

SATURDAY 15 DECEMBER 2018

SAT 19:00 Britain's Lost Waterlands: Escape to Swallows and Amazons Country (b07k18jf)

Documentary which follows presenters Dick Strawbridge and Alice Roberts as they explore the spectacular British landscapes that inspired children's author Arthur Ransome to write his series Swallows and Amazons.

The landscapes he depicted are based on three iconic British waterlands. The beauty and drama of the Lake District shaped by ancient glaciers and rich in wildlife and natural resources, the shallow man-made waterways of the Norfolk broads so crucial to farming and reed production, and the coastal estuaries and deep-water harbours of the Suffolk coastline shaped by ferocious tides and crucial to trade.

Engineer and keen sailor Dick uses vintage boats to explore the landscapes and meet people whose lives are shaped by the water, while wildlife enthusiast Alice explores the rich shorelines, interrogating the underlying geography and meeting the wildlife. Together they evoke the nostalgia of Ransome's writing and a bygone era of childhood freedom and adventure, but they also explore the economic significance of these special locations and the ways in which water was harnessed to change the course of British history.

SAT 20:00 The Queen Mary: Greatest Ocean Liner (b07d2wy4)

With exclusive access to the magnificent liner and its extensive archive of film and photographs, this documentary explores the action-packed life of the Clyde-built ship - an epic journey through some of the most dynamic periods of the 20th century.

Built with the blood and sweat of the master craftsmen of the Clydebank shipyards, she helped drag a nation from the depths of the great depression and set sail as a symbol of new hope and a better future. Leaving Southampton on 27 May 1936, her maiden voyage to New York set a new benchmark in transatlantic travel. Designed in peacetime to link the old world with the new, she ferried movie stars, politicians and royalty across the Atlantic, luxuriously cocooned in an art-deco floating palace.

Then, in 1939, she was transformed to challenge the fury of the Nazis in the Battle of the Atlantic. With a wartime record to rival that of the highest-ranking general, she carried whole armies through enemy-infested seas. Hitler offered a bonus of \$250,000 and the Iron Cross to any U-boat captain who could sink the Queen Mary.

When the war was over, the Queen Mary gave passage to thousands of British war brides and children who planned a new life in the New World. The Queen Mary was a great attraction to the rich and famous celebrities of the 1950s and 60s.

From an exclusive interview with singer Johnny Mathis, we find out what it was like to perform on the rough seas of the Atlantic. The liner continued in service until 1967 and is now a floating luxury hotel and museum docked in a custom-made lagoon in Long Beach, California.

SAT 21:00 The Sinner (m0001ktg)

Series 1

Episode 5

Cora's memories of events begin to return. Ambrose finds a young person's body in the woods, but his progress is hampered by the arrival of Captain Anne Farmer.

SAT 21:40 The Sinner (m0001ktj)

Series 1

Episode 6

Detective Ambrose decides to let Cora visit the Beverwyck club. Will she remember why she stabbed Frankie Belmont?

SAT 22:22 Easter Island: Mysteries of a Lost World (b03srmm6)

The contrast between the majestic statues of Easter Island and the desolation of their surroundings is stark. For decades Easter Island, or Rapa Nui as the islanders call it, has been seen as a warning from history for the planet as a whole - wilfully expend natural resources and the collapse of civilisation is inevitable.

But archaeologist Dr Jago Cooper believes this is a disastrous misreading of what happened on Easter Island. He believes that its culture was a success story not a failure, and the real reasons for its ultimate demise were far more shocking. Cooper argues that there is an important lesson that the experience of Easter Island can teach the rest of the world, but it doesn't begin by blaming its inhabitants for their own downfall.

This film examines the latest scientific and archaeological evidence to reveal a compelling new narrative, one that sees the famous statues as only part of a complex culture that thrived in isolation. Cooper finds a path between competing theories about what happened to Easter Island to make us see this unique place in a fresh light.

SAT 23:50 Top of the Pops (m0001jgn)

Peter Powell and Steve Wright present the pop chart programme, first broadcast on 6 November 1986. Featuring Bon Jovi, Peter Gabriel and Kate Bush, Red Box, Swing out Sister, Duran Duran, Berlin and The Pretenders.

SAT 00:25 Top of the Pops (m0001jgq)

Janice Long and John Peel present the pop chart programme, first broadcast on 20 November 1986, featuring Europe, Simple Minds, Swing Out Sister, Erasure, Bon Jovi, Berlin and Red Box.

SAT 00:55 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 Unthanks 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.

SAT 01:55 Britain's Lost Waterlands: Escape to Swallows and Amazons Country (b07k18jf)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 today]

SAT 02:55 The Queen Mary: Greatest Ocean Liner (b07d2wy4)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

SUNDAY 16 DECEMBER 2018

SUN 19:00 A History of Christianity (b00p90kk)

God in the Dock

Diarmaid MacCulloch's own life story makes him a symbol of a distinctive feature about Western Christianity - scepticism, a tendency to doubt which has transformed both Western culture and Christianity.

