

SATURDAY 19 DECEMBER 2015**SAT 00:00 Midnight News (b06rk6qw)**

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4. Followed by Weather.

SAT 00:30 Book of the Week (b06sxw4z)

My History

Episode 5

The early life of historian Lady Antonia Fraser. Her memoir describes growing up in the 1930s and 1940s but its real concern is with her growing love of History. The fascination began as a child - and developed into an enduring passion. She writes, 'for me, the study of History has always been an essential part of the enjoyment of life'.

Born Antonia Pakenham, the eldest of the eight children of the future Lord and Lady Longford, her childhood was spent in Oxford where her father was a don at Christ Church. Evacuation at the beginning of the war to a romantic Elizabethan manor house near Oxford was an inspiration for historical imaginings. There were adventures in Anglo-Ireland at Dunsany Castle and Pakenham Hall, each offering her treasured links to the past, which became private obsessions.

North Oxford wartime life included four years as one of the few girls then admitted to the Dragon School for Boys, followed by time at a convent school after her family's conversion to Catholicism. Antonia's father joined the Labour Government in 1945 as a Minister, which provided an odd background for exploits such as working in a Bond Street hat shop and a season as a self-made debutante. A job in publishing, by a fortunate coincidence, followed Oxford University and then the dramatic leap forward with the publishing of Mary Queen of Scots, which became a worldwide bestseller to general amazement - including that of the author.

In the final episode, Antonia Pakenham - now Fraser after her marriage to MP Hugh Fraser - writes her first serious book, a biography of Mary Queen of Scots, transforming her life.

A Heavy Entertainment production for BBC Radio 4.

SAT 00:48 Shipping Forecast (b06rk6r2)

The latest shipping forecast.

SAT 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (b06rk6r6)

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service. BBC Radio 4 resumes at 5.20am.

SAT 05:20 Shipping Forecast (b06rk6r9)

The latest shipping forecast.

SAT 05:30 News Briefing (b06rk6rc)

The latest news from BBC Radio 4.

SAT 05:43 Prayer for the Day (b06s1s8b)

A spiritual comment and prayer to begin the day with Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

SAT 05:45 iPM (b06s6mdd)

'I'm not ok'

A listener who stopped someone from taking their own life, and news through an 8 year old's eyes. James Naughtie reads Your News.

If you're experiencing distress, the following website has information and support: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/4WLS5NlWrySXJR2n8Snszdg/emotional-distress-information-and-support>.

SAT 06:00 News and Papers (b06rk6rh)

The latest news headlines. Including a look at the papers.

SAT 06:04 Weather (b06rk6rm)

The latest weather forecast.

SAT 06:07 Open Country (b06s0njl)

The Northern Lights at Christmas

For a Christmas special Helen Mark visits the snow covered landscape of Swedish Lapland in search of the mythical, and often elusive, Northern Lights or Aurora Borealis. In Sami culture the lights are thought to emanate from the souls of the dead and must be treated with immense respect. Traditionally

the Sami remained indoors during a display but today the chance of seeing the Northern Lights brings many visitors to this remote part of Sweden. Helen Mark hears about the mythology which surrounds the Aurora and travels by sled, snowmobile and foot to try to catch a glimpse for herself. Along the way she uncovers a dramatic mountainous landscape.

SAT 06:30 Farming Today (b06s6mds)

Farming Today This Week: Christmas Food

The latest news about food, farming and the countryside. Presented by Charlotte Smith and produced by Emma Campbell.

SAT 06:57 Weather (b06rk6rp)

The latest weather forecast.

SAT 07:00 Today (b06s6td9)

Morning news and current affairs. Including Yesterday in Parliament, Sports Desk, Weather and Thought for the Day.

SAT 09:00 Saturday Live (b06s6mdz)

Gyles Brandreth, Sue Perkins

Game show regular and former MP Gyles Brandreth discusses the wonders and curiosities of the English language. Great British Bake Off presenter Sue Perkins reveals how she overcame childhood shyness, how conducting music turned her adult life around, and where she hides smelly cheese.

Veteran entertainer Bruce Forsyth shares his Inheritance Tracks and why he feels that Frank Sinatra followed his lead to New York, New York.

Star Wars obsessive Jamie Stangroom searches for the iconic characters and actors that the current episode forgot - Greedo, Jar Jar, the man inside Jabba the Hut's tail. Where are they and can Jamie get them back into Star Wars? And which role did Michael Jackson want to play?

We also hear from a professional Christmas tree decorator to the stars of football, music and film. He also does Bethlehem. And when Britain faced rationing after World War Two, Care parcels from America brightened up the lives and diets of many families. Decades later, we bring together a sender and a recipient.

Word Play, by Gyles Brandreth, is published by Coronet Hardback books.

Spectacles a memoir, by Sue Perkins, is published by Penguin Michael Joseph books.

Producer: Paul Waters

Editor: Karen Dalziel.

SAT 10:30 The Kitchen Cabinet (b06s6mf6)

Series 12

Stonehenge

Jay Rayner hosts the culinary panel programme from Stonehenge.

Audience questions are answered by food historian Dr Annie Gray, master of DIY cooking Tim Hayward, Scottish chef with a Catalan twist Rachel McCormack, and the singer-turned-chef Andi Oliver.

This week, the panel discuss midwinter rituals, the history of festive dining, and how best to use bones in cooking. They also consider the merits of neolithic eating.

Produced by Darby Dorras
Assistant Producer: Hannah Newton

Food Consultant: Anna Colquhoun

A Somethin' Else production for BBC Radio 4.

SAT 11:00 The Week in Westminster (b06s6mfc)

Steve Richards of The Independent looks behind the scenes at Westminster.

It was a year of unexpected developments at Westminster - the Conservatives won a majority in the May General Election, the SNP gained almost all the Scottish seats at Westminster, the Liberal Democrats were nearly eliminated, and the backbench left wing MP Jeremy Corbyn became leader of the Labour party. Steve Richards talks to the SNP leader at Westminster, Angus Robertson, and also to the Liberal Democrat leader Tim Farron, about their reversals of fortune. And with fellow Week In Westminster presenters Isabel Hardman of the Spectator and Helen Lewis of the New Statesman, he considers what all these changes portend.

The Editor is Marie Jessel.

SAT 11:30 From Our Own Correspondent (b06rk6s0)

Damascus Rules

Almost better than travelling yourself! Insight, wit and colour from around the globe. In this one: the tablecloth approach to ending war -- serious discussions about how to end the fighting in Syria; the end of another long conflict may be in sight as the government in Bogota signs an interim peace deal with Colombia's FARC rebels; arguments intensify over territorial claims in the South China Sea -- we meet Vietnamese fishermen who now find themselves in the front line; the Turks and the Hungarians redouble their search for the missing heart of Suleiman the Magnificent, but why are they bothering? And they've got problems in Rome: alleged corruption in high places, organised crime, traditional shops and businesses being chased away. But the Romans are putting all this to one side, at least for a few days. After all, it's Christmas! And there are menus to be planned!

SAT 12:00 News Summary (b06rk6s9)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

SAT 12:04 Money Box (b06s6mfh)

A Swiss bank to start charging negative interest rates on savings

From the New Year a Swiss bank will become the first to start charging customers negative interest rates. The Chief Economist at the Bank of England, Andy Haldane has described the ability to impose negative interest rates on currency the "most radical and durable option" to encourage spending. But could it ever happen here?

Are the Government's plans to extend pensions freedoms to people who have bought an annuity a 'step too far'? From April 2016, the government will remove the restrictions on buying and selling existing annuities to allow pensioners to sell the income they receive for an upfront cash sum. The financial services regulator has said this presents a bigger consumer protection concern than the pensions freedoms. We discuss with former Pensions Minister Steve Webb and Billy Burrows, an independent retirement expert.

Dido Harding, Chief Executive of Talk Talk, has been in front of the Culture Select Committee this week being quizzed by MPs about cyber security, following a data breach in October. We speak to some of the listeners who contacted us at the time.

And UK businesses face more than £1bn in costs from the introduction of the National Living Wage next year, according to government advisors. Julie Abraham is from hi-fi store Richer Sounds who already pay above the new National Living Wage. She discusses with Rob Payne from Best Western Hotels who is concerned that it will change the face of the British hospitality industry.

Presenter: Paul Lewis

Producer: Alex Lewis

Editor: Andrew Smith.

SAT 12:30 The Now Show (b06s1gcs)

Series 47

Episode 6

Steve Punt and Hugh Dennis are joined by Jon Holmes, John Finnemore, Jess Ransom, Jasper Rees, Jake Yapp and Harry the Piano for a festive look at the week's news.

Written by the cast with additional material from Gareth Gwynn, Max Davis, Liam Beirne, Sarah Campbell and Rebecca Channon.

Produced by Alexandra Smith.

SAT 12:57 Weather (b06rk6s1)

The latest weather forecast.

SAT 13:00 News (b06rk6ss)

The latest news from BBC Radio 4.

SAT 13:10 Any Questions? (b06s1gcl)

Kate Hoey MP, Bernard Jenkin MP, Laura Sandys, Roland Rudd

Jonathan Dimbleby presents political debate and discussion from Figheldean Village Hall near Salisbury with a panel including the Labour MP Kate Hoey, Conservative MP and Chair of the Public Administration Committee Bernard Jenkin, Chair of the European Movement Laura Sandys and the Chair of Business for New Europe Roland Rudd.

SAT 14:00 Any Answers? (b06s6n4k)

Europe

Have your say on the issues discussed on Any Questions? Anita Anand takes your calls on; Europe - Do we stay in or out? Or is renegotiation the best way forward? And as an Oxford College considers removing a statue of Cecil Rhodes - how do you feel about airbrushing him from our history.

Presented by Anita Anand
Producer Beverley Purcell
Editor Karen Dalziel.

SAT 14:30 Drama (b06s6n4m)

Inspector Chen Novels

When Red Is Black

Inspector Chen: When Red Is Black

by Qiu Xiaolong

dramatised by John Harvey

Crime drama set in early 1990s Shanghai. When Chen agrees to do a translation job for a property developer he is given a laptop, a 'little secretary' to provide for his every need, and medical care for his mother. There are, it seems, no strings attached . . . and then the murder of a dissident writer is reported.

Inspector Chen Jamie Zubairi
Detective Yu Dan Li
Peiqin Sarah Lam
Gu Ewen Bailey
Old Liang Gerard McDermott
Party Secretary Li Daniel York
Huang Richard Pepple
Lanlan Tina Chiang
Qiao Ming Chris Pavlo
Peng Debra Baker
White Cloud Elizabeth Chan
Jia George Watkins
Boa Hung Leo Wan

Director: David Hunter

The third dramatisation in the Inspector Chen series, following on from Death of a Red Heroine & A Loyal Character Dancer.

When the murder of a dissident writer is reported Sergeant Yu is forced to take charge of the investigation. The victim, a middle-aged teacher with a dissident past and a book notorious in the West, has been found dead in her tiny room in a converted multi-family house. It is only when Chen, on leave to complete a lucrative translation project gets involved, and the past excavated, that the murderer is eventually found.

Qiu Xiaolong was born in Shanghai, China. As well as writing the award-winning Inspector Chen series of mystery novels, he is also the author of two books of poetry translations, Treasury of Chinese Love Poems (2003) and Evoking T'ang (2007), and his own poetry collection, Lines Around China (2003). Qiu's books have sold over a million copies and have been published in twenty languages. He lives in St. Louis, USA with his wife and daughter.

SAT 15:30 Soul Music (b06ry20g)

Series 21

Nimrod

Edward Elgar's incomparable Nimrod, and the part it plays in people's lives, is explored this week:

Composed as part of the Enigma Variations in the latter part of the 19th century, Nimrod was inspired by Elgar's friend and music editor, Augustus Jaeger.

In an interview for this programme, Jaeger's granddaughter, Gillian Scully, talks about her grandfather and describes hearing her own granddaughter playing Nimrod at a school concert.

It wasn't what Elgar intended, but Nimrod is now - and, probably, forever - associated with Remembrance. The Right Reverend Nigel McCulloch - National Chaplain to the Royal British Legion - talks about hearing it played at the Festival of Remembrance in the Royal Albert Hall stirring memories of his own father who died in WW2, and serving as a reminder of all those lost or injured in war.

Margaret Evison's son, Lieutenant Mark Evison of the Welsh Guards, was killed in Afghanistan in 2009. Nimrod played an important part in his funeral which was held at The Guard's Chapel in London.

For Lord Victor Adebowale, Chief Executive of the charity Turning Point, Nimrod is a piece that reminds him of his father and the struggles he had as a Nigerian immigrant to the UK.

Composer and conductor, Paul Spicer, plays through Nimrod at the piano exploring why it is a piece that stirs such deep emotions.

Producer: Karen Gregor.

SAT 16:00 Woman's Hour (b06s6t1c)

Gloria Steinem; Tina Fey; Neko Case

The feminist icon Gloria Steinem on her new book and how her feminism has shaped her politics and her journalism. Observer journalist Yvonne Roberts and comedian and feminist activist Kate Smurthwaite discuss how Gloria Steinem has influenced them.

Tina Fey the American comedian, writer, actress and producer tells us about her latest film Sisters

Can it be morally right to criticise someone for how they look? The columnist Katie Hopkins says she hates fat people and wouldn't employ them. Katie joins Times columnist David Aaronovitch to discuss how people judge others on looks alone.

With just 10 days to go before opening night, Noma Dumezweni took on the lead role in Penelope Skinner's new play Linda at the Royal Court in London. We ask her what it's been like to step into the spotlight at the last minute.

How much do we expect fictional heroines to be beautiful? Writer Claire Harman, novelist Maggie O'Farrell and film critic Catherine Bray discuss how women are defined by their looks in film and literature.

The US singer songwriter Neko Case talks about her career and performs her latest single 'I'll be around'.

SAT 17:00 PM (b06s6t1f)

Saturday PM

Full coverage of the day's news.

SAT 17:30 IPM (b06s6mdd)

[Repeat of broadcast at 05:45 today]

SAT 17:54 Shipping Forecast (b06rk6td)

The latest shipping forecast.

SAT 17:57 Weather (b06rk6tn)

The latest weather forecast.

SAT 18:00 Six O'Clock News (b06rk6tt)

The former Labour MP died days after he was ruled unfit to face child abuse charges. The death has also been announced of the football player, manager and pundit, Jimmy Hill.

SAT 18:15 Loose Ends (b06s6tlh)

Clive Anderson, Nikki Bedi, Russell Howard, Jay Rayner, Charlie Higson, Joel Morris, Jeffrey Lewis, Honne

Clive Anderson and Nikki Bedi are joined by Russell Howard, Jay Rayner, Charlie Higson and Joel Morris for an eclectic mix of conversation, music and comedy. With music from Jeffrey Lewis and Honne.

Producer: Sukey Firth.

SAT 19:00 Profile (b06s6tlk)

Elon Musk

Elon Musk, the billionaire owner of SpaceX and Tesla Motors, has a plan to stop computers from taking over the world. The co-founder of Paypal - who made his first fortune in his twenties - has joined other tech giants to fund a not-for-profit company called OpenAI. Its aim is to develop the most advanced forms of artificial intelligence and then to share the results. Musk is among a group of thinkers - including Stephen Hawking - who have warned that AI could eventually lead to the end of the human race. His idea is that by making AI 'open source', powerful corporate interests will be kept in check. Mark Coles explores the life of a man with a passion for rockets, cars and a plan to retire to Mars.

Producers: Smita Patel and Sally Abrahams.

