

SATURDAY 23 MAY 2015**SAT 19:00 Wild Arabia (b01r12zm)**
The Jewel of Arabia

In a remote corner of southern Arabia one mountain range holds a remarkable secret. Swept by the annual Indian Ocean monsoon, the Dhofar mountains become a magical lost world of waterfalls and cloud forests filled with chameleons and honey badgers. Offshore, rare whales that have not bred with any others for over 60,000 years and green sea turtles come ashore in their thousands, shadowed by egg-stealing foxes. Heat-seeking cameras reveal, for the first time, striped hyenas doing battle with Arabian wolves. Meanwhile, local researchers come face to face with the incredibly rare Arabian leopard.

SAT 20:00 The Wonderful World of Blood - with Michael Mosley (b05nyyh)

Of all the wonders of the human body, there's one more mysterious than any other. Blood: five precious litres that keep us alive. Yet how much do we really know about this sticky red substance and its mysterious, life-giving force?

Michael Mosley gives up a fifth of his own blood to perform six bold experiments. From starving it of oxygen to injecting it with snake venom, Michael reveals the extraordinary abilities of blood to adapt and keep us alive. Using specialist photography, the programme reveals the beauty in a single drop. Michael even discovers how it tastes when, in a television first, he prepares a black pudding with his own blood.

Down the ages, our understanding of blood has been as much myth as science, but Michael reveals there might be truth in the old vampire legends, as he meets one of the scientists behind the latest research that shows young blood might be able to reverse the ageing process - the holy grail of modern medicine.

SAT 21:00 1864 (b05wmygd)
Episode 3

Monrad forces a new constitution through parliament that incorporates Schleswig into the Danish kingdom and, as expected, triggers a declaration of war from Prussia. Laust and Peter meet their young comrades-in-arms, as well as the experienced and mysterious Johan, and get a taste of how real the horrors of war can be. The brothers exchange letters with Inge, but Laust also sends her secret letters.

In Danish with English subtitles.

SAT 22:00 1864 (b05wmygk)
Episode 4

Peter and Laust reach Dannevirke where they are dismayed to find the historic defences almost useless, and are further disheartened to learn that their new captain is none other than Didrich. General De Meza decides, against the will of the powers-that-be in Copenhagen, to withdraw to Dybbol.

In Danish with English subtitles.

SAT 23:00 Queen - Days of Our Lives (b011r4gs)
Episode 2

The story of British rock band Queen, formed in 1971. The second half of this documentary sees Queen at the peak of their powers. With the ultimate showman in Freddie Mercury and a string of rock anthems to their name, Queen smashed attendance records with a series of stadium shows across South America.

But the band quickly learned that if reaching the top is tough, staying there is the biggest challenge of all. With a loss of focus in the studio, the decline in popularity in North America, increasing internal tension and a desire to pursue solo projects, it seemed as if the band had had its day. Then came the performance from Mercury at Live Aid and their record breaking Magic tour in 1986. Queen were back amongst the very best. They were rejuvenated and once again had the world at their feet, but then tragedy struck and threatened to tear the band apart.

Featuring musical performances, previously unseen and rare footage, and intimate interviews.

SAT 00:00 Wild Boys: The Story of Duran Duran (b007bqj)

Duran Duran came out of Birmingham and conquered the world during the 1980s. Originally a New Romantic band in full make-up and cossack pants, they rapidly became bedroom pin-ups for a generation of teenage girls.

Led by Simon Le Bon, Nick Rhodes and John Taylor, Duran Duran dominated the British and American charts in the

mid-1980s with classic singles such as Rio, Save a Prayer and Wild Boys. Pioneers of the MTV-style promo video - from the X-rated Girls on Film to Raiders of the Lost Ark spoof Hungry Like the Wolf - Duran Duran were the 80s equivalent of The Beatles in America and outsold Spandau Ballet and Wham! in their pomp.

Sixty million records later, Le Bon and Rhodes are seen touring America with their Pop Trash project from the early 2000s. The documentary reflects on the heady heights of Duran Duran's career, the cracks in their make-up plus the effects of sex, drugs and fame on ordinary boys from working-class backgrounds.

Apart from the key Durannies - Le Bon, Rhodes and John Taylor - the programme also features celebrity interviews with Debbie Harry, Yasmin Le Bon, Duran Duran managers Paul and Michael Berrow, Claudia Schiffer, Nile Rodgers and Lou Reed.