In the final programme in the series, he asks where that change came from. He challenges the simplistic notion that faith in Christianity has steadily ebbed away before the relentless advance of science, reason and progress, and shows instead how the tide of faith perversely flows back in.

Despite the attacks of Newton, Voltaire, the French Revolutionaries and Darwin, Christianity has shown a remarkable resilience. The greatest damage to Christianity was actually inflicted to its moral credibility by the two great wars of the 20th century and by its entanglement with Fascism and Nazism. And yet it is during crisis that the Church has rediscovered deep and enduring truths about itself, which may even be a clue to its future.

SUN 20:00 Concorde: A Supersonic Story (b097vtv3)

The life of the most glamorous plane ever built, told by the people whose lives she touched. We uncover rare footage telling the forgotten row between the French and British governments over the name of Concorde that threatened to derail the whole project. On the eve of the opening of Bristol's multi-million-pound aerospace museum, a cast of engineers, flight technicians and frequent fliers tell the supersonic story aided by Lord Heseltine and Dame Joan Collins - and we meet the passenger who shared an intimate moment with The Rolling Stones.

Narrated by Sophie Okonedo.

SUN 21:00 Charles Dickens and the Invention of Christmas (b008lykb)

Griff Rhys Jones reveals how Dickens created the idea of a traditional family Christmas through one of his best-known books, A Christmas Carol. From the moment it was published in 1843, the story of miserly Ebenezer Scrooge captured the

imagination of Victorian Britain. Santa Claus, Christmas cards and crackers were invented around the same time, but it was Dickens's book that boosted the craze for Christmas, above all promoting the idea that Christmas is best celebrated with the family.

Interviewees include former on-screen Scrooge, Patrick Stewart, and writer Lucinda Hawksley, great-great-great-granddaughter of Charles Dickens himself.

SUN 22:00 A Christmas Carol (m0001kwg)

Simon Callow enacts the story of Ebenezer Scrooge, the miserly owner of an old counting house, who is visited by the ghost of his dead business partner, Jacob Marley, on Christmas Eve. Marley warns Scrooge he is doomed in the afterlife unless he pays heed and learns from three ghosts who will visit him during the night. The Ghosts of Christmas Past, Christmas Present and Christmas Yet to Come show Scrooge how his mean, uncaring behavior has oppressed those around him as they visit episodes from his past, his present and his future life. By the end Scrooge is humbled and redeemed and transforms into a generous, kind-hearted man.

Viewers can listen in stereo or binaural via headphones

SUN 23:15 Timeshift (b06pm5vf)

Series 15

How Britain Won the Space Race: The Story of Bernard Lovell and Jodrell Bank

The unlikely story of how one man with some ex-WWII army equipment eventually turned a muddy field in Cheshire into a key site in the space race. That man was Bernard Lovell, and his telescope at Jodrell Bank would be used at the height of the Cold War by both the Americans and the Russians to track their competing spacecraft. It also put Britain at the forefront of radio astronomy, a new science which transformed our knowledge of space and provided the key to understanding the most mind-bending theory of the beginnings of the universe - the Big Bang.

SUN 00:15 Small Island (b00pdyh3)

Episode 1

Lives and loves entwine in Andrea Levy's award-winning story of Jamaicans and Londoners involved in the Second World War.

London 1948: Hortense joins Gilbert, her new husband, in England, where he is lodging with Queenie Bligh. The women have both married in unpromising circumstances as love is a luxury neither can afford. As Hortense remembers her life in Jamaica and the profound love she had for Michael and his betrayal of her, Queenie also remembers her night of passion with the same Michael when her husband was away at war. Initially suspicious of each other, will they uncover the secret they share?

SUN 01:40 Small Island (b00ph9I4)

Episode 2

The emotional and moving climax to the stories of Hortense, Queenie and Gilbert whose lives entwine in post Second World War London.

Hortense begins her new life in England and soon learns it is not the golden land she hoped it would be. She and Gilbert suffer racism and ignorance, but in adversity they discover new qualities in each other and begin to fall in love. Queenie is shocked when her husband Bernard returns to her after years away. When she goes into labour and has a baby by a mysterious father, the lives of all four are changed forever.

MONDAY 17 DECEMBER 2018

MON 19:00 University Challenge (b0918vfh)

Christmas 2017

Queen Mary College, London v Cardiff University

It is the penultimate first-round match in the Christmas quiz for alumni, and both teams are doing battle for a place in the semis. They are Queen Mary College, London, with Iron Maiden legend Bruce Dickinson and broadcaster Adrian Chiles, against Cardiff University, with BBC World News presenter Laura Trevelyan and former cycling world champion Nicole Cooke.

