00p90d6)
Plants

Plants' solutions to life's challenges are as ingenious and manipulative as any animal's.

Innovative time-lapse photography opens up a parallel world where plants act like fly-paper, or spring-loaded traps, to catch insects. Vines develop suckers and claws to haul themselves into the rainforest canopy. Every peculiar shape proves to have a clever purpose. The dragon's blood tree is like an upturned umbrella to capture mist and shade its roots. The seed of a Bornean tree has wings so aerodynamic they inspired the design of early gliders. The barrel-shaped desert rose is full of water. The heliconia plant even enslaves a hummingbird and turns it into an addict for its nectar.

SAT 20:00 Choir of the Year (b00wgn3h)
2010

The best of British choirs battle it out for the ultimate accolade of Choir of the Year 2010. Just six choirs have made it through to the grand final at London's Royal Festival Hall after months of tough qualifying rounds. Aled Jones and Josie d'Arby present all the excitement and thrills of Britain's best-loved choral competition.

SAT 21:30 The Road to Coronation Street (b00ttj2r)
6.53pm, December 9th 1960, Granada Studios, Manchester. With minutes to go until the live transmission of episode one, creator Tony Warren is being sick in the toilets, actress Pat Phoenix is missing and so is the cat from the opening shot.

This is the epic story of one man's struggle to make a programme that no-one wanted. Granada's formidable bosses Sidney Bernstein and his brother Cecil are not enthusiastic, but together with producer Harry Elton and director Derek Bennett, Tony takes up the battle. He wants cobbles, a pub, seven houses and a shop, but above all he wants Northern actors. Led by casting director Margaret Morris and her young assistant Josie Scott, the hunt begins for the legendary cast - Doris Speed, Pat Phoenix, Violet Carson and William Roache. With a last-minute change of title, Coronation Street is born.

SAT 22:45 Mad Men (b00wbmsv)
Series 4

Tomorrowland

Don hires Megan to accompany him and his children on their trip to California after Betty fires Carla unexpectedly. Peggy spearheads a new campaign for a pantyhose company. Betty and Henry prepare to move to a new house in Rye.

SAT 23:30 Getting On (b00wbl9z)
Series 2

Episode 6

Darkly comic series that offers a glimpse inside a world a million miles away from traditional hospital dramas. This is the dull, dreary, dog end of the health service with paperwork to fill in, bottoms to wipe and the drama played out in a thousand tiny acts of revenge and kindness, shining a light on the way workplace relationships play out and mapping out the life of a hospital through six shifts (five days and one night) on B4 ward.

Nurse of the Year at King Edward's sees Den pushing the boat out, so it's little wonder Kim has unwisely banked on her annual assessment with Nurse Flixter being a formality with a modest pay rise in the bank.

Pippa's future is under scrutiny for different reasons as she reflects on life away from B4. Mrs Fyvie's decline worsens, with Beedy at her bedside. And the new wing may have found a new life.

SAT 00:00 Al Murray's German Adventure (b00wbl9x)
Episode 1

Making fun of the Germans has had 'Pub Landlord' comedian Al Murray's audiences laughing in the aisles, but behind the scenes Murray is a serious historian with a fascination for the real Germany.

In this two-part documentary, Al sets out to discover the truth behind the wartime jokes and banter that still plague all things German. In a breathtaking journey through one of Germany's coldest winters, he discovers a country of warm and welcoming people and two centuries of stunning arts and culture.

From Bach to Bauhaus and the Brothers Grimm, Al falls in love

with the true historical, natural and cultural beauty of this much-maligned land.

SAT 01:00 The Road to Coronation Street (b00ttj2r)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:30 today]

SAT 02:20 Choir of the Year (b00wgn3h)
[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

SUNDAY 05 DECEMBER 2010

SUN 19:00 Time to Remember (b00wbl9v)
The Need for Speed

The story of the groundbreaking men, women and machines who, on land and sea and in the air, went furthest and fastest in the first half of the 20th century, told through newsreel footage and voiceover from the original 1950s series Time to Remember.