SAT 19:15 Saturday Review (b06rk6v9)

Les Liaisons Dangereuses, Star Wars, Serial Podcast,

Dickensian, Penguin Monarchs

Dominic West and Janet McTeer star in the first major London production for 30 years of Christopher Hampton's Les Liaisons Dangereuses.

Star Wars is back. Unless you've been living in cave, it's been hard to avoid. But is it any good?

Last year WBEZ, Chicago Public Radio created the astoundingly successful Serial podcast and now there's a new series unravelling the peculiar story of American soldier Bowe Bergdahl

Dickensian is Tony "Eastenders" Jordan's mash-up of several Charles Dickens stories and characters. How well does this TV series capture the spirit of the originals?

Penguin publishing is putting out a series of 45 small books, each of which tells the story of a different British monarch. Tom Sutcliffe is joined for the final edition of Saturday Review for 2015 by Timberlake Wertenbaker, Rosie Goldsmith and Patrick Gale. The producer is Oliver Jones.

SAT 20:00 Archive on 4 (b06s6t1m)

The Selling of Sinatra

Jazz singer Kurt Elling provides a unique take on Frank Sinatra, playing with the glitz and glamour, and discovering the dark undertones to a crooner's life that we thought we knew. In a centenary celebration, he analyses just how much image-making and effort went into turning Francis Albert Sinatra into plain old "Frank."

Sinatra had many incarnations in a sixty-year career. He was born to a working-class Italian immigrant family in New Jersey. His father was a lightweight boxer, bar owner and firefighter. His mother Natalina was active in Democratic politics and ran an illegal abortion clinic. Frank dropped out of high school and began singing at his dad's bar, eventually gaining the attention of bandleader Tommy Dorsey.

With Tommy's help, Sinatra's popularity grew in the 40s, but he didn't serve in the Second World War due to a perforated eardrum and he attracted some bitterness as magazine photographs displayed him surrounded by beautiful women and making plenty of cash in New York.

A decline in popularity and damage to his vocal chords led to the "wilderness years", suicide attempts and deep depression.

With the boost of an Oscar win in 1953, Frank successfully remade himself on an industrial scale with Las Vegas tours, Hollywood movies, platinum records, retirements, comebacks and high society connections that included the Oval Office.

Contributors include Robert Wagner, John Lahr and Paul Anka.

Producer: Colin McNulty

A Whistledown production for BBC Radio 4 first broadcast in December 2015.

SAT 21:00 Drama (b06rwdg7)

The Arabian Nights

Episode 2

The Hunchback Cycle is told in this episode, including the story of The Barber (Alexei Sayle) and his brothers, as well as lesser known stories.

The immortal stories of The Arabian Nights brought to life in an inventive fresh adaptation by Glen Neath, as present and past merge into one.

Ata Madri (Indira Varma) is in Cairo attempting to retrieve a lost manuscript of The Arabian Nights that is said to contain the real ending of the book. As we follow her search we slip into this sea of stories.

These tales of wonder and imagination have beguiled both east and west over generations and remain as seminal and influential as ever. Here, the stories are told in a rich world of sound by an ensemble of actors from around the world.

Narrator.....Nadim Sawalha
Madri.....Indira Varma
Clive, Steward.....Ewan Bailey
Ali Zum, Thief, Chief....Waleed Elgadi
Tailor.....Bhasker Patel
Tailor's Wife.....Alyssa Kyria
Christian, Old Man.....Niall Ashdown
Lame Young Man,
Al-Haddar.....Muzz Khan
Mother,
Beautiful Woman.....Noa Bodner
Barber.....Alexei Sayle
Jewish Physician's maid,
Judge's Daughter.....Sharlit Deyzac
Caliph.....Renu Setna

Bakbook,
Jewish Physician.....Amir El-Masry
Young Woman.....Laura Hanna
Bakbak.....Nabil Elouahabi
Blind Beggar.....Noof McEwan
Watchman, Al-Ashar.....Stewart Scudamore
Hasan, Taxi Driver.....Nayef Rashed

Sound design by Alisdair McGregor
Music by Michael Ward with David Lewin and Peter Rophone

Director: Boz Temple-Morris

A Holy Mountain production for BBC Radio 4 first broadcast in December 2015.

SAT 22:00 News and Weather (b06rk6vc)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4, followed by weather.

SAT 22:15 What Is IS? (b06sdlmb)

David Aaronovitch and a range of experts untangle the ideological threads that make up the 'Islamic State'.

Following its attacks in Paris, debate has raged about whether the so-called Islamic State is a political movement or a religious one.

But what if it's both, and more besides? David Aaronovitch calls on testimony from journalists, historians, political scientists and philosophers to explore the complex, sometimes conflicting elements that have shaped this organisation.

He examines its place in the long tradition of Apocalyptic anti-Westernism - a tradition that has also appeared in a European Christian context, in Japan, and elsewhere. David traces the role of senior figures from Saddam Hussein's regime in its creation and thinking, and asks whether avenging the invasion of Iraq has simply given IS its opportunity to prosper, or provides its guiding mission.

He explores the role of IS in the relationship between Sunni and Shia Islam, and its use of Islamic history in its worldview and its propaganda. And finally, David asks, how unusual is the Islamic State?

Producers: Phil Tinline and Wesley Stephenson.

SAT 23:00 Round Britain Quiz (b06rx48)

Programme 9, 2015

(9/12)

The South of England team of Marcus Berkmann and Simon Singh square up to Northern Ireland in the shape of Brian Feeney and Polly Devlin. This week's contest is the last-but-one occasion in which either of these teams will appear this season, and both will be keen to add a victory to their score-sheet so far.

'Can you turn DeForest Kelley into the creator of Harry Hole by way of some French soap?' is just the first of the cryptic puzzles which face them. Tom Sutcliffe chairs the contest and will be providing helpful hints and nudges wherever necessary - with the proviso that the teams score fewer points the more help they need.

Several of today's questions are the work of Round Britain Quiz listeners who've submitted them to the programme in recent months. And, as always, Tom will have the answer to the teaser he left hanging at the end of the previous edition - as well as setting a new puzzle to be thinking about until next week.

Producer: Paul Bajoria.

SAT 23:30 The Echo Chamber (b06rgwgc)

Series 6

James Fenton

Paul Farley meets the poet James Fenton who has, in his varied life, also been a war reporter, a gardener and a lyricist. He has just received the 2015 Pen Pinter prize for his writing. His poems of exile, emigration and conflict written over forty years of travelling into assorted bad lands remain extraordinarily telling documents. Producer: Tim Dee.

SUNDAY 20 DECEMBER 2015

SUN 00:00 Midnight News (b06s6x9p)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4. Followed by Weather.

SUN 00:30 Through the Wardrobe (b03kpl7r)

The Rosy Rural Ruby

In tribute to Belfast-born C.S. Lewis who died on 22nd November 1963, three new short stories take us through doors and portals into unexpected worlds and situations. While novelist and playwright Lucy Caldwell charts a defining moment in the life of someone struggling with their sense of identity, a woman gets to know her neighbours a little more intimately than she could ever have expected in a story from novelist and screenwriter Glenn Patterson. And finally in a new story from Frank Cottrell Boyce we discover what might happen if C.S. Lewis himself were to discover an opening to another world. What might such a world contain?

The Rosy Rural Ruby by Frank Cottrell Boyce

Read by David Troughton

Produced in Belfast by Heather Larmour.

SUN 00:48 Shipping Forecast (b06s6x9r)

The latest shipping forecast.

SUN 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (b06s6x9t)

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service. BBC Radio 4 resumes at **5.20am**.

SUN 05:20 Shipping Forecast (b06s6x9w)

The latest shipping forecast.

SUN 05:30 News Briefing (b06s6x9y)

The latest news from BBC Radio 4.

SUN 05:43 Bells on Sunday (b06s6zll)

Bells from the High Cathedral of Saints Peter and Mary, Cologne, Germany.

SUN 05:45 Profile (b06s6tlk)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Saturday]

SUN 06:00 News Headlines (b06s6xbce)

The latest national and international news.

SUN 06:05 Something Understood (b06s6zln)

At the Darkest Point

At the moment of mid-winter, John McCarthy explores how we cope with dark times, how we express our feelings and how we find a way through.

Dark and difficult times are part of our human experience. On the news we encounter human suffering - on a scale so massive and distant from our immediate lives, whether man made or as a result of natural disasters, it is often impossible to take in or begin to understand.

Most of us have more local and intimate dark times to cope with. Sickness, loss of loved ones, financial worries - these are all examples of darkness that can come in the middle of the day.

And there is also the dark that is pure loneliness.

Since first reading it as a schoolboy, John has found solace in George Herbert's poem, The Flower, which emphasises renewal and return after the dark tempests of the night.

There's a new commission from the poet Jen Hadfield who sends us a postcard from the winter darkness of Shetland, readings of poems by Rilke and Byron, and the composer and sound artist Janek Schaefer tells the story of how he came to create a piece of music - White Lights of Divine Darkness (for Sir John Tavener).

The readers are Joshua Elliot, Serena Jennings and Jen Hadfield.

Produced by Natalie Steed

A Whistledown production for BBC Radio 4.

SUN 06:35 On Your Farm (b06s6zlj)

Christmas Goose

Judith Dryden raises a hundred geese and five hundred turkeys for the Christmas dinner tables of North East England. This year a popular storyline in The Archers about geese farming means that she's already sold out.

Caz Graham joins Judith and some very vocal birds on the family farm near Sunderland to hear how keeping Christmas poultry is the perfect diversification for a busy arable farm.

SUN 06:57 Weather (b06s6xbf)

The latest weather forecast.

SUN 07:00 News and Papers (b06s6xbh)

The latest news headlines. Including a look at the papers.

SUN 07:10 Sunday (b06s6zls)

A Puritan's Christmas, Tension in Burundi, Fake apostolic blessings

Should the Archbishop of Canterbury 'apologise for the Church's mistake in its response to homosexuality around the world'? That's the call by the Very Revd Prof Martyn Percy, Dean of Christ Church, Oxford who has written an essay on the topic ahead of the next month's meeting of Primates. He debates with Canon Dr Chris Sugden from Anglican Mainstream.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has said Burundi is on the cusp of a civil war. Dr Phil Clark from SOAS looks at the tensions in the country and Tearfund's Country Director Emmanuel Murangira explains how they are responding.

This week police in Rome seized 3,500 fake "Apostolic Blessings." Catholic writer Michael Walsh explains what they are and why they are so coveted.

Bob Walker reports from the National Civil War Centre where they are marking Yuletide by, 'sitting on the fence'. Christmas was a big point of division amongst the sides fighting the British Civil War in the 17th century; mince pies were banned and churches raided to ensure they were not holding services.

On the day of the Spanish General Election we ask if there is a religious vote in this campaign? Alistair Dawber, The Independent's correspondent in Madrid talks to Edward.

Jane Little reports from Charleston, South Carolina where she meets some of the families who publicly forgave the man who shot their loved ones as at a bible study class in June. Has enough been done in the city to tackle racism since the killings?

What was it like to experience Christmas in 1945? 70 years after the end of the Second World War, Henry Muchamore tells us his story of spending Christmas Day with three German Prisoners of War when he was 7 years old.

Producers:

David Cook

Carmel Lonergan

Series Producer:

Amanda Hancox.

SUN 07:54 Radio 4 Appeal (b06s6zms)

Save the Rhino

Sam Taylor presents The Radio 4 Appeal on behalf of Save the Rhino

Registered Charity No 1035072

To Give:

- Freephone 0800 404 8144

- Freepost BBC Radio 4 Appeal, mark the back of the envelope 'Save the Rhino'.

- Cheques should be made payable to 'Save the Rhino'.

SUN 07:57 Weather (b06s6xbk)

The latest weather forecast.

SUN 08:00 News and Papers (b06s6xbn)

The latest news headlines. Including a look at the papers.

SUN 08:10 Sunday Worship (b06s6zms)

Seeing Salvation

The last in an Advent series 'Learning to see' from Methodist College Belfast. Preacher: the Bishop of Meath & Kildare Pat Storey - who was the UK's first female bishop and a former pupil of 'Methody.' Led by the Rev David Neilands. Readings: Luke 1:46-56 and John 21:4-13. Carols sung by the famous Methodist College Choir include: O Little Town - arr. Bob Chilcott; A Maiden Most Gentle - arr. Andrew Carter; Silent Night - Franz Gruber arr. Bob Chilcott; Shepherd's Carol - Bob Chilcott; The Colours of Christmas - John Rutter; What Child is This? - Thomas Hewitt Jones; Once in Royal - arr. Philip Stopford; Ding Dong Merily on High - arr. Philip Stopford. Director of Music: Ruth McCartney Organist: Donal McCann. Producer: Etta Halliday.

SUN 08:48 A Point of View (b06s1gcn)

Howard Jacobson: Christmas

Howard Jacobson recalls the healthy mongrel mix of traditions in his Jewish family's festivities at Christmas.

"Let's rejoice in the eclecticism, I say, and find in the varieties of ways people choose to mark or miss the point of Christmas the universal love that is its message."

Producer: Sheila Cook.

SUN 08:58 Tweet of the Day (b04mlvxt)
Ivory Gull

Tweet of the Day is the voice of birds and our relationship with them, from around the world.

Chris Packham presents the ivory gull from the northern polar seas. Ivory gulls breed on rocky outcrops and cliffs and has a near-circumpolar distribution, spending most of the year near the edge of the pack ice throughout Arctic Europe, Arctic Russia, Greenland and Canada. They regularly venture farther north than any other bird. The adults are brilliant white with black legs and black eyes; their only splash of colour is on the bill which is a pastel rainbow of blue, green, yellow and pink. At rest they look rather dove-like. Although their colour suggests purity, their tastes are definitely not. Ivory gulls are scavengers. Dead seals or whales will draw them from miles around and those birds which have turned up as rare winter visitors to the UK have often shown an uncanny ability to locate strandline corpses of porpoises, dolphins or seals. Diet aside these are entrancing gulls to watch as they loaf on icebergs or waft angelically over arctic seas.

SUN 09:00 Broadcasting House (b06s6xcd)
Amid a rare outbreak of global agreement, we weigh up the highs and lows of world diplomacy

We'll hear from Chris Watson, sound man to David Attenborough, as he guides us through his favourite wildlife recordings of the year.

Hugh Sykes meets two Tunisian rappers risking their lives to ridicule so-called Islamic State through their music.

On the papers; Nicholas Parsons, author and Guardian columnist Simon Jenkins, and Mary Beard, classics professor.

And on the Sunday before Christmas we welcome back the English Chamber Choir.

SUN 10:00 The Archers Omnibus (b06s7y32)
Please see daily episodes for a detailed synopsis.

SUN 11:15 Desert Island Discs (b06s7y34)
Commander Chris Hadfield

Kirsty Young's castaway is Chris Hadfield.

He was the first Canadian commander of the International Space Station and took part in three space missions spending a total of 166 days orbiting the Earth. He has spent over 14 hours doing two space walks.

He flew his first eight day mission into space in 1995 during which he visited the Russian space station Mir. In 2001 he paid his first visit to the International Space Station to help install Canadarm2, a robot arm helping to build the station which was launched three years previously. In 2012 he began his final five month stay in space on board the ISS. It was on this mission that his videos of life in space - including a film of him singing David Bowie's Space Oddity and accompanying himself on guitar - led to him enjoying a huge following on social media.