SAT 00:50 Natural World (b03fq319)
2013-2014

Killer Whales: Beneath the Surface

The killer whale was long feared as a sea monster until, in May 1964, one was brought into captivity for the first time. This spawned a journey of discovery into the killer whale's true nature.

It quickly became clear these were not mindless killers - they were, in fact, highly intelligent social creatures. Today, our understanding is deepening still further and the latest revelations are among the most sensational - not only will these top predators 'adopt' and care for injured and abandoned orphans, but it seems there's no longer just the 'killer whale'.

SAT 01:50 Wild Arabia (b01r12zm)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 today]**SAT 02:50 Fossil Wonderlands: Nature's Hidden Treasures (b03xsfq)**
Weird Wonders

Professor Richard Fortey journeys high in the Rocky Mountains to explore a 520 million-year-old fossilised seabed containing bizarre and experimental life forms that have revolutionised our understanding about the beginnings of complex life. Among the amazing finds he uncovers are marine creatures with five eyes and a proboscis, filter-feeders shaped like tulips, worm-like scavengers covered in spikes but with no identifiable head or anus, and a metre-long predator resembling a giant shrimp.

SUNDAY 24 MAY 2015**SUN 19:00 Peter Grimes on Aldeburgh Beach (b05x2wfg)**
A landmark open-air staging by Aldeburgh Music of Benjamin Britten's Peter Grimes, on the very place and beach that inspired the opera.

With the North Sea and sky as a dramatic backdrop and a first-rate cast and orchestra, this inspired production was one of the most talked about cultural events of Britten's centenary celebrations in 2013.

The opera is renowned for its visceral beauty and moving portrayal of a small seaside community struggling to accept the fisherman Peter Grimes, whose young apprentices have disappeared in suspicious circumstances.

SUN 21:20 Wild (b00793nq)
2006-07 Shorts

The Sheep Beside the Sea

Documentary telling the unlikely story of a banished flock of stoic sheep. Two hundred years ago they were turned out of their meadows on North Ronaldsay, the most northerly of the Orkney Islands. They were forced to eke out a living on the island's rocky windswept beach, a home they still share today with seals and seabirds. But, deprived of grass, how on earth have they managed to survive?

SUN 21:30 Secret Knowledge (b054fkzz)
The Private Life of a Dolls' House

Lauren Child, author, illustrator and creator of Charlie and Lola, has a secret passion - dolls' houses. She has worked on her own dolls' house for the past 30 years and her lifelong obsession continues to inspire her ideas and shape her work. But why do these interior worlds have the power to cast a spell beyond

childhood?

Lauren explores the history of dolls' houses from some of the earliest examples to their modern incarnations, speaks to craftspeople who create perfect miniatures and meets ardent collectors willing to pay big money for tiny objects of desire.

SUN 22:00 The Mystery of Murder: A Horizon Guide (b0555v7v)

There are about 600 murders each year in the UK. So, what drives people to kill? Are some people born to kill or are they driven to it by circumstances?

Michael Mosley delves into the BBC archives to chart scientists' progress as they probed the mind of the murderer to try to understand why people kill, and to find out whether by understanding murder we can prevent it.

SUN 23:00 Meat Loaf: In and out of Hell (b04xdrrb)

Since the release of the Bat Out of Hell album, Meat Loaf has possessed the kind of international status that few artists obtain. His larger-than-life persona and performances are fuelled by a passion for theatre and storytelling. This candid profile reveals the man and his music through his own testimony and from the accounts of those closest to him.

Meat Loaf's life story is one of epic proportions - he survived a childhood of domestic violence only to face years of record company rejection before eventually finding global fame. Along the way he experienced bankruptcy, health scares, bust-ups and one of the greatest comebacks of all time. All this and more is explored in the film, which features behind-the-scenes footage of his Las Vegas residency, plus plans for a new album featuring songs by Jim Steinman.

The film also revisits the Dallas of Meat Loaf's early years and includes insights from his high school friends, who reveal how Meat really got his famous moniker.

After his mother died, Meat Loaf fled Texas for the bright lights of LA. He sang in itinerant rock bands, but no-one would give him a recording contract. By 1969 he was broke and disillusioned. His break would take the form of a musical. He was offered a part in Hair, having been invited to audition whilst working as a parking attendant outside the theatre. Shortly afterwards he met Jim Steinman and the road to success really began. Yet the Hair gig was the beginning of an enduring love affair with theatre that is reflected in his singing persona today.