Jeremy Paxman asks the questions.

MON 19:30 Turtle, Eagle, Cheetah: A Slow Odyssey (m0001kwx)

A Turtle's Journey

Ride on board with a green sea turtle as it swims around its spectacular coral reef home of Sipidan in Malaysia. Using only natural sounds and elegant embedded graphics delivering detailed information, this is an immersive journey into the turtles' world like no other.

The turtle embarks on its daily routine, revealing how they utilise all the different areas of the reef, from the inner shallows to the deep drop-off – introducing us to all the fish and animals that they share one of the richest and most diverse places on our planet with in a mesmerising half-hour.

The turtles were filmed for Blue Planet II and part of an ongoing study into their behaviour for the Marine Research Foundation.

MON 20:00 Tudor Monastery Farm (b03ndb8c)
Christmas

Historian Ruth Goodman and archaeologists Tom Pinfold and Peter Ginn turn the clock back 500 years to rediscover how the farms of Tudor England celebrated the 12 days of Christmas.

Although Christmas was celebrated very differently in Tudor times, if anything the celebrations were even bigger. All work stopped on Christmas Eve for 12 days of revelry and feasting. While Peter and Tom decorate the farmhouse with holly and ivy, Ruth prepares grand banquets for the farm workers. The Christmas Day feast was particularly special and featured a pig's head rather than a turkey as its centrepiece.

Most farmers could not afford to feast every day, but the monasteries held a special mass and banquet on each of the 12 days of Christmas. The fifth day, the Feast of Thomas Becket, was particularly important. Red meat was thought to stimulate virility, so monks ate poultry, such as swan and game. Tom and Ruth learn the art of falconry - the main way of catching game birds. The team also indulge in archery, the most popular sport of the era, whilst Tom learns how to make bagpipes, the most widely played instrument of the day.

The culmination of Christmas was marked by a frenzy of music, food and alcohol. The main treat was twelfth night cake. A dried pea was hidden in the cake - the precursor to the sixpence in a Christmas pudding - and whoever found it would be appointed the Lord of Misrule for the night, leading the celebrations. Tudor life was hierarchical and strictly organised, but at Christmas the rules were relaxed and the roles reversed.

Finally the revellers head out 'wassailing' - an early version of carol singing, which originated many songs still sung today, such as We Wish You a Merry Christmas and Ding Dong Merrily on High.

MON 21:00 Eric, Ernie and Me (b09ksz61)

For over a decade, the Liverpudlian ex-market stall trader Eddie Braben penned Morecambe and Wise's material, reshaping the double act into the Eric and Ernie that the nation took to its heart. But it wasn't all sunshine.

This comedy-drama follows the story of how The Golden Triangle was formed and celebrates the man behind Morecambe and Wise's greatest successes.

In 1969 Eddie Braben was persuaded by the BBC's then Head of Light Entertainment Bill Cotton to make the journey to London to meet Eric and Ernie and their producer John Ammonds. It wasn't a meeting of the minds. But there was a spark, something different and special that Braben saw in the music hall double act who had yet to crack their on-screen presence. He set out to uncover the essence of what would transform them into television's most beloved entertainers.

What followed was years of dedication, determination and hard graft - comedy comes at a price. With the help and support of his wife Deidree, Eddie dug deep, taking on a huge scripting workload that saw Eric and Ernie take over the living rooms and hearts of the UK population.

Year on year a new series, a new Christmas special, incredible celebrity guests and the never-ending commute from home in Liverpool to work in London saw Eddie work himself to the point of exhaustion. He was a man desperate for a break but driven by perfection and the need to make people laugh.

The film culminates in a journey to the iconic 1977 Christmas Show, celebrates a decade of enormous success for both Braben and Morecambe and Wise, whilst not shying away from the pressure and pain Eddie went through to help create the screen work of Britain's beloved double act.

MON 22:00 Steptoe and Son (p031d1p1)
The Party

Harold books a Christmas holiday to Majorca for himself, causing Albert to fall mysteriously ill. Harold cancels the trip and decides to hold a party instead.

MON 22:45 Storyville (b0394h53)
Richard Pryor: Omit the Logic

Portrait of legendary comedian Richard Pryor which chronicles his life from his troubled youth to his meteoric rise as one of the most respected - and controversial - comic actors of the 20th century. Often misunderstood during the height of his celebrity, the film lays bare the demons with which he struggled, reminding us just how daring and dangerous artistic freedom can be.

Featuring appearances from comedy royalty including Mel Brooks and Robin Williams, it also offers unprecedented access to members of his family and inner circle and features rarely seen footage of the artist at work.

MON 00:05 Mark Lawson Talks To... (m0001kx1)
Galton and Simpson

Galton and Simpson talk about their famous creations Hancock's Half Hour and Steptoe and Son, how they met each other in hospital, and why they stopped working together.