Includes footage of Malcolm Campbell in Bluebird; the first Monaco Grand Prix; the Spitfire; Amelia Earhart; and Jean Batten, the first person to simultaneously hold the solo flight records between the UK and Australia in both directions.

SUN 19:30 How Earth Made Us (b00r390p)
Human Planet

Professor Iain Stewart explores the most recently established force - humans. It's easy to think of the human impact on the planet as a negative one, but as Iain discovers, this isn't always the case. It is clear that humans have unprecedented control over many of the planet's geological cycles. The question is, how will the human race use this power?

SUN 20:30 Masterpieces of Vienna (b008m61x)
The Tempest: Kokoschka

Series about Vienna's cultural artefacts looks at Oskar Kokoschka's expressionist masterpiece The Tempest, the product of a passionate love affair between the impoverished Viennese artist and a wealthy, older woman. The film tells the extraordinary story of their relationship and the bizarre behaviour it inspired from the rebellious Kokoschka.

SUN 21:00 Stephen Fry: Wagner and Me (b00wvpb2)
Stephen Fry explores his passion for history's most controversial composer in an extended feature-length version of a film first broadcast in Spring 2010. Stephen is Jewish and lost family in the Holocaust - can he salvage Richard Wagner's music from its dark associations with Hitler and anti-semitism?

Stephen's quest takes him behind the scenes at the legendary Bayreuth Festival Theatre, where he eavesdrops on rehearsals and discovers its backstage secrets. He also travels to the other landmarks of Wagner's extraordinary life and career in Germany, Switzerland and Russia.

Finally, he confronts the composer's dark side, investigating how Hitler appropriated Wagner's music and meeting a cellist who played in the prisoners' orchestra at Auschwitz, where some of Stephen's relatives died. What does she think of Stephen's passion for Hitler's favourite artist?

SUN 22:30 The Chaser (b00wgnx1)

Korean drama about a disgraced police detective-turned-pimp who becomes involved in a breathless race against time to catch a psychopathic serial killer after one of his girls goes missing. He has just twelve hours to find evidence against the killer, before the bureaucratic Seoul police department are forced to release him to continue his reign of terror.

SUN 00:30 How Earth Made Us (b00r390p)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:30 today]

SUN 01:30 Art of Germany (b00wbwg2)
A Divided Land

Andrew Graham-Dixon begins his exploration of German art by looking at the rich and often neglected art of the German middle ages and Renaissance.

He visits the towering cathedral of Cologne, a place which encapsulates the varied and often contradictory character of German art. In Munich he gets to grips with the earliest paintings of the Northern Renaissance, the woodcuts of Albrecht Durer and the cosmic visions of the painter Albrecht Altdorfer. Andrew also embarks on a tour of the Bavarian countryside, discovering some of the little-known treasures of

German limewood sculpture.

SUN 02:30 Stephen Fry: Wagner and Me (b00wvpb2)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

SUN 04:00 Time to Remember (b00wbl9v)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 today]

MONDAY 06 DECEMBER 2010

MON 19:00 World News Today (b00wgpn7)

The latest national and international news, exploring the day's events from a global perspective.

MON 19:30 Ancient Worlds (b00wdp11)
Return of the King

In Richard Miles's epic story of civilization, there have been plenty of examples of the great men of history, but none came close to the legend of Alexander of Macedon, known to us as 'the Great'. Uniting the fractious Greek city-states, he led them on a crusade against the old enemy, Persia, and in little more than a decade created an empire that stretched from Egypt in the west to Afghanistan in the east.

But it was Alexander's successors, the Hellenistic Kings, who had to make sense of the legacy of this charismatic adventurer. By knuckling down to the hard graft of politics, taxation and public works, they created something far more enduring than a mere legend - they built a civilization.