His first album, the now legendary Bat Out of Hell, was initially rejected by scores of record companies, yet went on to spend a staggering 485 weeks in the UK charts. The whole album is a masterwork of storytelling that Meat Loaf and Steinman worked on for four years and then battled to get heard. Meat Loaf and those who worked on the album - from Todd Rundgren to Ellen Foley - reflect on the songs, and celebrate the alchemy that resulted in such a blistering back catalogue.

When Bat Out of Hell II was finally released 15 years after the first album, it defied industry expectations, with I'd Do Anything for Love reaching number one in 28 countries. It is considered one of the greatest comebacks in music history. More albums and hits were to follow across the '90s and '00s, alongside a varied and successful acting career. Mark Kermode examines some of the roles Meat Loaf made his own, in films as diverse as The Rocky Horror Picture Show and Fight Club.

Having traversed the peaks and troughs of a career spanning the best part of 50 years, this consummate performer finally reveals what spurs him on, in this, the inside story of a bat out of hell who continues to blaze a trail into the hearts and minds of millions.

SUN 00:00 Metal Britannia (b00r600m)

Nigel Planer narrates a documentary which traces the origins and development of British heavy metal from its humble beginnings in the industrialised Midlands to its proud international triumph.

In the late 60s a number of British bands were forging a new kind of sound. Known as hard rock, it was loud, tough, energetic and sometimes dark in outlook. They didn't know it, but Deep Purple, Uriah Heep and, most significantly, Black Sabbath were defining what first became heavy rock and then eventually heavy metal.

Inspired by blues rock, progressive rock, classical music and high energy American rock, they synthesised the sound that would inspire bands like Judas Priest to take metal even further during the 70s.

By the 80s its originators had fallen foul of punk rock, creative stasis or drug and alcohol abuse. But a new wave of British heavy metal was ready to take up the crusade. With the success of bands like Iron Maiden, it went global.

Contributors include Lemmy from Motorhead, Sabbath's Tony Iommi, Ian Gillan from Deep Purple, Judas Priest singer Rob Halford, Bruce Dickinson from Iron Maiden and Saxon's Biff Byford.

SUN 01:30 Eurovision at 60 (b05vsm0d)

Hosts and competitors tell the behind-the-scenes story of 60 years of Eurovision, the greatest and maddest song contest on earth.

SUN 03:00 ABBA at the BBC (b03lyzpr)

If you fancy an hour's worth of irresistible guilty pleasures from Anni-Frid, Benny, Bjorn and Agnetha, this is the programme for you. ABBA stormed the 1974 Eurovision song contest with their winning entry Waterloo, and this programme charts the meteoric rise of the band with some of their greatest performances at the BBC.

It begins in 1974 with their first Top of the Pops appearance, and we even get to see the band entertaining holidaymakers in Torbay in a 1975 Seaside Special. There are many classic ABBA tunes from the 1979 BBC special ABBA in Switzerland, plus their final BBC appearance on the Late Late Breakfast show in 1982.

This compilation is a must for all fans and includes great archive interviews, promos and performances of some of ABBA's classics including Waterloo, Dancing Queen, Does Your Mother Know, Thank You for the Music, SOS, Fernando, Chiquitita and many more.

MONDAY 25 MAY 2015

MON 19:00 World News Today (b05wj1zg)

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

MON 19:30 Great British Railway Journeys (b01pwb7)

Series 4

Dudley to Bridgnorth

Armed with his copy of Bradshaw's Victorian railway guidebook, Michael Portillo continues his series of journeys along the tracks that helped fuel the Industrial Revolution by travelling on the stunning Severn Valley Railway.

He learns how Victorian blacksmithing was not for the faint-hearted, rides one of Britain's most modern trains and traverses the remarkable Victoria Bridge.

MON 20:00 Inside the Medieval Mind (b009wzw3)

Sex

Leading authority on the Middle Ages, Professor Robert Bartlett presents a series which examines the way we thought during medieval times. He unearths remarkable evidence of the complex passions of medieval men and women. The Church preached hatred of the flesh, promoted the cult of virginity and condemned woman as the sinful heir to Eve. Yet this was the era that gave birth to the idea of romantic love.