MON 01:05 An Art Lovers' Guide (b09yndw6)
Series 2

Lisbon

In the first of a series of city adventures, Janina Ramirez and Alastair Sooke head to Lisbon, rapidly becoming one of Europe's most popular tourist destinations.

Winding through the city's cobbled streets, from its steep hills to the picturesque shore line, the cultural riches they encounter reveal the city's fascinating history.

From a spectacular monument, to the maritime globetrotting of Portugal's 'golden age and the work of a photographer documenting the city's large African population, they discover a complex history of former glories and a darker, slave-trading past.

Their journey also uncovers the impact of twentieth century dictatorship on the city's artistic and cultural life, through the work of contemporary artists Paula Rego and Joana Vasconcelos.

And they discover how the city's location on the west coast of Europe, looking out to the Atlantic, has shaped the cosmopolitan spirit of the city: in one of the city's Fado clubs, Alastair and Nina enjoy the popular Portuguese folk music, whose beautiful melodies celebrate a yearning for home, once sung by sailors dreaming of their return.

MON 02:05 Turtle, Eagle, Cheetah: A Slow Odyssey (m0001kwx)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:30 today]

MON 02:35 Concorde: A Supersonic Story (b097vt13)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 on Sunday]

TUESDAY 18 DECEMBER 2018**TUE 19:00 University Challenge (b091944b)**
Christmas 2017

Brunel University v Reading University

It is the last first-round match in the Christmas series for university alumni when two teams are up against each other for a place in the semis. Brunel University includes Chelsea footballer Eniola Aluko and former Olympian and broadcaster Iwan Thomas. Playing them is the Reading University team, with Springwatch presenter Martin Hughes-Games and gardening expert Pippa Greenwood.

Jeremy Paxman asks the questions.

TUE 19:30 Turtle, Eagle, Cheetah: A Slow Odyssey (m0001kx4)

An Eagle's Flight

Take a flight on a summer morning with a white-tailed eagle around Scotland's west coast. A falconry-trained sea eagle wearing a specially designed on-board camera is the only way to glimpse the lives of these rare and protected species. From the high tops of Crois Bheinn on the remote Morvern Peninsula, the

eagle traverses across beautiful rolling moors and glens, along craggy cliff faces and finally ventures towards the Sound of Mull. With a two-metre wingspan, it is the biggest bird around - but that doesn't stop it being challenged by noisy crows and ravens. After its long flight, the hungry eagle is finally drawn down to the coast by the promise of a fish. Flying through torrential rain, it dives at over 100mph to grab the fish from a coastal pool before being reunited with its handler.

TUE 20:00 The Truth about Christmas Carols (b00gbgt3)

There could be nothing more sweet and sentimental than the sound of traditional carols performed by a velvet-voiced choir at Christmas. Or so you would think. Composer Howard Goodall uncovers the surprising and often secret history of the Christmas carol.

Far from being accepted as part of the celebrations of Jesus's birth, over the centuries carols have been banned by both church and state. The carols we sing seem set in stone and yet they can have up to 400 regional variations. Individual carols have caused controversy - While Shepherds Watched had to be cleaned up by the Victorians for being too crude and there's a suspicion that O Come All Ye Faithful was a call to 18th-century Jacobites to rebel.

The documentary celebrates the enduring power of the carol with a variety of performances from folk singer Bella Hardy to the choir of Truro Cathedral.

TUE 21:00 Rise of the Clans (b0bvf6f)
Series 1

A Queen Betrayed

Neil Oliver reveals how the clans plotted against Mary Stewart, Queen of Scots, ultimately leading to the beheading of the most charismatic queen in Scottish history. The tale turns on a brother's plot to overthrow his sister in a ruthless bid for power. James Stewart, Earl of Moray, uses clan power to first control and then rid Scotland of his sister Mary. As she battles conspiracies, plots and counterplots, Mary is trapped in the cruel and tumultuous world of clan blood feuds. After they murder her husband Lord Darnley and Mary flees into the arms of the Earl of Bothwell, the most ruthless of Scotland's clan chiefs, civil war breaks out. Mary escapes to England, never to return again.

TUE 22:00 A Timewatch Guide (b08zn5dg)
Series 4

Explorers: Conquest and Calamity

For centuries the story of exploration has been packed with incredible tales of adventure, but the last fifty years has seen a dramatic shift in our attitude towards explorers.

To find out how television has reflected this, Prof Fara Dabhoiwala delves into the BBC television archives, revealing that the pace of this change was faster than you would imagine. In the 1960s the BBC was still making programmes showing Christopher Columbus as an uncomplicated conquering hero. Barely a decade later, it made a documentary that delved into museum storerooms packed with artefacts brought back to Britain by Captain Cook, focusing on the perspective of the explored rather than the explorer.