Richard traces Alexander's battle-scarred route through Turkey, Syria and Lebanon to Egypt and ultimately to the western Punjab, Pakistan, where he discovers fascinating traces of a city where Greek west and Buddhist east were united in an intriguing new way.

MON 20:30 Only Connect (b00wgpn9)
Series 4

Epicureans vs Wrights

Quiz show presented by Victoria Coren in which knowledge will only take you so far, as patience and lateral thinking are also vital.

In the first semi-final, three lovers of luxurious wines and exotic dishes set aside their shared passion to address the challenge of the combined wits of the Wright family.

They compete to draw together the connections between things which at first glance seem utterly random, such as completing the sequence: 1950: Soap; 1952: Tea; 1953: Cream, eggs, sweets, sugar; ????

MON 21:00 Art of Germany (b00wgpnc)
Dream and Machine

Andrew Graham-Dixon continues his exploration of German art by looking at the tumultuous 19th century and early 20th century, and how artists were at the forefront of Germany's drive to become a single nation.

Andrew travels to the north and the coastal town of Greifswald, the birthplace of Caspar David Friedrich, the most influential of the German romantics, to discover how the Baltic coast impacted on his mysterious paintings of the German landscape. He also visits Berlin and explores the art of the powerful Prussian state, which would spearhead the unification of Germany in 1871.

The episode ends with the outbreak of World War I and the attempts of artists Franz Marc and Otto Dix to rationalise the catastrophic experiences of the world's first technological war, a war driven by the innovations of Prussia.

MON 22:00 Berlin (b00p4fl4)
Ruined Visions

The story of Berlin and its buildings is one of visionary creation and terrible destruction, of human ambition and delusion. From the 19th-century architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel to the Bauhaus pioneers of Modernism and the rebuilding of the city after the fall of the Wall, it is a city that has always looked to the future.

Architect Albert Speer had grand plans to transform Berlin into a monumental Nazi capital for Adolf Hitler, and the buildings that remain from his scheme are still haunted by their terrible associations.

There is no other city in the world where the morality of the architecture has been so heavily scrutinized. Buildings with Imperial, Nazi and Communist pasts all inspire fierce debates about whether this city should acknowledge or deny its chequered history.

MON 23:00 Storyville (b00tr1q3)
The Trouble with Pirates

Documentary telling the story of the piracy explosion, with unique access to the coastal towns of war-torn Somalia, the boardrooms of the City of London, the operation hubs on board warships in the Gulf of Aden and the heartbreak of a hostage situation gone wrong.

MON 00:00 Stephen Fry: Wagner and Me (b00wv2)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 on Sunday]

MON 01:30 Art of Germany (b00wgnpc)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

MON 02:30 Berlin (b00p4f14)
[Repeat of broadcast at 22:00 today]

MON 03:30 Julia Bradbury's German Wanderlust (b00wbmsq)
The Rhine

Julia Bradbury takes her boots and backpack to the Continent to explore the landscape of Germany and the cultural movement that made it famous - Romanticism.

The Germans enjoy a relationship with walking that has lasted over 200 years. The exploration of their landscape has inspired music, literature and art, and Romanticism has even helped shape the modern German nation, as Julia discovers. By walking in four very different parts of Germany, she explores river valleys, coastlines, mountains and gorges, following in the footsteps of Richard Wagner, Caspar David Friedrich, Johannes Brahms as well as British Romantics like William Turner and Lord Byron. This is Julia's chance to discover her own sense of wanderlust.

Julia kicks off her tour with a visit to the 'Romantic Rhine', recognised as a must-see of modern Germany, with her two-day walk exploring the most stunning part of the Upper Middle Rhine. Surrounded by castles, vineyards and medieval villages, the Rhine is an obvious walking gem, yet until 200 years ago it was regarded as little more than a great transport artery. Julia sets off along the river, exploring the 19th century transformation that turned the Rhine into the pin-up of Romanticism and the emblem of the German nation.