Chris was born in 1959 in Ontario, the second of five children: his father was a pilot and the family lived on a farm. He mapped out his future career aged nine when he watched Neil Armstrong become the first person to walk on the moon in 1969. In pursuit of his dream Chris first became an Air Cadet, then attended military college, becoming a fighter pilot and then a test pilot, as well as an aeronautical engineer. He finally achieved his ambition of becoming an astronaut in 1992.

He went onto become the Chief of Robotics at the NASA Astronaut Office and Chief of International Space Station Operations at the Johnson Space Centre in Houston, Texas. Following his final space mission, Chris retired from the Canadian Space Agency in July 2013. Amongst the awards he's received are the military Meritorious Service Cross, NASA's Exceptional Service Medal and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal.

Producer: Cathy Drysdale.

SUN 12:00 News Summary (b06s6xcg)
The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

SUN 12:04 I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue (b06rxn53)
Series 64

Episode 3

The nation's favourite wireless entertainment pays a visit to the Grand Opera House in York. Regulars Barry Cryer, Graeme Garden and Tim Brooke-Taylor are joined on the panel by Sandi Toksvig, with Jack Dee in the chair. Colin Sell provides piano accompaniment.
Producer - Jon Naismith. It is a BBC Radio Comedy production.

SUN 12:32 The Food Programme (b06s7y36)
No Mere Trifle

For some, trifle is an essential part of Christmas - a star centrepiece at the dinner table. For others it's a reminder of 70s food hell - soggy sponge, jelly, hundreds and thousands dissolving into custard and cream and possibly crowned with glace cherries. Tim Hayward argues pretty much every food writer of the last 50 years has pronounced on trifle in a massively doctrinaire fashion. He wants to fight the prejudice to delve into the shared secret recipes for quick and 'dirty' trifles and investigates the 'golden rules' to get every trifle doubter on side.

Presented by Tim Hayward.
Produced by Anne-Marie Bullock.

SUN 12:57 Weather (b06s6xcj)
The latest weather forecast.

SUN 13:00 The World This Weekend (b06sv2y)
News and analysis including the global effects of low oil prices plus saving Libya's antiquities. Presented by Shaun Ley.

SUN 13:30 Chrismukkah and Other Cultural Mash-ups (b06s7y5w)

As the number of inter-faith marriages in Britain increases, we uncover a growing phenomenon - the cultural mash-up. Sharmini Selvarajah meets the families who are getting creative as they combine different religious and cultural traditions to create their own unique festivals.

Embracing multiple festivals has always come naturally to Sharmini. She grew up in a British-Asian family, celebrating Christmas, Diwali and Tamil New Year. Now that she's married to a Jewish American, Passover, Thanksgiving and July 4th also feature.

Every year she throws a Chrismukkah party for family and friends, where latkes sit next to mince pies on the table, and Christmas carols are sung alongside Hanukkah blessings. She's curious about how other mixed families combine their various beliefs and customs.

The Sommers celebrate both Christmas and Hanukkah. Their blue and white Christmas tree is topped by a homemade star of David. Their three sons say the best part of combining Jewish and Christian December traditions is "double the presents - double the fun!"

But their Rabbi, Dr Jonathan Romain, warns that not all interfaith couples are prepared for the challenges of the festive season: "It's a time of year that can be for some families enormously enriching, but for others it's a major trauma. And it brings all issues of mixed faith marriage to the fore, issues they've been able to sweep under the carpet for the rest of the year."

Sharmini spends Easter Monday hunting for chocolate eggs with Amy who's a Christian, her Muslim husband Takbir, and their extended family. But she also hears from those who don't feel so positively about mashing things up. Is there a risk of diluting celebrations by merging them, so that each is inadequately marked? Does it lead to confusion for children growing up in interfaith families?

Producer: Hannah Marshall
A Loftus Media production for BBC Radio 4.

SUN 14:00 Gardeners' Question Time (b06s1b8y)
Harpenden

Eric Robson hosts the horticultural panel programme from Harpenden in Hertfordshire.

James Wong, Matt Biggs, and Anne Swithinbank answer the audience's gardening questions on misshapen potatoes, unsightly

fairy rings and how to contain an unruly Crabapple.

The panellists also offer their topical tips regarding post-flood garden care.

And in the features, RHS Wisley's Matthew Pottage investigates what could be the country's oldest Christmas tree.

Produced by Howard Shannon
Assistant Producer: Hannah Newton
A Somethin' Else production for BBC Radio 4.

SUN 14:45 The Listening Project (b06s7y5y)
Sunday Omnibus - Refugees in Lebanon

Fi Glover introduces conversations between Syrians who have had to flee their country and who find life in Lebanon gives them little hope for their futures.

This is the first time The Listening Project has recorded abroad. The conversations were facilitated by Oxfam.

The Listening Project is a Radio 4 initiative that offers a snapshot of contemporary Britain in which people across the UK volunteer to have a conversation with someone close to them about a subject they've never discussed intimately before. The conversations are being gathered across the UK by teams of producers from local and national radio stations who facilitate each encounter. Every conversation - they're not BBC interviews, and that's an important difference - lasts up to an hour, and is then edited to extract the key moment of connection between the participants. Most of the unedited conversations are being archived by the British Library and used to build up a collection of voices capturing a unique portrait of the UK in the second decade of the millennium. You can learn more about The Listening Project by visiting bbc.co.uk/listeningproject

Producer: Marya Burgess.

SUN 15:00 Drama (b06s7ztr)
Memsahib Emma

Episode 1

Tanika Gupta's glorious adaptation of Jane Austen's Emma is set in mid 19th century India.

Beautiful, clever, rich - and single - Emma Bhattacharjee sees no need for love or marriage. Nothing, however, delights her more than interfering in the romantic lives of others.

But her plans soon lead her into all kinds of trouble.

Emma Bhattacharjee Manjinder Virk
Roy Navin Chowdhry
Bhattacharjee Silas Carson
Krishna Maya Sondhi
Sumit Chowdhury Raj Ghatak
Miss Bates Meera Syal
Mrs Weston Tracy Wiles
Mr Elton Leo Wan

Directed by Tracey Neale

SUN 16:00 Open Book (b06s8027)
Samuel Bjork

Open Book this week will be devoted to contemporary Norwegian literature. Crime writer Samuel Bjork talks to Mariella Frostrup about his bestselling thriller I'm Travelling Alone, which has just been translated into English. His weary detective Holger Munch finds himself investigating the sad disappearance of six year old girls, a crime which becomes horribly personal for him.
Also on the programme the Norwegian writing sensation Karl Ove Knausgaard reveals the book he'd never lend, and we hear the latest news from Norway's bookscene.

SUN 16:30 The Echo Chamber (b06s8029)
Series 6

Wendy Cope and Lachlan Mackinnon

Paul Farley hears new poems from Wendy Cope and Lachlan Mackinnon at their home in Ely. Since 'Making Cocoa for Kingsley Amis', her first collection, was published in 1986, Wendy Cope has been among the most popular of poets in Britain and her poems have lent ideas to the national imagination. Her husband, Lachlan Mackinnon, has published four highly regarded collections too and is a great poet of love and loss as well as being as funny as his wife. Producer: Tim Dee.

SUN 17:00 Volunteer Nation (b06ryrmz)

Bank of England Chief Economist Andy Haldane explores a hidden engine of the British economy - its volunteers. The UK has an unpaid army of workers which hides in plain sight. "This is a fantastic success story, which is largely missed. And it could be even more of a success story if people knew about it," says Haldane, the country's most senior economist. He speaks both from his professional expertise and his personal experience, as he is a volunteer himself. This makes him one of the estimated 15 million people who volunteer in Britain regularly. Their efforts keep the country's sports clubs, libraries, hospitals and countless other facilities open and running. But their efforts are often unmeasured, unrecognized and sometimes used, it is argued, as a substitute for services and employment once provided by the state. Haldane explores the impact this volunteer army has on our economy and our communities and asks what more we could do to harness their efforts for the greater good of us all.
Producer: Sandra Kanthal.

SUN 17:40 Profile (b06s6tlk)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Saturday]

SUN 17:54 Shipping Forecast (b06s6xcl)

The latest shipping forecast.

SUN 17:57 Weather (b06s6xcn)

The latest weather forecast.

SUN 18:00 Six O'Clock News (b06s6xcq)

David Cameron is facing pressure to allow eurosceptic ministers to campaign for Britain to leave the EU.

SUN 18:15 Pick of the Week (b06s80zh)

John Waite

John Waite chooses his highlights from the best of BBC Radio this week.

The most talked about topic in 2015 was the colour of a dress. Forty million of us twittered on about whether it was blue and black or gold and white. This week John has radio moments this week that he thinks you'll find equally memorable. When a president sings, Jim Naughtie chokes and Jeremy Vine gets his fingers chewed off .. by a man eating Shetland Pony. Yes for thrills and spills - who needs Star Wars.

The BBC Radio iPlayer pick is The Morecambe and Wise Show

Producer: Stephen Garner

The BBC Pick of the Week team: Kay Bishton & Elodie Chatelain.

SUN 19:00 The Archers (b06s80zk)

Eddie tries to flog his Christmas holly and mistletoe outside St Stephens. It's a big day for the Grundys, as they move back into Grange Farm - although it is only for a few months. Eddie gives Jill a tour and offers an open invitation to pop in for a mince pie and a drink.

Elizabeth's surprised to hear about Ruth staying in in New Zealand over Christmas. Jill invites Elizabeth to join Brookfield for Christmas lunch. It will be good for David to have some company - he's taking Ruth's absence hard, and Bert has gone away to be with his family.

Jean Harvey is still getting on the rest of the Calendar Girls cast's nerves with her demands. Lilian accused her of being a Prima Donna! Lynda has an emotional outburst and Susan goes to talk to Lynda to calm her down. Lynda's excited to see that the calendars have arrived. However, there's disaster as Susan seems to be showing a little more than she intended to, which just adds to Lynda's stress levels. However, Susan finds a solution and the two of them set to work covering up - with cunningly placed stickers.

SUN 19:15 June Whitfield: 90 Not Out (b06s8556)

Take It From Here to Happy Ever After

In an age of instant celebrity, what does it take to maintain a long career in entertainment?

June Whitfield is one of our best-known faces and most widely loved stars. She has recently turned 90 years old. It's an ideal opportunity for BBC Radio 4 to wish her a happy birthday and toast her long, successful career - a career which is still ongoing.

Joanna Lumley visited June at home in Wimbledon to re-live some of her finest comedy moments and explore how the entertainment industry has changed - most notably the expanded roles for women as performers, writers and producers - during

her remarkable career.

Radio has been vital to June's success, but it was TV that brought her to the hearts of millions. This first of two programmes looks back and listens to her first footsteps on the path to fame - at first on radio in Take It From Here, then alongside almost every big name comic of the 50s, 60s and 70s, until Terry and June put her name in the title of that most successful of sitcoms.

Joanna Lumley, a co-star with June in Absolutely Fabulous, listens back to some selected gems from the archives and discusses the highs and lows of her time in the entertainment business.

Presenter: Joanna Lumley
Producer: Steve Doherty
A Giddy Goat production for BBC Radio 4.

SUN 19:45 From the Vineyard (b06s80ff)

Pinotage by Christopher Hope

Mysterious Marta attends to her wine-making tasks in the Cape region, watched over by the owner of the estate. Then something happens.

Written and read by Christopher Hope.

Producer: Duncan Minshall

First broadcast on Radio 4 in December 2015.

SUN 20:00 Feedback (b06s6vy9)

On Wednesday James Naughtie made an emotional sign off on the Today programme as he left the presenter seat after 21 years. What were listeners' favourite Naughtie moments? We hear highlights from two decades of broadcasting, from discussion of Auberon Waugh's nipples to the famous Jeremy Hunt gaff.

In the aftermath of the Scottish referendum, and the SNP's success in the general election, BBC Scotland is also having a debate around the extent of its own independence. A committee in Holyrood has called on the BBC to release more budgetary power for BBC Scotland, with more money and services. With that as the backdrop, BBC Radio Scotland introduced a more analytical schedule to suit the new political landscape, but with more live music as well. Is it working for the listeners? Roger Bolton talks to Jeff Zycinski, the head of BBC Radio Scotland.

BBC Radio 3 are looking ahead to the New Year with a brand new production of Artist Descending a Staircase, a radio play written over 40 years ago by Sir Tom Stoppard, one of the greatest living dramatists. Roger speaks to Sir Tom about the peculiarities and creative opportunities that come with writing for radio.

In the world of The Archers, the Grundy family has had a tough start to the festive season but listeners welcomed an emotional twist in the story this week, ushering in a happier Christmas for 94-year-old Joe.

Producer: Katherine Godfrey
A Whistledown production for BBC Radio 4.

SUN 20:30 Last Word (b06s1b92)

Mick Murphy, Ahmed Chalabi, Mattiwillda Dobbs, Brajraj Mahapatra and Holly Woodlawn

Matthew Bannister on

The Irish cyclist, strong man and farm labourer Mick Murphy who won a famous victory in the 1958 round Ireland race.

The Iraqi politician Ahmed Chalabi who boasted that he tricked the Americans into invading his country.

The American soprano Mattiwillda Dobbs, who was the first black singer to appear at La Scala in Milan.

The last surviving Indian king from the days of the British Raj. Brajraj Mahapatra ended his days in poverty.

And Holly Woodlawn, the transgender actress who starred in Andy Warhol's film "Trash" and Lou Reed's song "Walk On The Wild Side"

SUN 21:00 Money Box (b06s6mfh)

[Repeat of broadcast at 12:04 on Saturday]

SUN 21:26 Radio 4 Appeal (b06s6zm5)

[Repeat of broadcast at 07:54 today]

SUN 21:30 In Business (b06s0qyc)

The Sexy Salaryman

The white collar worker has become a central figure in TV series and comic books in Japan.

Ruth Alexander travels to Tokyo to explore the rise of the middle manager as cult hero, speaking to best-seller novelists, manga artists and TV directors about why the workplace makes such good drama.

She finds out what the fictional exploits of the 'salaryman' tell us about doing business in Japan, and hears about the emergence of a new character getting attention in popular culture - the salarywoman.

Presented and Produced by Ruth Alexander.

SUN 22:00 Westminster Hour (b06s6xcv)

Weekly political discussion and analysis with MPs, experts and commentators.

SUN 22:45 What the Papers Say (b06s80ml)

George Parker of The Financial Times analyses how the newspapers are covering the biggest stories.

SUN 23:00 The Film Programme (b06s0njn)

Star Wars - do you remember the first time?

Francine Stock asks listeners: Do you remember the first time with Star Wars ?

She hears from people who have seen the first film over 20 times, who could recite every line of dialogue, and were inspired to become pilots, designers and IT boffins thanks to Star Wars. And from an extra whose hair can be briefly viewed in his role as a X-Wing pilot and a listener whose father played the oboe on the famous soundtrack. Francine is joined in studio by scientist and presenter Adam Rutherford who has felt the Force on more than one occasion, and still has the toys to prove it.

SUN 23:30 Something Understood (b06s6zln)

[Repeat of broadcast at 06:05 today]

MONDAY 21 DECEMBER 2015**MON 00:00 Midnight News (b06s6xdy)**

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4. Followed by Weather.

MON 00:15 Thinking Allowed (b06rz91s)

Chess worlds, Competitive entrepreneurs

Chess players: Laurie Taylor talks to Gary Fine, Professor of Sociology at Northwestern University, and author of a study into the complex, committed and conflict ridden worlds of chess communities, both amateur and professional. They're joined by John Saunders, chess player and writer. Also, the competitive culture of the self-made man. Simon Down, Professor of Management at Anglia Ruskin University, discusses his study of businessmen whose talk of luxury cars and loads of cash represented a bid to gain a higher position in the hierarchy of their group.