MON 21:00 One-Hit Wonders at the BBC (b05r7nxx)

Compilation of some indelible hits by artists we hardly heard from again, at least in a chart sense. Featuring Peter Sarstedt's Where Do You Go To (My Lovely)? - a number one in 1969 and a hit he never really matched, Trio's 1982 smash Da Da Da, Phyllis Nelson's 1985 lovers rock-style classic Move Closer, and The New Radicals' 1999 hit You Get What You Give.

We travel through the years selecting some of your favourite number ones and a few others that came close, revealing what's happened to the one-off hitmakers since and exploring the unwritten laws that help make sense of the one-hit wonder phenomenon.

MON 22:00 Country at the BBC (b08gkzvy)

Grab your partner by the hand - the BBC have raided their archive and brought to light glittering performances by country artists over the last four decades.

Star appearances include Tammy Wynette, Kris Kristofferson, Johnny Cash and, of course, Dolly Parton. All the greats have performed for the BBC at some point - on entertainment shows, in concert and at the BBC studios. Some of the rhinestones revealed are Charley Pride's Crystal Chandeliers from The Lulu Show, Emmylou Harris singing Together Again on The Old Grey Whistle Test and Glen Campbell's Rhinestone Cowboy from The Val Doonican Music Show.

We're brought up to date with modern country hits from Top of

the Pops and Later...with Jools Holland.

MON 23:00 Kate Bush at the BBC (b04f86xk)

Between 1978 and 1994, Kate Bush appeared on a variety of BBC programmes, including Saturday Night at the Mill, Ask Aspel, the Leo Sayer Show, Wogan and Top of the Pops. This compilation showcases her performances of hit songs such as Wuthering Heights, Babooshka, Running up That Hill and Hounds of Love, alongside other intriguing and lesser-known material in the BBC studios.

MON 00:00 The Last Explorers (b017zqnn)

John Muir

Neil Oliver follows in the footsteps of four Scottish explorers who planted ideas rather than flags - ideas that shaped the modern world we know today.

Set in the spectacular Yosemite Valley in California, this is the story of the father of the modern conservation movement and one of the founders of America's National Park movement. John Muir was a 19th-century adventurer who explored the natural world and devoted his life and work to persuade others to see the sacred beauty of his discoveries.

MON 01:00 Guilty Pleasures: Luxury in... (b012cnkx)

The Middle Ages

Luxury isn't just a question of expensive and the beautiful objects for the rich and the powerful. It has always been much more important than that, especially in the ancient and medieval worlds.

This second episode follows the clash between luxury and Christianity which convulsed medieval Europe. Luxury was a roadblock on the road to heaven, so the church was quick to condemn the jewellery, gorgeous weapons and pattern-welded swords of the early medieval world. Yet the church also had its own form of luxury, in the form of spectacular manuscripts designed to do the work of God through astonishment and display. And to some extent it worked, as by 1200 medieval boys' toys like warhorses and tournaments came to be suffused with Christian ideas of chivalry and gentility.

But by that time the growth of trade had brought new luxuries to Europe, condemned in turn by the church, like exotic spices from the East. Spicy food led to spicy conduct, said the preachers, and to the sin of lechery. But soon the Black Death paradoxically liberated luxury from the church by initiating a new world of relative luxury and consumerism - the luxury world we inhabit today.

MON 02:00 Inside the Medieval Mind (b009wzw3)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

MON 03:00 How to Get Ahead (b03xsgwk)

At Medieval Court

Writer, broadcaster and Newsnight arts correspondent Stephen Smith looks back at the Medieval Age to find out what it took to get ahead at the court of Richard II. Richard presided over the first truly sophisticated and artistic court in England. Painters, sculptors, poets, tailors, weavers and builders flocked to court to make their fortunes. But these were dangerous times. Being close to Richard brought many a courtier to a sticky end. Featuring David Tennant and Clarissa Dickson Wright.

TUESDAY 26 MAY 2015

TUE 19:00 World News Today (b05wj1zm)

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

TUE 19:30 Great British Railway Journeys (b01pwc0k)

Series 4

Welshpool to Aberystwyth

Armed with his copy of Bradshaw's Victorian railway guidebook, Michael Portillo concludes his series of journeys along the tracks that helped fuel the Industrial Revolution by travelling to the Victorian seaside resort of Aberystwyth.

He experiences Victorian entertainment, hears how the railways took Welsh textiles into even the most exclusive households and unleashes the power of a 19th-century engineering triumph.