MON 04:00 Art of Germany (b00wgnpc)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

TUESDAY 07 DECEMBER 2010

TUE 19:00 World News Today (b00wgq0g)
The latest national and international news, exploring the day's events from a global perspective.

TUE 19:30 The Sky at Night (b07hbt8)
The Great Bear

Ursa Major, the Great Bear, is a rich source of galaxies, double and variable stars and the Hubble Deep Field, through which we are able to look back 10 billion years in time. Sir Patrick Moore and his astronomical team give an intimate guide to one of the skies' most recognisable constellations.

TUE 20:00 Philip Larkin and the Third Woman (b00wqyvb)
Former poet laureate Sir Andrew Motion discovers an unseen and unpublished poem by Philip Larkin when he returns to Hull to meet one of the poet's former lovers. Speaking for the first time about her relationship with Larkin, Betty Mackereth reveals the man behind the famous poems.

TUE 20:30 Time to Remember (b00wgq0j)
In Times of Need

Clips and narration from different episodes of the 1950s Time to Remember series offer insights into the hardships and privations of the 1920s and 30s on both sides of the Atlantic.

Includes footage of the bombing in Wall Street in 1920, preparations for the 1926 UK General Strike and images of the

American dustbowl in the 1930s.

TUE 21:00 The Joy of Stats (b00wgq0l)
Documentary which takes viewers on a rollercoaster ride through the wonderful world of statistics to explore the remarkable power they have to change our understanding of the world, presented by superstar boffin Professor Hans Rosling, whose eye-opening, mind-expanding and funny online lectures have made him an international internet legend.

Rosling is a man who revels in the glorious nerdiness of statistics, and here he entertainingly explores their history, how they work mathematically and how they can be used in today's computer age to see the world as it really is, not just as we imagine it to be.

Rosling's lectures use huge quantities of public data to reveal the story of the world's past, present and future development. Now he tells the story of the world in 200 countries over 200 years using 120,000 numbers - in just four minutes.

The film also explores cutting-edge examples of statistics in action today. In San Francisco, a new app mashes up police department data with the city's street map to show what crime is being reported street by street, house by house, in near real-time. Every citizen can use it and the hidden patterns of their city are starkly revealed. Meanwhile, at Google HQ the machine translation project tries to translate between 57 languages, using lots of statistics and no linguists.

Despite its light and witty touch, the film nonetheless has a serious message - without statistics we are cast adrift on an ocean of confusion, but armed with stats we can take control of our lives, hold our rulers to account and see the world as it really is. What's more, Hans concludes, we can now collect and analyse such huge quantities of data and at such speeds that scientific method itself seems to be changing.

TUE 22:00 Accused (b00wljgl)
Series 1

Liam's Story

Series of dramas, created by Jimmy McGovern, about ordinary people as they face their day in court. Liam, a taxi driver, stands accused of a terrible crime. As he begins the long walk back to the courtroom to hear the jury's verdict we see the obsession that led him to this crime of passion.

TUE 23:00 Al Murray's German Adventure (b00wbl9x)
[Repeat of broadcast at 00:00 on Saturday]

TUE 00:00 The Joy of Stats (b00wgq0l)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

TUE 01:00 Time to Remember (b00wgq0j)
[Repeat of broadcast at 20:30 today]

TUE 01:30 Philip Larkin and the Third Woman (b00wqyvb)
[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

TUE 02:00 The Sky at Night (b07hbt8)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:30 today]

TUE 02:30 Al Murray's German Adventure (b00wbl9x)
[Repeat of broadcast at 00:00 on Saturday]

TUE 03:30 The Joy of Stats (b00wgq0l)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

WEDNESDAY 08 DECEMBER 2010

WED 19:00 World News Today (b00wgq7z)
The latest national and international news, exploring the day's events from a global perspective.