Producer: Charlie Taylor.

MON 00:45 Bells on Sunday (b06s6zll)

[Repeat of broadcast at 05:43 on Sunday]

MON 00:48 Shipping Forecast (b06s6xf0)

The latest shipping forecast.

MON 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (b06s6xf2)

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

MON 05:20 Shipping Forecast (b06s6xf4)

The latest shipping forecast.

MON 05:30 News Briefing (b06s6xf6)

The latest news from BBC Radio 4.

MON 05:43 Prayer for the Day (b06s85kb)

A spiritual comment and prayer to begin the day with Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

MON 05:45 Farming Today (b06s85kg)

Flooding Clear Up

It's Christmas week but many farmers are still clearing up after the flash floods that hit earlier this month. Caz Graham catches up with some of them in Cumbria, where an information and support centre has been set up at an auction mart.

Nancy Nicolson is at Kielder Forest in Northumberland to find out how giant Christmas trees for public spaces are grown and felled. And we get a look ahead to 2016 with consultant Graham Redman from The Andersons Centre. Presented by Charlotte Smith and produced by Sally Challoner.

MON 05:56 Weather (b06s6xf8)

The latest weather forecast for farmers.

MON 05:58 Tweet of the Day (b040vhm)

Asian Koel

Michael Palin presents the Asian koel's arrival to an Indian orchard. This long-tailed glossy blue-black bird, is a well-known British harbinger of spring, and like its British counterpart, it is a cuckoo.

The koel's plaintive call is heard from late March until July around villages and in wooded countryside from Pakistan east to Indonesia and southern China. In India, it symbolises the birth of a new season, the flowering of fruit-trees, the bloom of romance and all that's good about spring. The koel's song can be heard in many Bollywood movies and has inspired poems and folk songs; it's even rumoured to help mangoes ripen faster.

This almost universal feel-good factor doesn't extend to its victims, because the koel is after all a cuckoo, and lays its eggs in other birds' nests. Asian Koels are parasitic on a wide range of birds, but in India especially, on House Crows and Jungle Crows.

Producer Andrew Dawes.

MON 06:00 Today (b06s8712)

Morning news and current affairs. Including Sports Desk, Weather and Thought for the Day.

MON 09:00 Start the Week (b06s8714)

Space Survival and Exploration

On Start the Week, as the first Briton heads into space for two decades, Andrew Marr explores the future of space travel. Kevin Fong is an expert in space medicine and in this year's Royal Institution Christmas Lectures looks at how to survive in outer space. The Astronomer Royal Martin Rees questions whether human space travel is worth the money or the risk, while the astrophysicist Carole Haswell searches distant galaxies for habitable exoplanets. Stephen Baxter is a writer of hard science fiction who, as a member of the British Interplanetary Society, investigates star ship design and extra-terrestrial liberty.

Producer: Katy Hickman.

MON 09:45 Book of the Week (b06s8716)

The Man Who Made Things Out of Trees

Episode 1

In 2012, Robert Penn felled (and replanted) a great ash from a Welsh wood. He set out to explore the true value of the tree of which we have made the greatest and most varied use in human history. How many things can be made from one tree?

Over the next two years he travelled across Britain, to Europe and the USA, to the workshops and barns of a generation of craftsmen committed to working in wood. He watched them make over 45 artefacts and tools that have been in continual use for centuries, if not millennia.

Today, he begins his search for the perfect tree in woodland near his South Wales home. It's a bitter, Elizabethan winter and snow lies on the forests. After a long hunt, he gets a call from a forester in Herefordshire.

This is a tale about the joy of making things in wood, of its touch and smell, its many uses and the resonant, calming effect of running our hands along a wooden surface. It is a celebration of man's close relationship with this greatest of natural materials and a reminder of the value of things made by hand and made to last.

Abridged by Jo Coombs

Produced by Hannah Marshall

A Loftus Media production for BBC Radio 4.

MON 10:00 Woman's Hour (b06s8718)

Lucy van Pelt, Baroness Verma, Homelessness, Little Green Dress, Memory

Lucy van Pelt was the feisty, grumpy cartoon character in Charles M. Schulz's comic strip Peanuts. Now her best quotations have been pulled together in a new book *How To Be a Grrrl*. Writer Jenny Colgan and Journalist Hadley Freeman, both Lucy Super Fans, describe their love for this character. Is she a feminist icon or a bossy manipulator?

Baroness Verma, Parliamentary Under-secretary of State for International Development has just been appointed Ministerial Champion for Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Overseas. One in three women worldwide experience physical or sexual violence in their life-time according to the United Nations so what role can she play in tackling such widespread abuse?

In June 2013 Daisy-May Hudson, her younger sister and her mother were made homeless because their landlord decided to sell the property they had called home for thirteen years. Daisy explains to Jane Garvey why she decided to document her family's experience in the film she called "Halfway".

Alternatives to the LBD: it's Christmas party season but before you pull out your trusty LBD (little black dress), take note that some other trends are stealing the show. The Little Green Dress, the visible bra and casual party wear are all making waves at parties this year. Anna Murphy, fashion director at the Times, describes how party fashion is changing.

Memory: there are some occasions which lend themselves to the making of enduring memories and Christmas is one of them. But how much do we know about memory? How are memories made, how reliable are they and what triggers them? Does gender affect how we remember? With Dr Anna Weighall Cognitive Development Psychologist at the University of Leeds.

MON 10:45 15 Minute Drama (b06s871b)

I Am the Very Model of a Modern Major General

A Man of Jollity

The story of the rise and fall of a collaboration between three men who dominated Victorian musical theatre and have left a lasting legacy. Everyone has heard of the immortal Gilbert and Sullivan, but who knows about the man who brought them success, George Grossmith, the original Modern Major General?

Simon Butteriss and Robin Brooks' delightful comedy drama about the entertainer George Grossmith, who was plucked from his humble touring circuit to become the star of the Gilbert & Sullivan Savoy Operas, staying for twelve years. Grossmith was central to why Gilbert and Sullivan operas became so successful and continue to be so today.

Simon Butteriss, who plays Grossmith, is best known as a performer in the Gilbert and Sullivan patter roles, which he continues to sing all over the world to a huge fan base. Robin Brooks' work for Radio 4 includes *Ulysses*, *I Claudius*, *The Great Scott* and *Iris Murdoch: Dream Girl*. His recent dramatisation of *Iris Murdoch's The Sea*, *The Sea* starring Jeremy Irons has been shortlisted for a BBC Audio Drama Award, 2016.

Episode One: A Man of Jollity

It's 1877 and Gilbert and Sullivan cast George Grossmith, a touring comedian, as the leading man in their new opera, *The Sorcerer*. But there's one problem. He's not a singer. Will the society clown hold his own among the divas and thereby change the face of musical theatre forever?

Pianist: Gretel Dowdeswell

Sound Designer: Alisdair McGregor

Written by Simon Butteriss and Robin Brooks
Directed by Simon Butteriss and Fiona McAlpine
Produced by Fiona McAlpine

An Allegra production for BBC Radio 4.

MON 11:00 The Disused Chapel on the Cornish Skyline (b06s871d)

Petroc Trelawny investigates what has happened to a distinguishing feature of Cornwall, its chapels.

Petroc grew up in St Martin, on the Lizard, and went to Sunday school at the Methodist chapel. Producer Julian May lived in Carnon Downs, near Truro. He sometimes went to Quenchwell Chapel. Cornish life revolved round chapels: as well as services and Sunday schools there were 'tea treats', anniversary feasts, concerts and a strong social network.

Clive Buckingham, a Methodist and an architect, takes Petroc to Ponsanooth, a small village with a huge, beautiful, grade II* listed chapel that seats 600. Once workers from the nearby gunpowder works filled its pews. These, like Cornish miners and fishermen were wild people. Then, in the 19th century, came religious revival. Billy Bray, famously dissolute, was 'saved', became a preacher and built chapels with his own

hands.

In the 1850's, archivist David Thomas says, there were 1,200 chapels in Cornwall. Fewer than 200 are still used. Today only 20 or so people worship at Ponsanooth. The disused chapel on the Cornish skyline is a familiar sight.

But, Petroc discovers, some find new life. St Martin chapel is now a family home. Quenchwell chapel has been converted, too, and Tipu Choudhury tells Petroc how it became the Cornwall Islamic Community Centre. The chapel on the skyline at Tregona is tiny, made of cob and remote. Petroc meets Andrew Tebbis and Jane Darke, artists who, resisting attempts to turn it into a holiday cottage, are making it an art space, an amenity, as it always was, for locals.

Petroc tells the story of the abandonment and rebirth of Cornwall's chapels. He meets, too, those still worshipping, who think it's not the chapels that need converting, but the people.

Producer: Julian May.

MON 11:30 The Missing Hancocks (b06s871s)

Series 2

The Trial of Father Christmas

The Anthony Hancock Strolling Players present a cautionary tale of Christmas as it might be.

Between 1954 and 1959, BBC Radio recorded 102 episodes of Galton and Simpson's classic sitcom Hancock's Half Hour. But 20 went missing from the BBC archives, and had not been heard since their original transmission... until these faithful re-imaginings.

After a highly acclaimed first series, another five were lovingly re-recorded in front of a live audience at London's BBC Radio Theatre.

Tony Hancock Kevin McNally

Bill Kerr Kevin Eldon

Sid James Simon Greenall

Kenneth Williams Robin Sebastian

Andre Melly Susy Kane

With Simon Greenall and John Finnemore

Newly recorded score by the BBC Concert Orchestra

Written by Ray Galton and Alan Simpson

Produced by Ed Morrish and Neil Pearson

Originally broadcast on the BBC Light Programme on 21 December 1955.

Recreated for broadcast by BBC Radio Comedy for BBC Radio 4 and first broadcast in December 2015.

MON 12:00 News Summary (b06s6xfb)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

MON 12:04 Home Front (b06kv6s3)

21 December 1915 - Florrie Wilson (Season 6 start)

The first episode of Season 6: on this day, as Folkestone began to recover from a major landslide, it appears that the Wilsons have all developed little rituals.

Written by Richard Monks

Directed by Jessica Dromgoole

Sound: Martha Littlehailes

MON 12:15 You and Yours (b06s871v)

Space tourism, Solar subsidies, Loneliness in Japan

The man who's bought a ticket into space: when will tourists actually be able to take off?

Is it still worth getting solar panels on your roof?

And we report from Japan on how loneliness is being tackled among its ageing population.

Presenter: Winifred Robinson

Producer: Jon Douglas.

MON 12:57 Weather (b06s6xf)

The latest weather forecast.

MON 13:00 World at One (b06s871f)

The man who's dominated international football for a quarter of a century, Sepp Blatter, has been banned from any involvement in the sport for eight years, as has Michel Platini. Both men deny any wrongdoing. We'll be asking how the game's image can recover. More than a hundred British lives were lost in the Sangin area of Afghanistan, now a senior police officer in Sangin town has said their base could fall to the Taliban within hours. We speak to a British soldier who fought in the area. As Jeremy Corbyn marks 100 days since becoming Labour leader, we'll explore what the next 100 might have in store. And as part of our WATO at 50 series marking the best of British...we meet the Silversmiths of Edinburgh.

MON 13:45 Roger Law: Art and Seoul (b06s87tk)

Artist Roger Law has long been fascinated by the culture of Korea. From stunning ceramics to films and music, South Korea has it all. Roger travels to the 21st century city of Seoul to find out what fires up the Korean imagination.

In the first of the series, Roger Law discovers how Korean potters became so skilled at ceramics that the Japanese decided to kidnap them.

Producer Mark Rickards.

MON 14:00 The Archers (b06s802k)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Sunday]

MON 14:15 Drama (b03pmk7f)

Joseph Wilde - Wildsong

The writer Joseph Wilde and musician Tim van Eyken take the main roles in their new play 'Wildsong'. Integral to the drama Wilde has written is Tim van Eyken's music, a soundscape composed using recordings made on the Somerset Levels.

Vic leaves the comfort of the city, in search of his brother Reg, last heard of living somewhere in rural Somerset. Their father is dying, and he wants to see his son before the end. Vic's search takes him far into the watery land of the Somerset Levels. Striving to persuade his brother to return, Vic reluctantly shares his life of witty cutting, cider and singing. The place, its life and sounds - its wildsong - begin to change him. But Reg's recalcitrance and Vic's desperation - his own life is not as ordered and secure as he makes out - lead to a dangerous confrontation as, in a violent storm, the Somerset Levels flood.

Director - Julian May.

MON 15:00 Round Britain Quiz (b06s891x)

Programme 10, 2015

(10/12)

Tom Sutcliffe chairs a contest between the Scots (Val McDermid and Roddy Lumsden) and Northern Ireland (Polly Devlin and Brian Feeney). The last time they clashed, the Scots claimed victory: can the tables be turned today? The stakes are high, as this is the last appearance either team will be making in the programme this year.

The panellists might sigh with relief at seeing references to crime fiction and popular music; but what about cricket, 19th century art, Classical mythology and the geography of Paris? They'll need knowledge of all of these to arrive at the answers to today's impenetrable-sounding problems, with Tom on hand to provide a gentle hint, or even just a raised eyebrow, where necessary.

Tom will also have the answer to the teaser puzzle which may have kept you guessing since last week's contest.

Producer: Paul Bajoria.

MON 15:30 The Food Programme (b06s7y36)

[Repeat of broadcast at 12:32 on Sunday]

MON 16:00 My Life on Paper (b05xhwr2)

Across Britain, sixth formers are preparing to write and embellish their UCAS personal statements as they apply to university.

Actress, playwright and mother Jane Godber explores how creative you can get in 4000 characters - the limits of a personal statement - what if you really had to tell the truth about your life?

If you wrote that the most influential people in your life are not Jack Kerouac and Tennyson, but your mum or your dad, who is paralysed. That you are more mature than most sixth-formers because you've been the main carer for your mum and sisters since you were thirteen.

Jane hears from students, admissions tutors and heads of sixth-

form, as well as creative writing tutors Ian Marchant and Helen Cross. She also attempts to write her own short biog, with the help of daughter Martha and a large packet of marshmallows.

Producer...Mary Ward-Lowery.

MON 16:30 Beyond Belief (b06s8bpt)

Yule

December 21st - the shortest day in the year - is the day pagans across Europe are marking the Winter Solstice; an ancient festival, connected to the lowest position of the sun in the sky. It has been celebrated for millennia, and yet, its relationship to the relatively recent Christian celebration of Christmas is inseparable. It is no coincidence that a festival marking the 'rebirth' of the new sun in the sky comes just days before the celebration of the birth of Jesus, seen by Christians as the Son of God. How did this relationship develop? Where did many of the familiar customs we associate with Christmas come from?

Ernie Rea explores the pagan origins of Christmas with Ronald Hutton, professor of History at Bristol University; JJ Middleway, a celebrant and ritualist based in the Druid tradition; and the reverend Steve Hollinghurst, a Church of England vicar and author of 'New Age Paganism and Christian Mission'.

Producer:

Amanda Hancox.

MON 17:00 PM (b06s8bpy)

News interviews, context and analysis.