As the story of exploration became as much about social calamity as conquest, television has been forced to find new ways to portray explorers. By the 21st century this included everything from focusing on adventurers like Ernest Shackleton, famous not for conquest but for saving the lives of his men, to using new technology to demystify exploration by making programmes from material shot by the explorers themselves.

TUE 23:00 The Sky at Night (b06t3wst)

The Real Star of Bethlehem: A Christmas Special

Astronomers have been fascinated by the idea of the Star of Bethlehem for centuries. Did it exist? And if so, what was it?

The list of candidates includes some of the most exciting objects in the night sky - supernovae, comets, meteors and unusual alignments of the giant planets.

In this surprising and entertaining Christmas special the Sky at Night team go in search of the potential causes of the Star of Bethlehem.

The team explore the possibilities, investigating the nature of the phenomena and digging through the historical records including Babylonian clay tablets and ancient Chinese manuscripts, to reconstruct events in the night sky 2,000 years ago.

Maggie Aderin-Pocock goes hunting for supernovae using the most powerful laser in Britain, and discovers that these mighty explosions caused by the death of stars can shine brighter than the moon in our sky.

Chris Lintott reconstructs the night sky over Jerusalem at the time of Jesus's birth, discovering a once-in-a-millennium conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter that was first suggested as a cause of the star by the great astronomer Johannes Kepler in 1604.

Armed with his telescope, Pete Lawrence searches out the features of the night sky we can observe today that may provide clues to the origin of the Star of Bethlehem.

Professor Alan Fitzsimmons explains why the sudden appearance of a comet in the night sky has always been seen as an omen of great events on Earth.

Dallas Campbell goes in search of the historical and archaeological records that can shed light on the identity of the star. Finding Babylonian tablets in the vaults of the British Museum and ancient Chinese texts that record all the unusual events in the night sky 2,000 years ago, including a bright new star that appeared for 70 days in the year 5BC.

TUE 00:00 Timeshift (b08lxx0y)
Series 17

Roof Racks and Hatchbacks: The Family Car

The family car. We grow up in the back seat - and before we know it, we find ourselves in the driving seat...

Timeshift explores the British experience of the family car, from the groundbreaking Morris Minor to the ubiquitous Ford Cortina, the Range Rover to the new Jaguar F-Pace - not to mention their imported rivals, such as the Volkswagen Golf and the Volvo estate.

Despite its reputation for being practical and sensible, designers have long endeavoured to make the family car attractive, even exciting, and to keep pace as the family and its requirements have evolved over the decades. Can a family vehicle be small - like the Mini? Or fast - like the Golf GTI? And what's the real reason why so many of today's family cars seem so enormous?

But the story of the family car isn't just about design. It's about the joy and frustration of parents and kids being cooped up on the road together. A saga of continental road trips and games of I-spy, backseat squabbles and impromptu toilet breaks. For better or worse, the car is one of the few remaining places where families still get to be a family.

Contributors include motoring journalists Richard Porter and Zog Ziegler, author Ben Hatch and leading car designer Ian Callum.

TUE 01:00 The Truth about Christmas Carols (b00gbgt3)
[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

TUE 02:00 Turtle, Eagle, Cheetah: A Slow Odyssey (m0001kx4)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:30 today]

TUE 02:30 Rise of the Clans (b0bvf6f)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

WEDNESDAY 19 DECEMBER 2018

WED 19:00 University Challenge (b091947t)
Christmas 2017

Semi-Final 1

It is the first of the semi-finals in the University Challenge quiz for grown-ups.

Jeremy Paxman asks the questions.

WED 19:30 Turtle, Eagle, Cheetah: A Slow Odyssey (m0001kxf)
A Slow Odyssey: A Cheetah's Hunt

Join three young, orphaned cheetah siblings as they set out across the savannah in Namibia in search of prey. The orphaned cats are being reintroduced into the wilds of Namibia, and specially designed on-board cameras are being used to monitor their progress.

The summer rains have turned the land into a verdant scene, unleashing new sounds, sights and smells for the young cats to

experience. As they move through the acacia woodland, thorny scrub and open grassy plains, they encounter herds of gemsbok and zebra and the occasional warthog. These are encounters that will test the young cheetah's hunting skills.

At this age, the siblings are still learning the ropes and are curious about everything they come across. The siblings pursue zebra and chase a warthog, but both are more than a match for them. Undeterred, the siblings continue on their journey, next testing their prowess on a herd of gemsbok that immediately turn the tables and chase the cheetah.

WED 20:00 Inside Chernobyl's Mega Tomb (b08650s6)
Documentary which follows the construction of a trailblazing 36,000-tonne steel structure to entomb the ruins of the nuclear power plant destroyed in the 1986 Chernobyl disaster. It films close up with the team of international engineers as they race to build the new structure before Chernobyl's original concrete sarcophagus - the hastily built structure that covers the reactor - collapses.