WED 19:30 A History of the World (b00sj235)
Cumbria's Atomic Pioneers

Using everyday objects to tell the history of the world, Stuart Maconie goes in search of Britain's atomic past, revealing the story of Calder Hall in Cumbria, the world's first commercial nuclear power station. Back in the 1950s, this huge industrial site was seen as a shining beacon of the future during the dark days of the Cold War.

Stuart meets the workers who were there during the royal opening by Queen Elizabeth II in 1956, and through colour archive film taken during its building and launch we see a rare snapshot of Britain's pioneering industrial days.

On his journey back through time, Stuart examines the objects that unlock the past. He discovers an invitation to the royal ceremony, how the newspapers of the time reported the 'magnificent achievement', the old piece of machinery from the station that kept breaking down, and how this now distant world was fondly viewed through the pages of the Eagle Comic.

Going behind the closed doors of Calder Hall, he reveals a sci-fi version of the future and meets those who played their part in this turning point in history.

WED 20:00 Masterpieces of Vienna (b008m62t)
Freud's Couch

Series about Vienna's cultural artefacts looks at Sigmund Freud's couch - now an iconic piece of furniture and the emblem of psychoanalysis. The film tells the story of how its arrival in Freud's Viennese apartment triggered a revolution in 20th-century thinking.

WED 20:30 Julia Bradbury's German Wanderlust (b00wgq81)
The Bavarian Alps

Julia Bradbury takes her boots and backpack to the Continent to explore the landscape of Germany and the cultural movement that made it famous - Romanticism.

The Germans enjoy a relationship with walking that has lasted over 200 years. The exploration of their landscape has inspired music, literature and art, and Romanticism has even helped shape the modern German nation, as Julia discovers. By walking in four very different parts of Germany, she explores river valleys, coastlines, mountains and gorges, following in the footsteps of Richard Wagner, Caspar David Friedrich, Johannes Brahms as well as British Romantics like William Turner and Lord Byron. This is Julia's chance to discover her own sense of wanderlust.

Julia moves to the far south of Germany for her second adventure. The Alps are a famous walking environment and, 140 years ago, were the playground of the famously eccentric Bavarian king Ludwig II. Julia's stunning mountain walk explores the fairytale story of Ludwig's life, his obsession with landscape, Romantic art and literature, and his close friendship with composer Richard Wagner. The walk's highlight is Ludwig's greatest Romantic legacy, the incredible castle of Neuschwanstein.

WED 21:00 Al Murray's German Adventure (b00wgq83)
Episode 2

Making fun of the Germans has had 'Pub Landlord' comedian Al Murray's audiences laughing in the aisles, but behind the scenes Murray is a serious historian with a fascination for the real Germany.

In the second of a two-part documentary, Al sets out to discover the truth behind the wartime jokes and banter that still plague all things German. In a breathtaking journey through one of Germany's coldest winters, he discovers a country of warm and welcoming people and two centuries of stunning arts and culture.

From Bach to Bauhaus and the Brothers Grimm, Al falls in love with the true historical, natural and cultural beauty of this much-maligned land.

WED 22:00 Lennon Naked (b00sv451)
Christopher Eccleston is John Lennon in a drama which charts his transition from Beatle John to enduring and enigmatic icon.

Writer Robert Jones articulates the burden of genius, as well as issues of fatherhood and fame, covering a period of wildly fluctuating fortunes for Lennon from 1967-71. When the Beatles' manager Brian Epstein died unexpectedly in 1967 it was a turning point in Lennon's life and the film focuses on the turbulent and intense period of change that followed, and how John was haunted by his troubled childhood.

It also reveals the impact of re-establishing contact with his long-lost father and the events that led Lennon to shed everything both personally and creatively, including calling time on the Beatles. Meeting Yoko Ono was the catalyst for this new era and the film explores the development of their extraordinary relationship, their growing disillusionment with Britain and what caused Lennon to abandon the UK to start a new life in America - a process which ultimately led Lennon to record arguably the most powerful solo work of his career.