MON 18:00 Six O'Clock News (b06s6xfk)

Sepp Blatter and Michel Platini get 8 year bans after an ethics enquiry

MON 18:30 I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue (b06s8bpy)

Series 64

Episode 4

The antidote to panel games pays a return visit to the Grand Opera House in York. Regulars Barry Cryer, Graeme Garden and Tim Brooke-Taylor are joined on the panel by Sandi Toksvig with Jack Dee in the chair. Colin Sell attempts piano accompaniment.

Producer - Jon Naismith. It is a BBC Radio Comedy production.

MON 19:00 The Archers (b06s8bq0)

Helen has a nasty cold and Rob gets her to stay in bed today while he looks after the shop. Helen asks about Ian and asks Rob, if he sees Ian, to let Ian know she has been trying to call him. At the shop, Rob encourages Pat to help him make sure that Helen stays in bed. Rob also talks to Pat about Christmas when she mentions the Bridge Farm traditional tree-decorating ceremony. Pat later visits Helen and tells her that perhaps she Rob and Henry should enjoy their own Christmas Eve tradition this year.

The Grundys offer a warm, toasty welcome to Peggy at Grange Farm and look forward to Christmas there. Joe and Peggy discuss changes in farming over the years - having seemingly come full circle, Joe's happy to be back where he started. David and Jill discuss the changing nature of dairy and the very real possibility of losing the Brookfield herd. David confides in Jill - he really needs Ruth back home with him.

MON 19:15 Front Row (b06s8bq2)

Tony Jordan and Ron Howard, plus Kurt Masur remembered

The new BBC drama series, Dickensian, sees Charles Dickens's most famous stories and characters co-existing on the same Victorian streets. John Wilson talks to Tony Jordan, the creator of the series.

The German conductor Kurt Masur led both the London and the New York Philharmonic Orchestras and encouraged a peaceful reunification of Germany. Norman Lebrecht pays tribute to Masur who died at the weekend aged 88.

Ron Howard has proved himself an extraordinarily diverse director, from his Oscar-winning A Beautiful Mind to Frost/Nixon, Apollo 13, Parenthood, Splash and Rush. His latest film, In The Heart of The Sea, starring Chris Hemsworth, Benjamin Walker and Ben Whishaw, he explores the true story that inspired Melville's Moby Dick.

And if you're in need of some cultural inspiration this Christmas but have had enough of the obvious festive fare, Front Row have selected four arts experts to champion an alternative Christmas treat each day this week. Tonight, the art critic Waldemar Januszczak reveals his out of the ordinary

Christmas image.

MON 19:45 15 Minute Drama (b06s871b)

[Repeat of broadcast at 10:45 today]

MON 20:00 The Philosopher's Arms (b06s8bq4)

Series 5

Hate Speech

The Philosopher's Arms, presented by Matthew Sweet, asks whether speech can harm. Helping us come to an answer, we have a philosopher, cartoonist and a man who was arrested for hate speech.

MON 20:30 Crossing Continents (b06rzd48)

Cambodia: Trust Me, I'm not a Doctor

The Cambodian government has recently announced a clampdown on unlicensed doctors. This comes after a mass infection of HIV in a rural village, blamed on an unlicensed doctor re-using syringes. The "doctor", recently convicted of manslaughter, has just begun a 25 year prison sentence.

For millions of people, self-taught, unlicensed doctors are often their cheapest - and only - option if they fall ill. Cambodia has one of the world's lowest numbers of doctors per head of population, on a par with Afghanistan. For Crossing Continents, John Murphy travels outside the capital Phnom Penh to see whether the government clampdown is having an effect. He finds evidence that self-taught doctors are still operating in villages, without hindrance - and with plenty of local support. Producer Helen Grady.

MON 21:00 Putting Science to Work (b06rxyct)

Air Pollution

As the recent VW scandal reminds us, the exhaust from petrol and, in particular, diesel cars are damaging our health. So what can science do to help? Jim Al-Khalili invites three scientists into the studio to explain how their research or technology could help reduce pollution from dirty car exhausts. Professor of Chemistry, Tony Ryan makes the case for smart materials that absorb noxious gases. If only everyone could treat their jeans with nanoparticles that that clean up the air as they walk around town. Professor Clare Grey and her team are working on the next generation of batteries for electric cars. And engineer, Bernard Porter is a champion of hydrogen fuel cells. So, which technology is best designed to help us reduce air pollution in our cities? Who deserves the lion's share of Jim's imaginary pot of research funding to help us tackle this problem?

Producer: Anna Buckley.

MON 21:30 Start the Week (b06s8714)

[Repeat of broadcast at 09:00 today]

MON 21:58 Weather (b06s6xfm)

The latest weather forecast.

MON 22:00 The World Tonight (b06s8br9)

March of anti-austerity parties in Europe

Varoufakis on Podemos gains; Bacteria in UK resists "last resort" antibiotic; Crace on SNP (photo shows Pablo Iglesias, leader of Spanish "Podemos" party. credit: AP).

MON 22:45 Book at Bedtime (b06s8bsg)

A Snow Garden and Other Stories

A Faraway Smell of Lemon

Rachel Joyce's new collection "A Snow Garden and Other Stories" glides through the festive season with interlinked stories which delight and surprise. From an unexpected birth at an airport full of stranded travellers, a famous son wanting to escape the madness for a normal family dinner, to a divorced father's wish to give his two little boys the one thing they really want, a white Christmas. Five stories as funny, joyous, poignant and memorable as Christmas should be.

Rachel Joyce is the author of the Sunday Times and international bestsellers The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry, Perfect and The Love Song of Miss Queenie Hennessy. The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Book Prize and longlisted for the Man Booker Prize and has been translated into 34 languages.

She is the award-winning writer of over 30 original afternoon plays and classic adaptations for BBC Radio 4.

Read by Rachel Joyce

Produced & Directed by Gemma McMullan.

MON 23:00 Mastertapes (b06s8brc)

Series 5

Georgie Fame (the A-Side)

John Wilson returns with a new series of Mastertapes, in which he talks to leading artists about the album that made them or changed them. Future programmes in the series include Donovan discussing 'Sunshine Superman', Steel Pulse returning to 'Handsworth Revolution' and Squeeze talking about 'East Side Story'

Series 5, Programme 1, A-side. 'Rhythm & Blues At The Flamingo' with Georgie Fame

At the age of 16, former apprentice cotton weaver, Clive Powell, successfully auditioned for pop impresario Larry Parnes who then forced him to change his name to Georgie Fame.

After touring alongside Marty Wilde, Joe Brown, Gene Vincent and Eddie Cochran, Georgie played the piano in Billy Fury's backing band, the Blue Flames. By March 1962 it was Georgie Fame and the Blue Flames who began a three year residency at the Flamingo Club in London's Soho.

Including tracks like 'Night Train', 'Work Song', 'Baby, Please Don't Go' and 'Do The Dog', 'Rhythm And Blues at the Flamingo' captured the vibrancy and excitement of the famous and notorious club which played a significant part in the breakdown of racial prejudice in post-war British society.

Here Georgie Fame talks candidly with John Wilson about the album that started it all and, together with some of the original Blue Flames (including guitarist Colin Green, saxophonist Mick Eve and trumpeter Eddie 'Tan Tan' Thornton) as well as his two sons Tristan and James Powell, play exclusive versions of some of the key tracks.

The B-side of the programme, where it's the turn of the audience to ask the questions, can be heard on Tuesday 22nd December at **3.30pm**.

Producer: Paul Kobrak.

MON 23:30 Stepping Stones (b064ygkt)

Stick by the Sea: A Childhood Tale

Broadcaster Piers Plowright explores five sound-worlds - some from far back in his life and some more recent - which still resonate with him.

In this first episode, he returns to the small Welsh village he was evacuated to during the Second World War, to find the family that took him, his mother, and sister, into their house.

With four of the Thomas siblings, now all in the 80s, he explores their different, sometimes conflicting, memories of the years 1943 to 1945 and remembers and recreates the sounds that surrounded them.

Produced by Alan Hall

A Falling Tree production for BBC Radio 4.

MON 23:45 Today in Parliament (b06s8brf)

TIP: Questions in the House of Lords over what progress is being made on talks to reform the EU. Peers also consider the tax paid by online companies, and banks' relationship with vulnerable customers. Sean Curran reports.

TUESDAY 22 DECEMBER 2015

TUE 00:00 Midnight News (b06s6xgw)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4. Followed by Weather.

TUE 00:30 Book of the Week (b06s8716)

[Repeat of broadcast at 09:45 on Monday]

TUE 00:48 Shipping Forecast (b06s6xgy)

The latest shipping forecast.

TUE 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (b06s6xh0)

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

TUE 05:20 Shipping Forecast (b06s6xh2)

The latest shipping forecast.

TUE 05:30 News Briefing (b06s6xb4)

The latest news from BBC Radio 4.

TUE 05:43 Prayer for the Day (b06s98c7)

A spiritual comment and prayer to begin the day with Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

TUE 05:45 Farming Today (b06s98c9)

Payment priority for flood-hit farmers, Farming Today Cow TB test, Poinsettia

The Farming Minister George Eustice says 600 farmers, badly affected by flooding, will have their annual support payment claims prioritised. There had been fears that Basic Payment Scheme claims for common land wouldn't be paid out until February.

Anna Hill finds out what the next big thing in Christmas Poinsettia growing could be...

And, will the Farming Today dairy cow make it through her Bovine TB test?

Presented by Anna Hill and produced by Sarah Swadling.

TUE 05:58 Tweet of the Day (b04t0v13)

Ostrich

Michael Palin presents the avian record breaking ostrich in the Kalahari Desert. Ostriches are ornithological record-breakers. The black and white adult male ostrich is taller and heavier than any other living bird, reaching almost 3 metres in height and weighing a whopping 150 kilograms. Females are smaller but lay the largest eggs of any bird. The ostrich's eye measures 5cm in diameter and is the largest of any land vertebrate.

Ostriches live in the wide open landscapes of central, eastern and South-West Africa. As well as being tall and observant, Ostriches also minimise their chances of being predated on, by living in groups and sharing lookout duties, or staying close to sharp-eyed antelope and zebra herds. They can also use their powerful legs to try and outrun a predator, reaching speeds of up to 70 kilometres per hour which makes them the fastest avian runner.

TUE 06:00 Today (b06s98cc)

Morning news. Includes Sports Desk, Yesterday in Parliament, Weather, Thought for the Day

TUE 09:00 The Long View (b06s98cf)

John Thurloe, Cromwell's postmaster, and the interception of mail

Jonathan Freedland finds out how today's concerns about the privacy of our communications, and debates about encryption, have intriguing precedents in the 17th century.

Producer Clare Walker.

TUE 09:30 The Misogyny Book Club (b064kk77)

Hands Up, Misogynists!

What does the popularity of Fifty Shades of Grey say about how women see themselves?

This is the final programme of a series exploring misogyny in our most read books, including the Bible, Hamlet, fairy tales and Sons and Lovers. Jo Fidgeon and company discuss how E.L. James' Fifty Shades of Grey reflects or subverts the hatred of women depicted in these earlier texts.

The conversation ranges over violence towards women; the taboo of sexual curiosity; and broaches an uncomfortable question: can a feminist also be a misogynist?

TUE 09:45 Book of the Week (b06t4l4r)

The Man Who Made Things Out of Trees

Episode 2

In 2012, Robert Penn felled (and replanted) a great ash from a Welsh wood. He set out to explore the true value of the tree of which we have made the greatest and most varied use in human history. How many things can be made from one tree?

Over the next two years he travelled across Britain, to Europe and the USA, to the workshops and barns of a generation of craftsmen committed to working in wood. He watched them make over 45 artefacts and tools that have been in continual use for centuries, if not millennia.

With snow on the ground, a team of tree surgeons help to bring

the tree down. Once the timber has been sawn into planks, Rob's project to see how many things can be made from one ash tree really begins. He starts with one of the earliest associations between man and ash - tool handles. It was the attaching of stone tool heads to wooden handles which allowed our Neolithic ancestors to cultivate the land, build homes, furniture, canoes and much more.

This is a tale about the joy of making things in wood, of its touch and smell, its many uses, and the resonant, calming effect of running our hands along a wooden surface. It is a celebration of man's close relationship with this greatest of natural materials and a reminder of the value of things made by hand and made to last.

Abridged by Jo Coombs

Produced by Hannah Marshall

A Loftus Media production for BBC Radio 4.

TUE 10:00 Woman's Hour (b06s98ch)

Women in combat, Sam Bailey, Learning hygge with the Danes

Next year women will no longer be barred from close combat roles in the Armed Forces. Former Brigadier Nicky Moffat, who was the most senior female officer in the army, on what it will mean for recruits and how front line roles have changed.

Backstage with 2013 X Factor winner Sam Bailey as she prepares for her pantomime debut.

Snuggling up in a duvet, sitting by a roaring fire and lighting candles are what the Danes would describe as 'hygge'. Could the concept help us get through the dark days of winter? Helen Russell, author of 'The Year of Living Danishly', and teacher Susanne Nilsson discuss.

Christmas can be a time of joy, but for many it can be a time of stress, tension and anxiety. So can the skills of CBT, or cognitive behavioural therapy, help people cope with the emotional strains of the festive season? Clinical psychologist Christine Padesky on why she thinks the principles of CBT can help us all have a better Christmas.

Wine or beer? Wine sommelier Dominique Kate Hopgood versus beer sommelier Jane Peyton on the best accompaniment for the Christmas Turkey or veggie roast.

Presenter: Emma Barnett

Producer: Anne Peacock.

TUE 10:45 15 Minute Drama (b06s98ck)

I Am the Very Model of a Modern Major General

Ruler of the Queen's Navee

The story of the rise and fall of a collaboration between three men who dominated Victorian musical theatre and have left a lasting legacy. Everyone has heard of the immortal Gilbert and Sullivan, but who knows about the man who brought them success, George Grossmith, the original Modern Major General?

Simon Butteriss and Robin Brooks' delightful comedy drama about the entertainer George Grossmith, who was plucked from his humble touring circuit to become the star of the Gilbert & Sullivan Savoy Operas, staying for twelve years. Grossmith was central to why Gilbert and Sullivan operas became so successful and continue to be so today.

Simon Butteriss, who plays Grossmith, is best known as a performer in the Gilbert and Sullivan patter roles, which he continues to sing all over the world to a huge fan base. Robin Brooks' work for Radio 4 includes Ulysses, I Claudius, The Great Scott and Iris Murdoch: Dream Girl. His recent dramatisation of Iris Murdoch's The Sea, The Sea starring Jeremy Irons has been shortlisted for a BBC Audio Drama Award, 2016.

Episode Two: Ruler of the Queen's Navee

It's 1878. HMS Pinafore looks set to fail in a London heatwave, and Gilbert blames the disaster on Grossmith's vulgar performance. Can Grossmith save his career along with the sinking ship, and will Gilbert realise he's created a star, not a monster?

Pianist: Gretel Dowdeswell

Sound Designer: Alisdair McGregor

Written by Simon Butteriss and Robin Brooks
Directed by Simon Butteriss and Fiona McAlpine
Produced by Fiona McAlpine

An Allegra production for BBC Radio 4.

TUE 11:00 Putting Science to Work (b06s9d1f)

Infuriating Packaging

Opening presents can be quite a challenge. Toys incarcerated in rigid transparent plastic cases can bring tears, not of joy. Not to mention vacuum-packed luxury foods that are just impossible to get into. So, can science save us from infuriating packaging? And, if so, which technology is most likely to deliver us from this irksome everyday problem? Three scientists battle it out in the studio, pitching for Jim's imaginary pot of research money. Dr Alaster Yoxall is determined to understand what makes things fiddly. Professor Mark Miodownik dreams of packages that can be opened by your mobile phone. While Professor Lynne Boddy believes mushrooms as the new polystyrene. Could the future of packaging be mouldable mould?