Built to last just 30 years, the temporary sarcophagus is now crumbling, putting the world at risk of another release of radioactive dust. Radiation levels make it impossible for workers to build the new shelter directly over the old reactor, so engineers are erecting the new megastructure - taller than the tower of Big Ben and three times heavier than the Eiffel Tower - to one side and will then face the challenge of sliding the largest object ever moved on land into place over the old reactor.

WED 21:00 Digging for Britain (m0001kxh)
Series 7

Iron Age Revealed

Alice Roberts follows the excavation of Iron Age Britain's most spectacular grave. A team of archaeologists in East Yorkshire have uncovered the remains of only the third upright chariot burial ever found in Britain, and the only chariot burial ever found in this country with the chariot harnessed to two standing ponies. This sensational find is the lead dig for the Digging for Britain Iron Age special.

WED 22:00 Vic & Bob's Big Night Out (m0001kxx)
Series 1

Episode 4

In this final episode of the current series, Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer continue to delight us with a non-stop half hour filled with mischief, mayhem and more besides.

Joined by series regular Vaun, they present their unique blend of sketches, songs, eye popping special effects, ridiculous fights and spectacular stunts.

Tonight Bob showcases his incredible new 'Diversity' style dance routine which he has heavily invested in and been working very hard on. He eventually forces a reluctant Vic to join in, which naturally has mixed results.

The Man with the Stick makes a long awaited and triumphant return - all the way from the future where he has been living in an apocalyptic land, under a tyrant ruler.

Characters Donald and Davey Stott take to the stage to perform one of their most ambitious magic routines to date, which leaves everybody speechless.

Vic & Bob pull a special wish bone each, which makes their innermost dreams finally come true after all these years of working together. Did they really get what they wanted?

They end the show with their song 'You Can Do It' proving that after over 30 years in the business together they really can still do it, with trademark originality and style!

WED 22:30 Inside No. 9 (b05rd99b)
Series 2

Cold Comfort

It's Andy's first day as a volunteer at the Comfort Support Line call centre, which offers the lonely and desperate a chance to talk about their problems. All the CSL counsellors have their own ways of dealing with clients, coping with the emotional stress and killing time between phone calls. But is Andy really prepared for what's to come?

WED 23:00 All Aboard! The Sleigh Ride (b06t3psw)
In a Slow TV Christmas special, BBC Four rigs a traditional reindeer sleigh with a fixed camera for a magical journey across the frozen wilderness of the Arctic. Following the path of an

ancient postal route, the ride captures the traditional world of the Sami people who are indigenous to northern Scandinavia and for whom reindeer herding remains a way of life.

Filed in Karasjok, Norway - 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle - this journey takes us through breathtaking scenery not normally glimpsed by anyone other than the Sami. Deliberately unhurried, the rhythmic pace of the reindeer guides us along an epic two-hour trip that takes us over undulating snowy hills, through birch forests, across a frozen lake and past traditional Sami settlements.

Facts about the reindeer, natural history, Sami culture and the Arctic climate are delivered by graphics and archive stills embedded into the passing landscape. With no commentary, music or presenter - just the crunching of snow and the soft tinkle of a reindeer bell - this hypnotic sleigh ride is an enchanting experience to put everyone in the Christmas spirit.

WED 01:00 Inside Chernobyl's Mega Tomb (b08650s6)
[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

WED 02:00 Turtle, Eagle, Cheetah: A Slow Odyssey (m0001kxf)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:30 today]

WED 02:30 Digging for Britain (m0001kxh)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

THURSDAY 20 DECEMBER 2018

THU 19:00 University Challenge (b09194dl)
Christmas 2017

Semi-Final 2

It is the second of the semi-finals in the University Challenge quiz for grown-ups.

Jeremy Paxman asks the questions.

THU 19:30 Top of the Pops (m0001ky1)
Gary Davies presents the pop chart programme in an edition featuring Frankie Goes to Hollywood, Debbie Harry, Five Star, Nick Kamen, Berlin and Anita Baker.

THU 20:00 Secret Life of Farm Animals (m0001ky3)
Series 1

Pigs

We all think we know about farm animals - that sheep are stupid, pigs are smart and that cows lie down when it is going to rain. But there's a lot more to them than that. In this series we're bringing together some of the country's best farms to create one sun-dappled ideal where we will test animal intelligence, discover unlikely relationships and uncover a side of farm animals you've never seen before.