WED 23:25 TOTP2 (b00747qb)

John Lennon Special

Steve Wright presents a mixture of pop nostalgia and music, celebrating the late John Lennon.

WED 23:55 Al Murray's German Adventure (b00wgq83)

[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

WED 00:55 Julia Bradbury's German Wanderlust (b00wgq81)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:30 today]

WED 01:25 Masterpieces of Vienna (b008m62t)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

WED 01:55 A History of the World (b00sj235)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:30 today]

WED 02:25 Lennon Naked (b00sv451)

[Repeat of broadcast at 22:00 today]

WED 03:50 Al Murray's German Adventure (b00wgq83)

[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

THURSDAY 09 DECEMBER 2010

THU 19:00 World News Today (b00wqqln)

The latest national and international news, exploring the day's events from a global perspective.

THU 19:30 The Secret Life of Chaos (b00pv1c3)

Chaos theory has a bad name, conjuring up images of unpredictable weather, economic crashes and science gone wrong. But there is a fascinating and hidden side to Chaos, one that scientists are only now beginning to understand.

It turns out that chaos theory answers a question that mankind has asked for millennia - how did we get here?

In this documentary, Professor Jim Al-Khalili sets out to uncover one of the great mysteries of science - how does a universe that starts off as dust end up with intelligent life? How does order emerge from disorder?

It's a mindbending, counterintuitive and for many people a deeply troubling idea. But Professor Al-Khalili reveals the science behind much of beauty and structure in the natural world and discovers that far from it being magic or an act of God, it is in fact an intrinsic part of the laws of physics. Amazingly, it turns out that the mathematics of chaos can explain how and why the universe creates exquisite order and pattern.

And the best thing is that one doesn't need to be a scientist to understand it. The natural world is full of awe-inspiring examples of the way nature transforms simplicity into complexity. From trees to clouds to humans - after watching this film you'll never be able to look at the world in the same way again.

THU 20:30 The Beauty of Diagrams (b00wgqlq)

Florence Nightingale

Series in which mathematician Marcus du Sautoy explores the stories behind some of the world's most familiar scientific diagrams.

Can a diagram save lives? Florence Nightingale is best known as the Lady of the Lamp, who cared for thousands of soldiers in appalling conditions during the Crimean War of 1854-6. What is less well-known is that she was a superb statistician, and the first to use a statistical graphic as a call to action.

After the war, Nightingale wrote a passionate report on why the soldiers had died in such large numbers and it revealed the astonishing fact that out of 18,000 deaths, 16,000 had been due to infectious diseases in hospital rather than battle wounds. The report included her revolutionary and controversial 'Rose Diagram', whose message was potent and direct - hospitals can kill. The diagram was designed to persuade the British government that, if sanitation in hospitals was improved, many deaths could be avoided. Nightingale's pioneering diagram was a catalyst in the creation of better and cleaner hospitals that would go on to save thousands of lives.

THU 21:00 My Father, the Bomb and Me (b00wkps1)

Academic and broadcaster Lisa Jardine turns detective on her

famous father, Jacob Bronowski. Through his personal and professional dilemmas she reveals the story of science in the 20th century, from Einstein to the atom bomb.

THU 22:00 The Ascent of Man (b0074sdz)

The Harvest of the Seasons

Dr Jacob Bronowski's classic account of the social and intellectual evolution of the human race looks at the move mankind made from nomadic pasturage to settled agriculture, with the domestication of the horse and the cultivation of wheat.

THU 22:50 The Road to Coronation Street (b00ttj2r)

[Repeat of broadcast at 21:30 on Saturday]

THU 00:05 The Chaser (b00wgnx1)

[Repeat of broadcast at 22:30 on Sunday]

THU 02:05 My Father, the Bomb and Me (b00wkps1)

[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

THU 03:05 The Ascent of Man (b0074sdz)

[Repeat of broadcast at 22:00 today]

THU 03:55 The Beauty of Diagrams (b00wgqlq)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:30 today]

FRIDAY 10 DECEMBER 2010

FRI 19:00 World News Today (b00wgrtp)

The latest national and international news, exploring the day's events from a global perspective.