Producer: Anna Buckley.

TUE 11:30 Soul Music (b06s9d1h)
Series 21

Fairytales of New York

The tragi-comic tale of love gone sour and shattered dreams eloquently depicted in the Christmas classic *Fairytales of New York* is the focus of this edition of Soul Music. James Fearnley, pianist with The Pogues recounts how the song started off as a transatlantic love story between an Irish seafarer missing his girl at Christmas before becoming the bittersweet reminiscences of the Irish immigrant down on his luck in the Big Apple, attempting to win back the woman he wooed with promises of 'cars big as bars and rivers of gold'.

Gaelic footballer Alisha Jordan came to New York to play football aged 17 from County Meath in Ireland. Despite being dazzled by the glamour and pace of New York City, she missed her family and friends and stencilled the words 'Fairytales of New York' on her apartment wall as an affirmation of her determination to make the most of her new life in the city. When she was later attacked on the street by a stranger, the words came to signify her battle to recover and not to let the horrific facial injuries she suffered defeat her or her ambition to captain her football team. Rachel Burdett posted the video of the song onto her friend Michelle's social media page to let her know she was thinking of her and praying for her safe return when Michelle went missing suddenly one December. Stories of redemption and of a recognition that Christmas is often not the fairytales we are sold, told through a seasonal favourite.

Producer: Maggie Ayre.

TUE 12:00 News Summary (b06s6xh6)
The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

TUE 12:04 Home Front (b06kv7ds)
22 December 1915 - Dorothea Winwood

Minister of munitions, David Lloyd George made an official visit to armaments factories in Newcastle, and it is Dorothea's first day at the Bevan Hospital.

Written by Richard Monks
Directed by Jessica Dromgoole
Sound: Martha Littlehailes

TUE 12:15 You and Yours (b06s9d1k)
Call You and Yours - How do you deal with loneliness?

You can feel really lonely at this time of year when all the emphasis is on big family gatherings. We'd like to know how you've coped with loneliness?
What have you tried to combat it and what worked?

TUE 12:57 Weather (b06s6xh8)
The latest weather forecast.

TUE 13:00 World at One (b06s9d1m)
Analysis of news and current affairs, presented by Mark Maddell.

TUE 13:45 Roger Law: Art and Seoul (b06t1f1k)
Artist Roger Law has long been fascinated by the culture of Korea. From stunning ceramics to films and music, South Korea has it all. Roger travels to the 21st century city of Seoul to find out what fires up the Korean imagination.

Seoul is the place to go for anyone who wants plastic surgery, and Roger wants to know why. Is there something in the Korean psyche which can be helped by a nose job? And can they make him look like George Clooney?

Producer Mark Rickards.

TUE 14:00 The Archers (b06s8bq0)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Monday]

TUE 14:15 McLevy (b06s9d1j)
Series 11

The Seventh Veil

New series. 2/4. The Seventh Veil.

Victorian detective drama starring Brian Cox and Siobhan Redmond.

Written by David Ashton.

Chief Constable Murray Craddock is outraged when an exotic dancer arrives in Leith.

But it's all part of Jean Brash's plans to repay some old debts.

Other parts played by the cast.
Producer/Director: Bruce Young
BBC Scotland.

TUE 15:00 The Kitchen Cabinet (b06s6mf6)
[Repeat of broadcast at 10:30 on Saturday]

TUE 15:30 Mastertapes (b06s9d1r)
Series 5

Georgie Fame (the B-Side)

John Wilson returns with a new series of Mastertapes, in which he talks to leading performers and songwriters about the album that made them or changed them. Recorded in front of a live audience at the BBC's iconic Maida Vale Studios. Future programmes in the series include Donovan discussing 'Sunshine Superman', Steel Pulse returning to 'Handsworth Revolution' and Squeeze talking about 'East Side Story'

Programme 2 (B-side): Having discussed the making of 'Rhythm & Blues at the Flamingo' (in the A-side of the programme, broadcast on Monday 21st December and available online), Georgie Fame responds to questions from the audience and performs exclusive live versions of some of the tracks from the album (accompanied by his sons James and Tristan Powell, as well as a few of the original Blue Flames).

Producer: Paul Kobrak.

TUE 16:00 The Human Zoo (b06s9d1t)
Series 7

The Strangeness of Tradition

It's the time of year when we fall into the familiar, the traditions we've recycled since childhood. But why do we do it? Michael Blastland examines the psychology of how we behave around Christmas.

Mistletoe, gift-giving, decorated evergreen trees - irresistibly or unthinkingly, we all act out this time of year in a similar way. Do we simply copy each other? Is it about reinforcing group identity? Or do we fear the consequences if we transgress tradition?

In fact, how traditions arise and take hold - and more widely, what becomes conventional behaviour - is core to being human. How did Captain James Cook use convention to win over Fuegian tribesmen? Is tradition as much about the present as the past? And why is there moral outrage when we violate these traditions?

Michael Blastland investigates with resident Zoo psychologist Nick Chater, Professor of Behavioural Science at Warwick Business School, and roving reporter Timandra Harkness.

Contributors this week include Professor Robert Sugden, an economist from University of East Anglia; Professor Anne Murcott, anthropologist from SOAS, University of London; and Dr Björn Lindström, researcher at the Emotion Lab, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm.

The programme also includes writer and broadcaster Simon Fanshawe on Midnight Mass and when is the correct time to cook the turkey, and the cast of Andrew Pollard's Little Red Riding Hood from the Greenwich Theatre.

Producer: Dom Byrne
A Pier production for BBC Radio 4.

TUE 16:30 Great Lives (b06s9d1w)
Series 38

Alvin Hall chooses James Baldwin

Alvin Hall is the friendly face of financial reality, lecturing, writing and broadcasting on the subject of managing money. But he is also passionately interested in fine art, music and literature, and his nomination for a Great Life is that of writer and Civil Rights activist, James Baldwin.

Baldwin was born in 1924 in Harlem and his achievements in overcoming a difficult start in life were prodigious. For much of his life he lived outside the United States, returning in the late 1950s to support the nascent Civil Rights movement, though the Movement itself had some problems with his homosexuality. Throughout his life he continued to write about the experiences of being black in 20th century America and is now widely regarded as the pre-eminent African-American writer of the century.

Dr Douglas Field of the University of Manchester, who has written several books on James Baldwin, discusses Baldwin's life and achievements with Alvin and with Matthew Parris.

Producer Christine Hall

First broadcast on BBC Radio 4 in 2015.

TUE 17:00 PM (b06s9d1y)

Eddie Mair with interviews, context and analysis.

TUE 18:00 Six O'Clock News (b06s6xhb)

UK military are deployed to Helmand as reports suggest the Taliban could take Sangin

TUE 18:30 Don't Make Me Laugh (b06s9d20)

Christmas Special 2015

David Baddiel hosts a Christmas edition of the anti-comedy show, where the only task for the guests is to avoid making the audience laugh.

Frank Skinner, Hugh Dennis, Ellie Taylor and Dan Schreiber face the challenge of resisting all their natural instincts, talking about a series of funny subjects without making any jokes.

Producer: Dave Cribb
A So Radio production for BBC Radio 4.

TUE 19:00 The Archers (b06s9d22)

Richard Locke is throwing a housewarming party at Keepers Cottage, which he's now renting. Shula helps him set up. There, Richard meets Justin Elliot, who's staying at Grey Gables over Christmas. Richard and Shula discuss Elizabeth, who Richard's looking forward to meeting. Justin invites Lilian and Shula to join him at the New Year's Day races. Jennifer helps out in the village shop, getting her tabard on (much to Lilian's surprise).

Charlie puts Adam on the spot, asking whether they can still be friends. But Adam says there's nothing left to say.

TUE 19:15 Front Row (b06s9d24)

And Then There Were None, Snoopy and Charlie Brown, 70s revivals

Agatha Christie's *And Then There Were None* is one of the best-selling crime novels of all time, and now the book has been adapted into a television series for BBC One. Writer Sarah Phelps talks to Samira Ahmed about how she went about adapting the novel for the screen.

As Charlie Brown, Snoopy, Lucy, Linus and the rest of the Peanuts Gang make their big-screen debut, cartoonist and fan Kev F Sutherland delivers his verdict on Snoopy and Charlie Brown: The Peanuts Movie.

This year we saw Poldark return to our screens, along with other 1970s programmes *Open All Hours* and *The Clanders*. Then there are the programmes which draw on 1970s-style TV programmes such as *Mrs Brown's Boys*, *The Kennedys* and *Citizen Khan*. And, surely, *Downton Abbey* is a reinterpretation of *Upstairs Downstairs*? Writer Andrew Collins and historian Dominic Sandbrook discuss our fascination with the decade.

If you're in need of a break from all the sugar-coated festive fare, *Front Row* is offering some alternative Christmas treats for you to consider. The film critic Mark Eccleston unwraps his alternative Christmas film, *Bad Santa*.

Presenter: Samira Ahmed
Producer: Elaine Lester.

TUE 19:45 15 Minute Drama (b06s98ck)

[Repeat of broadcast at 10:45 today]

TUE 20:00 A Meaty Problem (b06s9d26)

Restaurateur Henry Dimpleby unravels the deep-seated attachment of the British to eating meat.

Henry wants to cut down on his meat consumption. Many scientists and policy makers think this is a good idea - for global food sustainability, climate change and health. In an effort to understand why he is finding it so difficult, he unpicks the cultural history of the British and their relationship to eating meat.

We join Henry as he hosts a vegetarian Sunday lunch for his family, without his beloved joint of meat. He speaks to cultural historian Ben Rogers, author of *Beef and Liberty*, and learns that the British have long been identified with their beef consumption - propaganda which sets them above the French during the 18th century wars, the fashionably obese John Bull character portrayed in stark contrast to the weak and feeble Frenchman existing on a diet of gruel and snails.

Dr Annie Gray recalls the popularity of the ditty *O the Roast Beef of Old England*, sung spontaneously by audiences in the playhouses of 18th century England.

With meat eating such a strong part of our cultural identity, Henry asks how we might go about re-programming ourselves so that we can reduce our intake? Like it or not, meat-eating is still very much associated with masculinity and psychotherapist Susie Orbach suggests reasons why men find it more difficult to reduce meat-eating than women.

Henry speaks to Professor of Food Policy at City University London, Tim Lang about whether personal choice can be enough, or whether governmental policy, taxes or rations are needed to change eating habits and prevent a global food crisis. Produced by Victoria Shepherd
A Somethin' Else Production for BBC Radio 4.

TUE 20:40 In Touch (b06s9d2b)

Guide dogs on planes. Dealing with parties

We hear how mistakes on a guide dog's passport led to it being taken away from its owner at Gatwick Airport. One of our regular columnists tells us about coping with parties when you can't read people's body language. And literacy historian, Dr Kate Macdonald, tells us about her research into WW1 short stories which depict blind soldiers.

TUE 21:00 The Listeners (b06s9d2d)

Series 3

Episode 1

Listening is about more than hearing as we discover in this new series of 3 programmes. The first programme explores three very different experiences of listening to speech with a poet, a speech dialect coach and Chair of Samaritans. Jan Haydn Rowles is an accent and dialect coach whose interest in dialect began when she noticed how her parents who were born in different counties spoke with different accents; and that the same was true of her and her siblings. Jan not only hears sounds she sees them; "When I listen to a person's voice I don't see it, I hear it" and she offers a fascinating insight into her visual experiences of sound. Katrina Porteous has spent much of her life in County Durham and Northumberland writing about the fishing communities and coastal landscape where she lives. 'A poem begins and ends in listening' she says. For Katrina, listening extends to the sounds of the words; whether they be soft sounds or hard sounds, and beyond the meaning of the words to the rhythm of language and the music of the dialect as we discover. Jenni McCartney is our third listener. She has been working with Samaritans for over 30 years, first as a volunteer and now as Chair. "Listening is absolutely crucial to what we do" she says. Started by Chad Varra in 1953, Samaritans is a charity which provides confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress, despair or suicidal thoughts, and is available 24 hours a day, every day. At its simplest, Samaritans is about listening. "Every 6 seconds somebody contacts Samaritans". Listening perhaps has never been more important. Producer Sarah Blunt.

TUE 21:30 The Long View (b06s98cf)

[Repeat of broadcast at 09:00 today]

TUE 21:58 Weather (b06s6xhd)

The latest weather forecast.

TUE 22:00 The World Tonight (b06s9d2g)

UK military deployed in Afghanistan

We hear from an Afghan activist who says sending more foreign troops is not a solution. Why are transgender people more visible than ever before? We discuss gender identity.

Picture: Royal Marines from 45 Commando on patrol in Sangin in the Helmand province of Afghanistan. Credit: Danny Lawson/PA Wire.

TUE 22:45 Book at Bedtime (b06t2gq5)

A Snow Garden and Other Stories

A Snow Garden

Rachel Joyce's new collection "A Snow Garden and Other Stories" glides through the festive season with interlinked stories which delight and surprise. From an unexpected birth at an airport full of stranded travellers, a famous son wanting to escape the madness for a normal family dinner, to a divorced father's wish to give his two little boys the one thing they really want, a white Christmas. Five stories as funny, joyous, poignant and memorable as Christmas should be.

Rachel Joyce is the author of the Sunday Times and international bestsellers *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry*, *Perfect* and *The Love Song of Miss Queenie Hennessy*. *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry* was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Book Prize and longlisted for the Man Booker Prize and has been translated into 34 languages.

She is the award-winning writer of over 30 original afternoon plays and classic adaptations for BBC Radio 4.

Read by Rachel Joyce

Produced & Directed by Gemma McMullan.

TUE 23:00 The Show What You Wrote (b06s9f1j)

Series 3

Crime & Punishment

John Thomson, Shobna Gulati, Fiona Clarke, Chris Jack, and Gavin Webster star in the themed sketch show made entirely from contributions sent in by the public.

The best ideas have been chosen from thousands of submissions from new writers resulting in a show like no other.

The theme of "Crime & Punishment" features some remarkably literal highwaymen, a door-to-door salesman who is in no way a conman, and an HR policy that shows it's always best to read the small print.

Written by Cassie Atkinson, Tim Craig, Sarah Glenister, Helen Green, Jack Hall, Dai Hill, Joe Hodgson, Gabby Hutchinson Crouch, Rose Johnson, Graham Kilvington, Derek Martin, Steve Nelson, Owen Seddon & Emlyn Williams.

Script editor: Jon Hunter

Producers: Ed Morrish and Paul Sheehan.

A BBC Radio Comedy production for BBC Radio 4 first broadcast in December 2015.

TUE 23:30 Stepping Stones (b064z75g)

The Chuckler: A Short Ride in a Smart Machine

Broadcaster Piers Plowright explores five sound-worlds - some from far back in his life and some more recent - which still resonate with him.

In this third episode, Piers goes for a drive with his two daughters in a Morris Minor, the same model and vintage as the one he owned between 1968 and 1990. As his only car, he discovers just what made it so special when the family was growing up.

Produced by Alan Hall

A Falling Tree production for BBC Radio 4.

TUE 23:45 Today in Parliament (b06s9f11)

Mark D'Arcy reports from Westminster as peers end the year discussing welfare, immigration and controversial changes to the politics A-level.

WEDNESDAY 23 DECEMBER 2015**WED 00:00 Midnight News (b06s6xjg)**

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4. Followed by Weather.