TUE 20:00 The Secret History of Our Streets (b01kn6jn)

Series 1

Reverdy Road

In 1886 Charles Booth embarked on an ambitious plan to visit every one of London's streets to record the social conditions of residents. His project took him 17 years.

Once he had finished he had constructed a groundbreaking series of maps which recorded the social class and standing of inhabitants. These maps transformed the way Victorians felt about their capital city.

This series takes six archetypal London streets as they are now, discovering how they have fared since Booth's day.

Booth colour-coded each street, from yellow for the 'servant-keeping classes', down to black for the 'vicious and semi-criminal'. With the aid of maps the series explores why certain streets have been transformed from desperate slums to become some of the most desirable and valuable property in the UK, whilst others have barely changed.

This landmark series features residents past and present, exploring how what happened on the street in the last 125 years continues to shape the lives of those who live there now.

The fifth episode features Reverdy Road, Bermondsey, which has endured as an enclave of working-class respectability. When Booth visited in 1900, he was impressed by the houses and gardens, and by the broad and clean streets.

Older residents recall life on the street during the war, when three houses were bombed, and trips to the hop fields of Kent. They also remember the work of a pioneer of public health, Dr Alfred Salter, who lived in the house on the corner of the street, a house that has been occupied by a doctor since 1880.

TUE 21:00 We Need to Talk About Kevin (b01p241z)

Eva puts her ambitions and career aside to give birth to Kevin. The relationship between mother and son is difficult from the very first years. When Kevin is 15, he does something irrational and unforgivable in the eyes of the entire community. Eva grapples with her own feelings of grief and responsibility. Did she ever love her son? And how much of what Kevin did was her fault?

TUE 22:45 Twin Sisters: A World Apart (b053pxdt)

Documentary telling the poignant true story of twin sisters from China, found as babies in a cardboard box in 2003 and adopted by two separate sets of parents - one from California, the other from a remote fishing village in Norway.

In the US, Mia is raised a typical all-American girl, with a bustling life filled with violin lessons, girl scouts and soccer, while Alexandra grows up in the quietude of the breathtakingly beautiful but isolated village of Fresvik, Norway.

Neither of the adoptive parents were told their daughters were twins, but a chance sighting at the orphanage enabled them to keep in touch, until a DNA test proved their hunch had been right. Both girls grew up knowing they had an identical twin living on the other side of the world.

The film tells the remarkable story of their parallel journey, punctuated by only the odd visit, videos and photographs - until they meet for a longer visit in Norway when they are eight years old. Despite living completely different lives and speaking different languages, they are mirrors of each other - the magical bond between them is extraordinary.

This is the story of our notions of family - the genetic ones we inherit and the ones we create.

TUE 23:45 One-Hit Wonders at the BBC (b05r7nxx)

[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 on Monday]

TUE 00:45 The Secret History of Our Streets (b01kn6jn)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

TUE 01:45 The Wonderful World of Blood - with Michael Mosley (b05nyyh)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 on Saturday]

TUE 02:45 Twin Sisters: A World Apart (b053pxdt)

[Repeat of broadcast at 22:45 today]

WEDNESDAY 27 MAY 2015

WED 19:00 World News Today (b05wj1zs)

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

WED 19:30 Great British Railway Journeys (b01q04ry)
Series 4

Portsmouth to Gomshall

Michael Portillo takes to the tracks with his copy of Bradshaw's Victorian railway guidebook, he travels the length and breadth of the British Isles to see what of Bradshaw's world remains. Michael is travelling port to port, from the centuries old naval hub of Portsmouth to the historic Grimsby docks. He feeds the crew of Britain's newest warship, discovers how the Victorians planned to repel a possible French invasion and learns that there's well-established industry where one might least expect to find it.

WED 20:00 Britain by Bike (b004lqf)
North Devon

Clare Balding sets out on a two-wheel odyssey to re-discover Britain from the saddle of a touring cycle.

In a six-part series, Clare follows the wheeltracks of compulsive cyclist and author Harold Briercliffe whose evocative guide books of the late 1940s lovingly describe by-passed Britain - a world of unspoiled villages, cycle touring clubs and sunny B roads.

Carrying a set of Harold's Cycling Touring Guides for company and riding his very own bicycle, Clare embarks on six iconic cycle rides to try and find the world he described - if it is still there.

Her first journey takes Clare to the rugged and beautiful Atlantic coast of north Devon - from Lynmouth, scene of Britain's worst flood disaster in the early 1950s, to Ilfracombe via Little Switzerland, and a hidden silver mine whose riches probably helped England win the Battle of Agincourt.