FRI 19:30 What Makes a Great Tenor? (b00sm1js)

The great tenor Rolando Villazon takes us inside the world of the sexiest and most risky of all operatic voices. It's a journey which includes some of the great names of the past, such as Caruso and Lanza, and some of the brightest stars performing today, like Domingo, Alagna and Florez. We hear how they tackle their most famous roles and what the risks and rewards are.

FRI 20:30 The Highland Sessions (b0074rx7)

Episode 4

Six-part series celebrating the historical and contemporary links between Scottish and Irish Gaelic song by bringing together top exponents of both traditions to sing and play together with no audience except themselves, using a house band of their peers.

The episode opens with Da Mihi Manum (Give Me Your Hand), performed by Steve Cooney and Kathleen MacInnes. Rona Lightfoot performs canntaireachd, an oral music form traditionally used to teach and pass on pipe tunes that Rona has made her own, elevating it to a kind of Gaelic scat singing.

FRI 21:00 Still Folk Dancing... After All These Years (b00wgrtr)

Young Northumbrian folk-singing siblings Rachel and Becky Unthank take a journey around England from spring to autumn 2010 to experience its living folk dance traditions in action. They lead us through the back gardens and narrow streets of towns and villages from Newcastle to Penzance to discover the most surprising of dances, ceremonies, rituals and festivities that mark the turning of the seasons and the passing of the year.

On their journey the Unthinks learn about the evolving history of the dances, whether connected to the land and the cycles of fertility or to working customs and practices in industrial towns. The girls talk to local historians and visit Cecil Sharp House to explore the dances' 20th century revival and codification through archivist Sharp and others, and we get to enjoy extraordinary film archive of the dances through the decades which show that although the people have changed, the dances have often remained remarkably constant.

Rachel and Becky grew up clog dancing in their native Northumberland and now get to observe and try other English dances, including travellers' step dancing in Suffolk, horn dancing with huge antlers in Staffordshire and stick dancing in Oxfordshire. This curious but vibrant world of local dances flies in the face of modernisation, and sometimes of ridicule, to keep the traditions and the steps alive.

FRI 22:00 The Christmas Session (b00pcnsp)

BBC Four celebrates merry midwinter in unique style, with an

exhilarating blend of folk tradition and burlesque fun. Energetic 11-piece Bellowhead and Mercury-nominated alternative folkies The Unthinks get together with the impressive young singers Thea Gilmore and Lisa Knapp, plus other special guests.

Steered by genial host Paul Sartin, the assembled artists perform seasonal songs of their own alongside yuletide favourites, ranging from folk ballads and carols to parlour songs and carousing dance numbers, with everyone coming together for a final knees-up.

Filmed at the atmospheric Shoreditch Town Hall, the setting evokes an old music hall combined with a festive Victorian family parlour, bedecked with garlands, period lamps and fireplace. Even the audience are dressed up in old-fashioned finery and prove themselves ready to kick up their heels.

FRI 23:00 Folk at the BBC (b0074s5I)

The 50s/60s

A compilation of folk performances from the 1950s and 60s, news items on the folk movement from the vaults and newly shot performances. Featured artists include Peggy Seeger, Ewan McColl, Lonnie Donegan, Martin Carthy, AL Lloyd, the Coppers and Bob Davenport.

FRI 00:00 What Makes a Great Tenor? (b00sm1js)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:30 today]

FRI 01:00 Still Folk Dancing... After All These Years (b00wgrtr)

[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

FRI 02:00 The Christmas Session (b00pcnsp)

[Repeat of broadcast at 22:00 today]

FRI 03:00 Folk at the BBC (b0074s5I)

[Repeat of broadcast at 23:00 today]