WED 00:30 Book of the Week (b06t4l4r)

[Repeat of broadcast at 09:45 on Tuesday]

WED 00:48 Shipping Forecast (b06s6xjj)

The latest shipping forecast.

WED 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (b06s6xjl)

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

WED 05:20 Shipping Forecast (b06s6xjn)

The latest shipping forecast.

WED 05:30 News Briefing (b06s6xjq)

The latest news from BBC Radio 4.

WED 05:43 Prayer for the Day (b06s9f9t)

A spiritual comment and prayer to begin the day with Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

WED 05:45 Farming Today (b06s9f9w)

Antibiotic resistance, Raspberry the new cranberry?, Holly harvest, Christmas food charity

Should a vital antibiotic of 'last resort' for humans be banned from use on farms, to lessen the risk of superbugs developing? Professor Nicola Williams, from Liverpool University's Institute of Infection Control and Global Health, discusses the implications of bacteria resistant to the drug Colistin being discovered in the UK.

Anna Hill joins a Norfolk charity which distributes farmers' produce donations to give homeless people, and others in need, a Christmas dinner.

The Scottish plant breeder who thinks the Raspberry could be the new Cranberry.

And, a very prickly harvest in the Cotswolds.

Presented by Anna Hill and produced by Sarah Swadling.

WED 05:58 Tweet of the Day (b04t0vp4)

Mauritius Kestrel

Michael Palin presents the Mauritius kestrel from the island of Mauritius. Today the calls of several hundred Mauritius kestrels ring out across the forests and farmland of the island, so it's hard to believe that as recently as the early 1970s, only four birds could be found in the wild.

These smart chestnut falcons were almost wiped out by a cocktail of threats...destruction of their evergreen forests, pesticides and the introduction of predators such as monkeys, mongooses, rats and cats. When a species is so critically endangered there aren't many options, and conservationists decided that their only choice was to take some of the wild Mauritius kestrels into captivity.

By 1993, 300 Mauritius kestrels had been released and by November of that year there were as many as 65 breeding pairs in the wild. Now the kestrels are back, hovering above the landscapes that nearly lost them forever.

WED 06:00 Today (b06s9j70)

Morning news and current affairs. Includes Sports Desk, Yesterday in Parliament, Weather and Thought for the Day.

WED 09:00 Midweek (b06s9j72)

Carmen Munroe, Denis King, Ralph Montagu.

Libby Purves meets actor Carmen Munroe; composer Denis King and Ralph Montagu, Lord Montagu of Beaulieu.

Ralph Montagu, Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, is the nephew of Elizabeth Montagu who is the subject of a new film - *The Honourable Rebel*. The film tells the story of Elizabeth - Liza - Montagu and is based on her autobiography. She was a musician, actor, linguist and she was recruited by both the UK and US governments to act as a spy during World War Two. *The Honourable Rebel* stars Dorothea Myer-Bennett with narration by Diana Rigg and is showing in 100 cinemas around the UK.

Actor Carmen Munroe is playing Cicely, Duchess of York, in *Richard III* at the New Diorama theatre. A founder of Talawa Theatre Company alongside Mona Hammond and Yvonne Brewster, she made her West End debut in Tennessee Williams's *Period of Adjustment* in 1962 and starred alongside Norman Beaton in the Channel 4 sitcom *Desmonds* in the 1990s. Although she has starred at the Royal Court, the Tricycle and even the Royal Shakespeare Company in plays by Lorca, Brecht, Shaw and August Wilson, this production marks her Shakespearean debut at the age of 83. *Richard III* is at the New Diorama Theatre, London

Denis King is a composer. He started out in the 50s, at the age of 12 as a member of The King Brothers with brothers Mike

and Tony. Since then he has composed over 200 TV themes - his best known being ITV's Black Beauty - and written over 25 musicals including Privates on Parade. His book, Key Changes - A Musical Memoir is self-published.

Producer: Paula McGinley.

WED 09:45 Book of the Week (b061414)
The Man Who Made Things Out of Trees

Episode 3

In 2012, Robert Penn felled (and replanted) a great ash from a Welsh wood. He set out to explore the true value of the tree of which we have made the greatest and most varied use in human history. How many things can be made from one tree?

Over the next two years he travelled across Britain, to Europe and the USA, to the workshops and barns of a generation of craftsmen committed to working in wood. He watched them make over 45 artefacts and tools that have been in continual use for centuries, if not millennia.

Rob takes a carefully selected log to Robin Wood, Britain's best-known wood-turner. He has agreed to use it to form a nest of three bowls - a difficult task, "the Holy grail of turning". As he works the wood in his Peak District cow shed, he's following a craft which dates back to ancient times - a beautifully decorated Celtic ash bowl was found at the Iron Age site of Glastonbury Lake village. And from the fall of the Roman Empire, a culture of woodware thrived in Britain. For at least a thousand years from AD 500, every man and woman in Europe, from kings and queens to paupers and serfs, ate and drank each day from a wooden vessel turned on a lathe.

This is a tale about the joy of making things in wood, of its touch and smell, its many uses, and the resonant, calming effect of running our hands along a wooden surface. It is a celebration of man's close relationship with this greatest of natural materials and a reminder of the value of things made by hand and made to last.

Abridged by Jo Coombs
Produced by Hannah Marshall
A Loftus Media production for BBC Radio 4.

WED 10:00 Woman's Hour (b06s9j74)
Ely Cathedral's Choristers

We join some of Ely Cathedral's girl Chorister as they get ready for a Service. Podcaster and craft enthusiast Helen Zaltzman, joins self-confessed craft sceptic, Jane Garvey, to explore the allure of crafting and to attempt making Christmas decorations out of fruit. A celebration of the photographer Julia Margaret Cameron to mark the bicentenary of her birth. And splitting up and making up - the power of female friendships, listeners Karen and Fiona share their story.

Presented by Jane Garvey
Producer Beverley Purcell.

WED 10:41 15 Minute Drama (b06s9j76)
I Am the Very Model of a Modern Major General

A Disagreeable Man

The story of the rise and fall of a collaboration between three men who dominated Victorian musical theatre and have left a lasting legacy. Everyone has heard of the immortal Gilbert and Sullivan, but who knows about the man who brought them success, George Grossmith, the original Modern Major General?

Simon Butteriss and Robin Brooks' delightful comedy drama about the entertainer George Grossmith, who was plucked from his humble touring circuit to become the star of the Gilbert & Sullivan Savoy Operas, staying for twelve years. Grossmith was central to why Gilbert and Sullivan operas became so successful and continue to be so today.

Simon Butteriss, who plays Grossmith, is best known as a performer in the Gilbert and Sullivan patter roles, which he continues to sing all over the world to a huge fan base. Robin Brooks' work for Radio 4 includes Ulysses, I Claudius, The Great Scott and Iris Murdoch: Dream Girl. His recent dramatisation of Iris Murdoch's The Sea, The Sea starring Jeremy Irons has been shortlisted for a BBC Audio Drama Award, 2016.

Episode Three: A Disagreeable Man 1
It's 1884 and after great success with The Pirates of Penzance, Gilbert and Sullivan move their operas to their very own Savoy Theatre. But after the successful runs of Patience and Iolanthe, the third opera, Princess Ida, fails to catch fire and tempers fray.

Pianist: Gretel Dowdeswell
Sound Designer: Alisdair McGregor

Written by Simon Butteriss and Robin Brooks
Directed by Simon Butteriss and Fiona McAlpine
Produced by Fiona McAlpine

An Allegra production for BBC Radio 4.

WED 10:55 The Listening Project (b06s9j78)
Oscar and Isaac – Badges and Adventures

Fi Glover introduces a conversation recorded at the CBBC Live and Digital Festival in Hull, between ten year olds who are well aware of the life skills they can learn in the Cub Scouts. Another conversation in the series that proves it's surprising what you hear when you listen, and this one can be seen, animated, on <http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc>

The Listening Project is a Radio 4 initiative that offers a snapshot of contemporary Britain in which people across the UK volunteer to have a conversation with someone close to them about a subject they've never discussed intimately before. The conversations are being gathered across the UK by teams of producers from local and national radio stations who facilitate each encounter. Every conversation - they're not BBC interviews, and that's an important difference - lasts up to an hour, and is then edited to extract the key moment of connection between the participants. Most of the unedited conversations are being archived by the British Library and used to build up a collection of voices capturing a unique portrait of the UK in the second decade of the millennium. You can learn more about The Listening Project by visiting bbc.co.uk/listeningproject

Producer: Marya Burgess

WED 11:00 Stars of Wonder (b06s9j7b)

Miranda Sawyer explores the magic of that enduring British ritual, the school nativity play.

Charlie Higson, Samira Ahmed, Simon Armitage, Tracey Thorn, Rory McGrath, Clare Grogan and Mark Billingham are among those inspired - or scarred - by the experience.

Northworld Primary School in Hackney opens its doors to reveal the inside story of its 2015 production from casting to opening night.

A Trevor Dann's Company production for BBC Radio 4.

WED 11:30 The Stanley Baxter Playhouse (b06s9j7d)
Series 7

Two Desperate Men

Inspired by a story by O. Henry, we travel to Perthshire in the days when the streets had more horses than horsepower. We encounter two 1930s tricksters who get their just deserts when they attempt to kidnap and hold to ransom a young lad who's learned a thing or two from the Wild West.

Stanley Baxter and Joe Caffrey are those two desperate men.

Young member of the Royal Lyceum Youth Theatre Tom Borley is the lad who gets the better of them in this classic screwball comedy.

Series of comic plays starring Stanley Baxter.

Hughie Stanley Baxter
Bill Joe Caffrey
Logan Tom Borley

Written by Colin MacDonald

Director: Marilyn Imrie

A Catherine Bailey production for BBC Radio 4 first broadcast in December 2015.

WED 12:00 News Summary (b06s6xjs)
The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

WED 12:04 Home Front (b06kv7k7)
23 December 1915 - Albert Wilson

On this day, Vera Brittain's fiancé, Roland Leighton, died in France, and in Folkestone, Albert tries to lift the curse on the house of Wilson.

Written by Richard Monks
Directed by Jessica Dromgoole
Sound: Martha Littlehales

WED 12:15 You and Yours (b06s9j7g)
A dog's Christmas, Airport shops, Japan care

For some families, Christmas is as much about the dog as the children, but the festive season can be a perilous time for dogs, with chocolates, alcohol and an excess of treats lying around. The founder of Lily's Kitchen tells us what to give our dogs if they are on the "nice list".

Samantha Fenwick reports from Japan on what is been done to accommodate its ageing population. Today she looks at how shops are catering for very old people by changing lay-outs and introducing new product lines.

Plus why would an airport shop invent a destination for a customer? Earlier this year You & Yours revealed that airport shops ask to see your boarding pass in order to claim back VAT on purchases being taken outside of the EU. It led to what the papers called a "mini-revolution" - hundreds of people refused to hand over their documents. This programme has now heard from a listener who, on his way to Sweden, never showed a shop his boarding pass, but the assistant recorded him as travelling to a non-EU destination.

Presented by Winifred Robinson
Produced by Natalie Donovan.

WED 12:57 Weather (b06s6xjv)
The latest weather forecast.

WED 13:00 World at One (b06s9j7j)

The high streets are packed - but the latest economic figures revise growth downwards - we'll be finding out what that means for the year ahead.

The recently retired Chief Constable of Greater Manchester tells us that the Government's plans to counter extremism risk turning forces into 'thought police'. Hugh Sykes reports from Sousse in Tunisia, the scene of a terrorist gun attack earlier this year. The former foreign secretary William Hague says people, like him, who've poured scorn on the European Union should think what pulling out would mean for this country - We debate that with two Conservative MPs. And in the latest of our wato@50 series, we look at British architecture.

WED 13:45 Roger Law: Art and Seoul (b06ifn7q)

Artist Roger Law has long been fascinated by the culture of Korea. From stunning ceramics to films and music, South Korea has it all. Roger travels to the 21st century city of Seoul to find out what fires up the Korean imagination.

Korean films are becoming more popular in the west, but there is still a long tradition we know little about. Roger visits the 'Hollywood of Seoul' to find out how their movies get made.

Producer Mark Rickards.

WED 14:00 The Archers (b06s9d22)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Tuesday]

WED 14:15 Tumanbay (b06s9j7i)
Series 1

Hidden Knowledge

In the fourth episode of this epic saga inspired by the Mamluk slave-dynasty of Egypt, Shajar, the Sultan's chief wife (Sarah Beck Mather), plots her son Madu's (Danny Ashok) succession to the throne. While Gregor, Master of the Palace Guard, is determined to discover what it is she has taken from the aged Hafiz and is having repaired in the workshop of a pair of artisans in the city. Marching with the army out to the provinces, Madu's slave find solace with an unlikely companion.

Tumanbay, the beating heart of a vast empire, is threatened by a rebellion in a far-off province and a mysterious force devouring the city from within. Gregor (Rufus Wright), Master of the Palace Guard, is charged by Sultan Al-Ghuri (Raad Rawi) with the task of rooting out this insurgence and crushing it.

Cast:
Gregor.....Rufus Wright
Heaven.....Olivia Popica
Slave.....Akin Gazi
Cadali.....Matthew Marsh
Sarah.....Nina Yndis
Ibn.....Nabil Elouahabi
Shajar.....Sarah Beck Mather
Madu.....Danny Ashok
Daniel.....Gareth Kennerley
General Qulan.....Christopher Fulford
Boy.....Darwin Brokenbro
The Hameed Brothers.....Christian Hillborg and Alec Utgoff
Rajik.....Akbar Kurtha

Pamira.....Nathalie Armin

Music - Sacha Puttnam
Sound Design - Steve Bond, Jon Ouin
Editors - Ania Przygoda, James Morgan
Producers - Emma Hearn, Nadir Khan, John Dryden

Written by Mike Walker
Directed by John Dryden

A Goldhawk production for BBC Radio 4

WED 15:00 The Educators (b06s9j7n)
The First Teachers

The most important educator in most children's lives is their parents, and the first five years is deemed to be critical. Sarah Montague meets Margy Whalley, the co-founder of Pen Green Children's Centre and Research Base in Corby, Northamptonshire.

For thirty years, the centre has been educating parents about the way their children behave and learn, and using the insights of parents and nursery staff to understand the learning process of every child.

Ranked outstanding in every one of its Ofsted reports, Pen Green has influenced other centres and early years provision in the UK, and plays an ongoing role in early years research.

Presenter: Sarah Montague
Producer: Joel Moors.

WED 15:30 The Listeners (b06s9d2d)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 on Tuesday]

WED 16:00 Thinking Allowed (b06s9j7q)
A Special Programme on Rituals

Rituals at Christmas & beyond. Laurie Taylor presents a special programme on the place of rituals in everyday life. How have they changed over time and do we still need them? He's joined by Adam Kuper, Centennial Professor in Anthropology at the London School of Economics and Political Science; Marina Warner, writer and mythographer and Elizabeth Pleck, Professor Emerita of History and Human Development & Family Studies at the University of Illinois.

Producer: Jayne Egerton.

WED 16:30 The Media Show (b06s9j7s)
Robin Esser; reporting migration; Formula 1; stories of 2016

Known as 'the newspaper man's newspaper man', Robin Esser's press career spans nearly 60 years. Robin worked on Fleet Street in the 'golden era' of journalism, editing the Daily then Sunday Express before taking on the Daily Mail in 1991, and later becoming its Executive Managing Editor. Robin joins Steve Hewlett to discuss how the media landscape has changed, some of the key strategic decisions he's made, and what he perceives as the challenges and opportunities facing papers like the Daily Mail today.