WED 20:30 Our World (b05t3fd2)
Kidnapped For A Decade

For years they were imprisoned, beaten, and raped. Now Amanda Berry and Gina DeJesus, two of the girls who were kidnapped by Ariel Castro in Cleveland, Ohio, speak about their harrowing ordeal. They, along with Castro's third victim Michelle Knight, managed to escape in 2013. Berry and DeJesus talk to Kirsty Wark about their kidnap, incarceration, and how they survived.

WED 21:00 The Real White Queen and Her Rivals (b037mw8c)
Episode 2

Author Philippa Gregory tells the interweaving stories of the women who were decisive figures in the Wars of the Roses. Gregory brings a rich story of intrigue, betrayal, love and bloodshed vividly to life. For Gregory, these women matter as much as the kings and nobles in this age of instability and dynastic feud.

She describes the lives of Elizabeth Woodville, the White Queen, a commoner whose beauty enchanted a king and who suffered shocking tragedy as she struggled to hold a grip on the throne for herself and for her children.

Gregory also brings to life the woman who would be queen to Richard III, the heiress Anne Neville. Gregory depicts a young woman born into power and privilege who survives traumatic losses to become queen. We see her grow from a political pawn of her noble father to a determined and canny player on the national stage.

Gregory also reveals the real character of Margaret Beaufort, mother of the Tudor dynasty. This extraordinary woman devotes her life to the cause of her son Henry Tudor and plays a cunning game of alliance and conspiracy to keep his claim to the throne of England alive. She is never queen, but ends the era more powerful than Queen Elizabeth or Queen Anne. Her brilliant strategic plotting steers her exiled son to the pinnacle of power.

WED 22:00 The Golden Age of Canals (b01173hf)
Most people thought that when the working traffic on canals faded away after the war, it would be the end of their story. But they were wrong. A few diehard enthusiasts and boat owners campaigned, lobbied and dug, sometimes with their bare hands, to keep the network of narrow canals open.

Some of these enthusiasts filmed their campaigns and their home movies tell the story of how, in the teeth of much political opposition, they saved the inland waterways for the nation and, more than 200 years after they were first built, created a second golden age of the canals.

Stan Offley, an IWA activist from Ellesmere Port, filmed his

boating trips around the wide canals in the 40s, 50s and 60s in 16mm colour. But equally charming is the film made by Ed Frangleton, with help from Harry Arnold, of a hostel boat holiday on the Llangollen Canal in 1961. There are the films shot by ex-working boatman Ike Argent from his home in Nottinghamshire and looked after by his son Barry.

There is astonishing film of the last days of working boats, some shot by John Pyper when he spent time with the Beecheys in the 60s, film taken by Keith Christie of the last days of the cut around the BCN, and the films made by Keith and his mate Tony Gregory of their attempts to keep working the canals through their carrying company, Midland Canal Transport.

There is film of key restorations, the Stourbridge 16 being talked about with great wit and affection by one of the leading activists in that watershed of restorations in the mid-60s, David Tomlinson, and John Maynard's beautiful films of the restoration of the Huddersfield, 'the impossible restoration', shot over two decades.

All these and more are in the programme alongside the people who made the films and some of the stars of them. Together they tell the story of how, in the years after 1945, a few people fought the government like David fought Goliath to keep canals open and restore ones that had become defunct, and won against all the odds.

WED 23:00 Inside the Medieval Mind (b009wzwb)
[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 on Monday]

WED 00:00 Tails You Win: The Science of Chance (p00yh2rc)

Smart and witty, jam-packed with augmented-reality graphics and fascinating history, this film, presented by professor David Spiegelhalter, tries to pin down what chance is and how it works in the real world. For once this really is 'risky' television.

The film follows in the footsteps of The Joy of Stats, which won the prestigious Grierson Award for Best Science/Natural History programme of 2011. Now the same blend of wit and wisdom, animation, graphics and gleeful nerdery is applied to the joys of chance and the mysteries of probability, the vital branch of mathematics that gives us a handle on what might happen in the future. Professor Spiegelhalter is ideally suited to that task, being Winton professor for the public understanding of risk at Cambridge University, as well as being a recent Winter Wipeout contestant on BBC TV.