It is harvest season. We follow a litter of piglets from birth as they grow up in the Brecon Beacons. We test the theory that every piglet always returns to the same teat to suckle, show that pigs love mud to keep cool because they have practically no sweat glands, and we show how intelligent they are with a series of puzzles. We also reveal that they are masters at the art of deception. Pigs tell porkies! Along the way we meet a pair of kunekune pigs raised as domestic pets in the heart of London. We visit a farm that uses llamas to guard its sheep and meet a pet rabbit with a remarkable identity crisis.

THU 21:00 Mark Kermode's Secrets of Cinema (m0001ky5)
Mark Kermode's Christmas Cinema Secrets

In a special seasonal edition of his acclaimed series, film critic Mark Kermode celebrates one of the most perennial of all genres: the Christmas movie. Mark unwraps a glittering selection of Christmas cinematic treats, from much-loved classics to hidden gems, Hollywood blockbusters to international films, and reveals the film-making techniques and storytelling secrets that make them so successful.

Mark demonstrates how, as with all great genres, a key to the success of the Christmas movie lies in its adaptability. Christmas cinema embraces a remarkable range of styles and themes, from fairy tale fantasy to high-octane action, family drama to horror. But a great Christmas movie does more than simply set its story in the festive season. It captures something magical - the Christmas spirit - and in this programme, Mark shows you how.

THU 22:00 The Bishop's Wife (b03n2mdm)

As Christmas approaches, newly appointed young bishop Henry Brougham prays for guidance when he needs funds for his dream of a new cathedral. What he gets is the down-to-earth Dudley, who announces himself as the bishop's new assistant and immediately sets to work, but a new cathedral is not what Dudley has in mind.

THU 23:45 Disclosure (b0btxnk5)

Series 1

The Lockerbie Legacy

Three decades on from the UK's worst terrorist atrocity, residents of Lockerbie reveal untold stories of how they have been affected by the downing of Pan Am Flight 103. Piecing together rare archive with personal testimony of those who were there on the night and in the months after, the film charts how the quiet Dumfriesshire market town has been forever changed.

THU 00:50 Top of the Pops (m0001ky1)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:30 today]

THU 01:20 Mark Kermode's Secrets of Cinema (m0001ky5)

[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

THU 02:20 Handmade in Japan (b08v8gxl)

Series 1

Samurai Sword

On the island of Kyushu in Japan, one of the country's last remaining families of Samurai sword makers are continuing a tradition their ancestors began 230 years ago. Working with his brother and son, Shiro Kunimitsu is dedicated to perfecting the art of producing swords of exceptional sharpness and durability. This film follows Shiro and his family as they lovingly craft a sword - a process that takes many months. We discover the importance of the sword in the ancient Samurai code, its enduring spiritual and symbolic power, and the challenges facing the dwindling numbers of sword makers in Japan today.

THU 02:50 A Timewatch Guide (b08zn5dg)

[Repeat of broadcast at 22:00 on Tuesday]

FRIDAY 21 DECEMBER 2018

FRI 19:00 University Challenge (b09194y)

Christmas 2017

The Grand Final

It is the grand final of this seasonal competition for alumni from some of the UK's top universities - which university will be Christmas University Challenge champions?

Jeremy Paxman asks the questions.

FRI 19:30 Top of the Pops (m0001kz0)

Janice Long and Steve Wright present the pop chart programme in an edition featuring The Housemartins, Alison Moyet, Dexys Midnight Runners, a-ha, Jackie Wilson and Madonna.

FRI 20:00 Fleetwood Mac: A Musical History (m0001kz2)

Fellow musicians, journalists and fans celebrate Fleetwood Mac with a selection of their best-loved songs.

Fleetwood Mac are the great survivors of British and American rock music. For more than fifty years they've overcome break-ups and breakdowns to become one of the most successful bands of all time. They have sold over 100 million records worldwide, with their 1977 smash Rumours accounting for nearly half of those sales.

They have endured, like all great bands, because of the complimentary talents of its members. From Peter Green to Christine McVie, Stevie Nicks and Lindsay Buckingham, it has contained some extraordinary songwriters. With brilliant musicians on all instruments, the band has been able to turn the songs into commercial gold. Above all the tough determination of the two men who gave the band their name has seen Fleetwood Mac through thick and thin.

Fleetwood fan Edith Bowman provides a narrative overview alongside other celebrity fans, who all pay tribute to the band in this hit-filled hour. Contributors include KT Tunstall, Travis's frontman Fran Healy, Toyah Willcox, Sian Pattenden and Emma Dabiri.

FRI 21:00 The Sound of Movie Musicals with Neil Brand (m0001kz4)

Episode 2

In the second episode of the series, Neil Brand looks at how the movie musical entered a second golden age in the aftermath of World War II.

He starts by examining one of the most striking films of that era: 1942's Die Grosse Liebe. This was made at the height of the conflict, and was a Hollywood-style musical with a distinctly German propaganda bent. Starring Hitler's favourite chanteuse, Zarah Leander, it sent a patriotic and pro-war message through its songs, and became the highest-grossing film ever in the time of the Third Reich.