How can you maximise your chances of living till you're 100? Why do many of us experience so many spooky coincidences? Should I take an umbrella? These are just some of the everyday questions the film tackles as it moves between Cambridge, Las Vegas, San Francisco and... Reading.

Yet the film isn't shy of some rather loftier questions. After all, our lives are pulled about and pushed around by the mysterious workings of chance, fate, luck, call it what you will. But what actually is chance? Is it something fundamental to the fabric of the universe? Or rather, as the French 18th century scientist Pierre Laplace put it, 'merely a measure of our ignorance'.

Along the way Spiegelhalter is thrilled to discover One Million Random Digits, probably the most boring book in the world, but one full of hidden patterns and shapes. He introduces us to the cheery little unit called the micromort (a one-in-a-million chance of dying), taking the rational decision to go sky-diving because doing so only increases his risk of dying this year from 7000 to 7007 micromorts. And in one sequence he uses the latest infographics to demonstrate how life expectancy has increased in his lifetime and how it is affected by our lifestyle choices - drinking, obesity, smoking and exercise.

Did you know that by running regularly for half an hour a day you can expect to extend your life by half an hour a day? So all very well... if you like running.

Ultimately, Tails You Win: The Science of Chance tells the story of how we discovered how chance works, and even to work out the odds for the future; how we tried - but so often failed - to conquer it; and how we may finally be learning to love it, increasingly setting uncertainty itself to work to help crack some of science's more intractable problems.

Other contributors include former England cricketer Ed Smith, whose career was cut down in its prime through a freak, unlucky accident; Las Vegas gambling legend Mike Shackelford, the self-styled 'Wizard of Odds'; and chief economist of the Bank of England, Spencer Dale.

WED 01:00 The Mystery of Murder: A Horizon Guide (b0555v7v)
[Repeat of broadcast at 22:00 on Sunday]

WED 02:00 Britain by Bike (b004lqf)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

WED 02:30 Our World (b05t3fd2)
[Repeat of broadcast at 20:30 today]

WED 03:00 The Golden Age of Canals (b01173hf)
[Repeat of broadcast at 22:00 today]

THURSDAY 28 MAY 2015

THU 19:00 World News Today (b05wj1zy)

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

THU 19:30 Top of the Pops (b05x1jkh)

Peter Powell presents chart hits of the week, with performances from the Human League, Prelude, Michael Jackson, Matchbox, Jona Lewie, the Ruts, OMD and Dexys Midnight Runners, and a dance performance from Legs & Co.

THU 20:00 Pompeii: Life and Death in a Roman Town (b00wqfxc)

Pompeii: one of the most famous volcanic eruptions in history. We know how its victims died, but this film sets out to answer another question - how did they live? Gleaning evidence from an extraordinary find, Cambridge professor and Pompeii expert Mary Beard provides new insight into the lives of the people who lived in the shadow of Mount Vesuvius before its cataclysmic eruption.

In a dark cellar in Oplontis, just three miles from the centre of Pompeii, 54 skeletons who didn't succumb to the torrent of volcanic ash are about to be put under the microscope. The remains will be submitted to a barrage of tests that will unlock one of the most comprehensive scientific snapshots of Pompeian life ever produced - and there are some big surprises in store.

Using the latest forensic techniques it is now possible to determine what those who perished in the disaster ate and drank, where they came from, what diseases they suffered, how rich they were and, perhaps even more astonishingly, the details of their sex lives.

The way the remains were found in the cellar already provides an invaluable clue about the lives of the people they belonged to. On one side of the room were individuals buried with one of the most stunning hauls of gold, jewellery and coins ever found in Pompeii. On the other were people buried with nothing. It looked like the stark dividing line of a polarised ancient society - a room partitioned between super-rich and abject poor. But on closer examination the skeletons reveal some surprises about life in Pompeii, of a place where slaves could eat a diet as rich and healthy as their masters, where colour was not a barrier to privilege or success and where even the poor could enjoy a standard of healthcare not realised again for another 18 centuries.

Mary takes us on journey from the cellar to a small ancient town which nevertheless boasted more than 50 fast food joints, dozens of rowdy bars, a 200-foot-long swimming pool and even its own brothel. The film opens the lid on this most famous of ancient towns to reveal Pompeii as it's never been seen before.