Once war had ceased, the American musical once again began to thrive with a colour (literally) and exuberance more pronounced than before. Central to its success, Brand argues, was the emergence of Gene Kelly as the superstar of this new age of Hollywood. Talking with Kelly's widow, Patricia Ward Kelly, he looks at how this star brought the musical film into the streets of America, most famously with Singin' in the Rain, long believed to be one of the greatest films ever made in any genre.

While musicals lit up the idea of the American Dream, they were also a crucial part of national identity in other countries. In newly independent India, the musical became both a popular form and also a tool for reinforcing cultural identity. Brand takes an in-depth look at two of the most significant movies of this period: Guru Dutt's Pyassa, and Mother India, long held as perhaps the most defining work of post-war Hindi film.

But it wasn't just in India that the musical had taken hold of, and reinvented, what films could achieve. In China, the Shaw Brothers studios had leapt on the idea of music being a box office draw, and with two remarkable films, The Love Eterne and Hong Kong Nocturne - the latter a remarkable 'swinging 60s' romp - taken the country's cinema to a whole new, Hollywood-inspired level.

Hollywood itself had been forced to adapt to keep up with the times. Rock and roll was seen as the future of musicals, first with simple B movies like Rock around the Clock, but later with the more sophisticated MGM movies of Elvis Presley, most notably Jailhouse Rock. And the rock musical kick started a renaissance in British film too, as Cliff Richard and The Shadows took to the screen in blockbusters such as The Young Ones and Summer Holiday. Neil meets Shadows guitarist Bruce Welch to get the insider story of how these Brit flicks became huge successes.

As the 1960s motored on, the movie musical hit both a boom and a bust. In France, Jacques Demy's The Umbrellas of Cherbourg was a brilliant New Wave reimagining of the musical form as a kind of working-class operetta. Meanwhile, in Hollywood, Robert Wise's The Sound of Music became a pinnacle of the form, catapulting Julie Andrews to superstardom and becoming one of the most profitable films of all time.

On the other hand, a series of big budget flops suggested the musical had run its course in the world of film. Who could forget Clint Eastwood warbling tunelessly through Paint Your Wagon? What would the future of the Hollywood musical be, if it had one?

The answer was a genius to rival Gene Kelly as a movie musical titan, choreographer-turned-director Bob Fosse. Dropping in on a dance class in New York where Fosse's highly unique style is still being taught today, Neil Brand shows how with Sweet Charity and Cabaret, Fosse totally revived the fortunes of the musical film.

FRI 22:00 Sinatra: All or Nothing at All (b06tg506)

Series 1 Compilations

Part 1

An up-close and personal examination of the life, music and career of the legendary entertainer. In 1971, Frank Sinatra sang his legendary 'retirement concert' in Los Angeles, featuring music which was said to reflect his own life. Told in his own words from hours of archived interviews, along with commentary from those closest to him, this definitive series weaves the legendary songs he chose with comments from friends and family, as well as never-before-seen footage from home movies and concert performances.

An unprecedented tribute to the beloved showman, with the full participation of the Frank Sinatra Estate, the opening episode takes us from Sinatra's birth to his early years as a roadhouse performer, revealing the influences behind his meteoric rise.

FRI 23:55 Je t'aime: The Story of French Song with Petula Clark (b05vnhz1)

'I want to make people cry even when they don't understand my

words.' - Edith Piaf

This unique film explores the story of the lyric-driven French chanson and looks at some of the greatest artists and examples of the form. Award-winning singer and musician Petula Clark, who shot to stardom in France in the late 1950s for her nuanced singing and lyrical exploration, is our guide.

We meet singers and artists who propelled chanson into the limelight, including Charles Aznavour (a protege of Edith Piaf), Juliette Greco (whom Jean-Paul Sartre described as having 'a million poems in her voice'), Anna Karina (muse of Jean-Luc Godard and darling of the French cinema's new wave), actress and singer Jane Birkin, who had a global hit (along with Serge Gainsbourg) with the controversial Je t'aime (Moi non plus), and Marc Almond, who has received great acclaim with his recordings of Jacques Brel songs.

In exploring the famous chanson tradition and the prodigious singers who made the songs their own, we continue the story into contemporary French composition, looking at new lyrical forms exemplified by current artists such as Stromae, Zaz, Tetes Raides and Etienne Daho, who also give exclusive interviews.

The film shines a spotlight onto a musical form about which the British are largely unfamiliar, illuminating a history that is tender, funny, revealing and absorbing.

FRI 00:55 Top of the Pops (m0001kz0)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:30 today]

FRI 01:25 Fleetwood Mac: A Musical History (m0001kz2)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

FRI 02:25 The Sound of Movie Musicals with Neil Brand (m0001kz4)

[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]