THU 21:00 Castles: Britain's Fortified History (b04t6n19)
Instruments of Invasion

Sam Willis looks at the history of the castle from its first appearance with the Normans in 1066 to the longest siege on English soil at Kenilworth Castle 200 years later. The castle arrived as an instrument of invasion but soon became a weapon with which unruly barons challenged the Crown. Tintagel Castle, the place where King Arthur is said to have been conceived, is also on the itinerary. It remains one of the most evocative of castles to this day, drawing visitors from around the world with its tales of myth and legend.

THU 22:00 Wild Arabia (b01r12zm)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Saturday]

THU 23:00 Timeshift (b00x7c3z)
Series 10

The Golden Age of Coach Travel

Documentary which takes a glorious journey back to the 1950s, when the coach was king. From its early origins in the charabanc, the coach had always been the people's form of transport. Cheaper and more flexible than the train, it allowed those who had travelled little further than their own villages and

towns a first heady taste of exploration and freedom. It was a safe capsule on wheels from which to venture out into a wider world.

The distinctive livery of the different coach companies was part of a now-lost world, when whole communities crammed into coach after coach en route to pleasure spots like Blackpool, Margate and Torquay. With singsongs, toilet stops and the obligatory pub halt, it didn't matter how long it took to get there because the journey was all part of the adventure.

THU 00:00 Top of the Pops (b05x1jkh)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:30 today]

THU 00:40 Art of China (b04cryjg)

Episode 2

Andrew Graham-Dixon travels to the Yellow mountains in southern China to understand the power of Chinese landscape painting. The period from the 10th to the 15th centuries - from the Song to the Ming dynasties - was the golden age of art in China. Andrew discovers an emperor so in love with art and beauty that he neglected to rule his country and scholar artists who fled the Mongol invasion to immerse themselves in nature, combining wondrous landscape painting and calligraphy. While Europe was still in the Dark Ages, Chinese art was being reborn.

THU 01:40 The Last Explorers (b017zqnn)

[Repeat of broadcast at 00:00 on Monday]

THU 02:40 Castles: Britain's Fortified History (b046n19)

[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

FRIDAY 29 MAY 2015

FRI 19:00 World News Today (b05wj205)

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

FRI 19:30 Secret Knowledge (b05wps6k)

Nina Simone & Me with Laura Mvula

Over half a century since she first performed her songs, Nina Simone is more popular than ever. From Sinnerman to Mississippi Goddam, Feeling Good to My Baby Just Cares for Me, she is an artist with an extraordinary songbook that mixes jazz, blues, soul and even classical.

British soul singer Laura Mvula travels to New York to celebrate the Nina songs that mean most to her and explore their musical roots. Performing with a Harlem gospel choir, uncovering the influence of Nina's classical training and meeting Simone's long-time guitarist Al Shackman, Laura presents a personal tribute to the genius of her musical hero.

FRI 20:00 Wynton Marsalis Plays Blue Note: Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra (b05wps6p)

Acclaimed trumpeter/bandleader Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra play a selection of classic tunes from the legendary American jazz label Blue Note composed by the likes of Horace Silver, Bud Powell and McCoy Tyner on the label's 75th anniversary, recorded live at Royal Hall, Harrogate as part of Harrogate International Festivals in June 2014.

FRI 21:00 When Pop Ruled My Life: The Fans' Story (b05wn8hf)

Journalist Kate Mossman explores the unique relationship between artist and fan, from The Beatles to One Direction, and her own evolving fascination with Queen.

FRI 22:00 Pop Life (b01cytgk)

I'm in a Boy Band

An exploration of these musical band of brothers from the inside out. How do boy bands work and what is it like to be in one? And what is the secret of their popularity?

A star-packed, cross-generational cast - from pioneering Motown legends like the Four Tops and the Jackson 5 to 21st-century boys like One Direction and JLS - speak frankly about what it is really like to follow the boy band dream.

FRI 23:00 Storyville (b0074nrj)

Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars

Classic rock film documenting David Bowie's last public

appearance as his androgynous alter ego Ziggy Stardust. This memorable final concert at the Hammersmith Odeon was filmed by DA Pennebaker, famous for such 1960s rock documentaries as Don't Look Back and Monterey Pop. The 17 songs performed include Changes, Time and Suffragette City.

FRI 00:30 When Pop Ruled My Life: The Fans' Story (b05wn8hf)

[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

FRI 01:30 Pop Life (b01cytgk)

[Repeat of broadcast at 22:00 today]

FRI 02:30 Storyville (b0074nrj)

[Repeat of broadcast at 23:00 today]