Journalists fail to tell the story of migration, that's according to a new report by the Ethical Journalism Network. It claims there is too much focus on the fear of migration, problems of security, and too little attention is given to the background situation and the lives of the migrants. Steve Hewlett hears from Zakeera Suffee, one of the report's authors, and from the media commentator Stephen Glover, who is also a columnist for The Daily Mail.

BBC Sport is to "reluctantly" end its Formula 1 television contract three years early as part of savings across the corporation. Channel 4 will take on the BBC's F1 broadcast rights from next season. BBC Sport was asked to find £35m of savings, as part of a £150m gap in the corporation's finances from next year. However, the decision has led to questions about whether the BBC is making the right choices in where savings are being made. Steve Hewlett talks to former head of BBC sport, Roger Mosey, and gets his views on the thinking behind this decision, and whether the savings axe has fallen in the right place.

And, what will 2016 hold for the big broadcasters? Analyst Claire Enders gives her thoughts on what the big issues will be for Channel 4, Sky and the BBC.

Producer: Katy Takatsuki.

WED 17:00 PM (b06s9l59)
Eddie Mair with interviews, context and analysis.

WED 18:00 Six O'Clock News (b06s6xjz)
Economic growth has slowed markedly.
It's emerged that seven of the biggest investment banks operating in London paid little or no tax last year.

WED 18:30 Tom Wrigglesworth's Hang-Ups (b06s9l5c)
Series 3

A Christmas Not Special

Episode 6, 'A Christmas Not Special'. A ring of the doorbell interrupts an already unconventional Wrigglesworth family Christmas.

Series 3 of the sitcom where Tom Wrigglesworth phones home for his weekly check-in with his Mum, Dad and Gran, giving listeners a glimpse into his family background and the influences that have shaped his temperament, opinions and hang-ups.

Episode 6 "A Christmas Not Special": The Wrigglesworths receive a Christmas visitor while Tom struggles to get home in time for dinner.

Starring Tom Wrigglesworth, Paul Copley, Kate Anthony, Elizabeth Bennett and Chris Pavlo.
Written by Tom Wrigglesworth and James Kettle with additional material by Miles Jupp
Produced by Richard Morris

A BBC Radio Comedy Production.

WED 19:00 The Archers (b06s9l5f)

Toby gets his dressed geese off to Ian, getting into Victorian market trader mode. Eddie and Toby go to market together, but Joe doesn't trust the Fairbrothers. However, Toby's a hit with the crowd and they do well. The only problem is they forgot to keep back a turkey for the Grundys - so Toby offers them a goose instead. Joe's mortified.

Helen finally gets to talk to Ian, but it doesn't go to plan. Hurt and angry, Ian says he trusted Helen and she let him down by not telling him about Adam and Charlie.

Rob persuades Helen to not go over to Pat and Tony's for Christmas Day - the three of them can stay at home together instead.

WED 19:15 Front Row (b06s9l5h)

Jennifer Lawrence on Joy; a cultural look ahead to 2016

Jennifer Lawrence, star of The Hunger Games, Silver Linings Playbook and American Hustle, discusses her latest David O. Russell film Joy, a biopic about the successful American business woman and entrepreneur who invented the Miracle Mop.

A curated guide to the arts in 2016 with theatre critic Matt Wolf, art historian Richard Cork, and broadcaster Gemma Cairney.

And as we enter the last days of frantic preparations, journalist and book critic Alex Clark suggests an alternative Christmas novel as an antidote to the usual festive fare.

WED 19:45 15 Minute Drama (b06s9j76)
[Repeat of broadcast at 10:41 today]

WED 20:00 Natural Histories (b05w9drk)
Natural Histories Live - The Big Story

Natural Histories: The Big Story

Lions, Sharks, Whales and Apes are four well known A-listers groups of animals that have got under our skin, enthralled us with their wildness and inspired literature, film, myth and legend. But so have Cockroaches and Fleas and the much lesser known Burbot and Mandrakes. Natural Histories has brought 25 groups of animals and plants together across 25 episodes to tell the stories of nature's influences on human culture from across the globe.

The Big Story, a special live event presented by satirical comedian Rory Bremner and Natural Histories presenter Brett Westwood tells a story of the earth from Dinosaurs to people. With comedy, music, readings and discussion all held in the spectacular Hinze Hall of the Natural History Museum. We tell a uniquely Big Story of 100 million years' worth of natural history.

WED 21:00 Would You Eat an Alien? (b06s5qqm)
Sociable Aliens

In this 4 part series Christine Nicol, professor of Animal Welfare at the University of Bristol, explores the fascinating

and challenging subject of animal sentience and welfare. To help delve into the nuances we set up an intriguing scenario... Jake the Spaceman (aka comedian Jake Yapp) has crash-landed on a remote planet and doesn't have much food to keep him going until he is rescued. Fortunately, the planet is teeming with alien life forms that are edible, but which ones should he eat? He wants to cause the minimum amount of pain and distress to the creatures, so what does he need to know about the nature of the beings on the planet? Can they feel pain? If so, how can he minimise suffering? Will eating an alien cause distress to others? Is the alien so aware and sensitive to its environment that Jake needs to consider whether it is a non-human person? Christine will interview animal welfare scientists, philosophers and wildlife biologists to get under the skin of animal sentience and the potential consequences of accepting that animals are conscious, aware creatures. These big questions generate surprising and challenging insights into our attitudes to other life. When you know absolutely nothing about the alien in front of you, what do you need to know before eating it?

WED 21:30 Midweek (b06s9j72)
[Repeat of broadcast at 09:00 today]

WED 22:00 The World Tonight (b06s9l5k)
Special report on migrants in Calais

Should more be done for the migrants in Calais? More on the British Muslims denied access to America. And politics over Christmas lunch - how Jeremy Corbyn divides opinion.

WED 22:45 Book at Bedtime (b06t2gr4)
A Snow Garden and Other Stories

I'll Be Home for Christmas

Rachel Joyce's new collection "A Snow Garden and Other Stories" glides through the festive season with interlinked stories which delight and surprise. From an unexpected birth at an airport full of stranded travellers, a famous son wanting to escape the madness for a normal family dinner, to a divorced father's wish to give his two little boys the one thing they really want, a white Christmas. Five stories as funny, joyous, poignant and memorable as Christmas should be.

Rachel Joyce is the author of the Sunday Times and international bestsellers The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry, Perfect and The Love Song of Miss Queenie Hennessy. The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Book Prize and longlisted for the Man Booker Prize and has been translated into 34 languages.

She is the award-winning writer of over 30 original afternoon plays and classic adaptations for BBC Radio 4.

Read by Rachel Joyce
Produced & Directed by Gemma McMullan.

WED 23:00 Little Lifetimes by Jenny Eclair (b06s9l5m)
Series 2

Waiting For Billy

by Jenny Eclair

Patsy and Billy are a rock and roll Darby and Joan. She's been with him through the good times and now the bad. With the money gone and the band members dying off, can Patsy's secret stay hidden for good.

Patsy Anita Dobson
Produced by Sally Avens

WED 23:15 Before They Were Famous (b03gg7nr)
Series 2

Episode 4

Even the most successful of writers have, at some point, had to take day jobs to pay the bills.

Ian Leslie presents the second series of this Radio 4 spoof documentary, which sheds light on the often surprising jobs done by the world's best known writers in the days before they were able to make a living from their art.

In a project of literary archaeology, Leslie unearths archive examples of early work by great writers, including Fortune Cookie messages written by Germaine Greer, a political manifesto by the young JK Rowling, and a car manual written by Dan Brown. In newspaper articles, advertising copy, and company correspondence, we get a fascinating glimpse into the embryonic development of our best-loved literary voices.

We may know them today for their novels, plays or poems but, once upon a time, they were just people with a dream - and a rent bill looming at the end of the month.

Producers: Anna Silver and Claire Broughton
A Hat Trick Production for BBC Radio 4.

WED 23:30 Stepping Stones (b064zmb4)
Splash: The Water in Winter

Broadcaster Piers Plowright explores five sound-worlds - some from far back in his life and some more recent - which still resonate with him.

In this fourth episode, Piers goes for a winter swim in the Men's Pond on Hampstead Heath and discovers how special the sounds are - wild-life, swimmers, the distant hum of London - on a January morning.

Produced by Alan Hall
A Falling Tree production for BBC Radio 4.

WED 23:45 Nabokov's Christmas (b01pfy5p)
by Vladimir Nabokov.

An intensely moving short story about a father mourning the death of his son. On Christmas Eve, a grieving father moves around the family home gathering together some of his son's effects. This leads him to discover things that he did not know about his beloved son and also to find something among his belongings that will renew his will to live.

Vladimir Nabokov was born in St. Petersburg in 1899, the eldest son of an aristocratic family. Nabokov is arguably most famous for his 1955 novel *LOLITA*.

Read by Robert Glenister.

Produced by Gaynor Macfarlane.

THURSDAY 24 DECEMBER 2015

THU 00:00 Midnight News (b06s6xmq)
The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4. Followed by Weather.

THU 00:30 Book of the Week (b06t4l4t)
[Repeat of broadcast at 09:45 on Wednesday]

THU 00:48 Shipping Forecast (b06s6xms)
The latest shipping forecast.

THU 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (b06s6xmv)
BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

THU 05:20 Shipping Forecast (b06s6xmx)
The latest shipping forecast.

THU 05:30 News Briefing (b06s6xn0)
The latest news from BBC Radio 4.

THU 05:43 Prayer for the Day (b06s9pwz)
A spiritual comment and prayer to begin the day with Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

THU 05:45 Farming Today (b06s9px1)
The Mistletoe Consultant, Blackcurrants, Why Farming Matters, Gathering Winter Fuel

Fruit growers are hoping for some colder weather in the New Year. Without it blackcurrant bushes won't have rested enough to produce a good crop next summer.

We meet a Mistletoe Consultant.

It's back into the classroom to learn more about the National Farmers Union's drive to introduce farming into primary school lessons.

And, we're gathering winter fuel.

Presented by Caz Graham and produced by Sarah Swadling.

THU 05:58 Tweet of the Day (b04t0vqb)
Chowchilla

Michael Palin presents the secretive chowchilla from Queensland, Australia. The chowchilla gets its name from its song, which is one of the most distinctive sounds of the coastal rainforest of north-east Queensland. You're not likely to see the bird though because it spends its time skulking on the forest floor. Chowchillas belong to the family known as logrunners because they feed and nest on or near ground-level. They're stout thrush-like birds; the males are dark brown with a white chest and throat, whilst the female's throat is rusty-orange.

Chowchillas have been found to sing with different dialects in different areas. Within say, 50 hectares, all the family groups of pairs and non-breeding younger birds may share the same dialect. But in an adjacent area, the families may assemble some of their song components slightly differently. Over time, their song culture could change and a new dialect would be born.

THU 06:00 Today (b06s9rz7)
Morning news and current affairs. Including Sports Desk, Weather and Thought for the Day.

THU 09:00 In Our Time (b06s9rz9)
Michael Faraday

Melvyn Bragg and guests discuss the eminent 19th-century scientist Michael Faraday. Born into a poor working-class family, he received little formal schooling but became interested in science while working as a bookbinder's apprentice. He is celebrated today for carrying out pioneering research into the relationship between electricity and magnetism. Faraday showed that if a wire was turned in the presence of a magnet or a magnet was turned in relation to a wire, an electric current was generated. This ground-breaking discovery led to the development of the electric generator and ultimately to modern power stations. During his life he became the most famous scientist in Britain and he played a key role in founding the Royal Institution's Christmas lectures which continue today.

With:

Geoffrey Cantor
Professor Emeritus of the History of Science at the University of Leeds

Laura Herz
Professor of Physics at the University of Oxford

Frank James
Professor of the History of Science at the Royal Institution

Producer: Victoria Brignell.

THU 09:45 Book of the Week (b06t4lr0)
The Man Who Made Things Out of Trees

Episode 4

In 2012, Rob Penn felled (and replanted) a great ash from a Welsh wood. He set out to explore the true value of the tree of which we have made the greatest and most varied use in human history. How many things can be made from one tree?

Over the next two years he travelled across Britain, to Europe and the USA, to the workshops and barns of a generation of craftsmen committed to working in wood. He watched them make over 45 artefacts and tools that have been in continual use for centuries, if not millennia.

With his family losing interest in the project, Rob decides to make something out of his ash that his children will enjoy - a wooden toboggan. Packing some logs into an old ski bag, he takes the train to Austria where he meets Christian Glasser. There are fifteen to twenty traditional toboggan manufacturers left across the Alps and Christian's firm, founded by his great-great-uncle in 1909, is one of them. He uses steam to bend the wood into runners, support bars and bridges - a technique which is recorded on an Ancient Egyptian tomb. A toboggan, or sled, is the oldest vehicle known to man, so Rob's children, and the 10 000 other people who buy a toboggan from Christian each year, are part of a rich tradition.

This is a tale about the joy of making things in wood, of its touch and smell, its many uses, and the resonant, calming effect of running our hands along a wooden surface. It is a celebration of man's close relationship with this greatest of natural materials and a reminder of the value of things made by hand and made to last.

Abridged by Jo Coombs
Produced by Hannah Marshall
A Loftus Media production for BBC Radio 4.

THU 10:00 Woman's Hour (b06s9rzc)

Liane Carroll, the night before Christmas, Bishop Rachel

Jenni Murray is joined by award-winning jazz singer Liane Carroll who performs live in the studio. Where will you be spending the night before Christmas? Will it be your own home, a childhood home or someone else's home? We discuss what being home for Christmas means. From the Woman's Hour archive, the first women ordained in the Anglican Church talk about celebrating their first Christmas in 1994. Also, we also catch up with the Rt Revd Rachel Treweek to hear about her first Christmas as the Bishop of Gloucester. And Christmas past on Woman's Hour, we ask how things have changed.

THU 10:45 15 Minute Drama (b06s9rzf)
I Am the Very Model of a Modern Major General

A Savoy Cocktail

The story of the rise and fall of a collaboration between three men who dominated Victorian musical theatre and have left a lasting legacy. Everyone has heard of the immortal Gilbert and Sullivan, but who knows about the man who brought them success, George Grossmith, the original Modern Major General?

Simon Butteriss and Robin Brooks' delightful comedy drama about the entertainer George Grossmith, who was plucked from his humble touring circuit to become the star of the Gilbert & Sullivan Savoy Operas, staying for twelve years. Grossmith was central to why Gilbert and Sullivan operas became so successful and continue to be so today.

Simon Butteriss, who plays Grossmith, is best known as a performer in the Gilbert and Sullivan patter roles, which he continues to sing all over the world to a huge fan base. Robin Brooks' work for Radio 4 includes *Ulysses*, *I Claudius*, *The Great Scott* and *Iris Murdoch: Dream Girl*. His recent dramatisation of *Iris Murdoch's The Sea, The Sea* starring Jeremy Irons has been shortlisted for a BBC Audio Drama Award, 2016.

Episode Four. A Savoy Cocktail
It's 1885 and Grossmith is now the toast of the Savoy Opera, with a starring role as Ko-Ko in *The Mikado* - but his nerves and Gilbert's demands threaten to get the better of him. Will the clash of egos and a dose of laudanum wreck the show?

Pianist: Gretel Dowdeswell
Sound Designer: Alisdair McGregor

Written by Simon Butteriss and Robin Brooks
Directed by Simon Butteriss and Fiona McAlpine
Produced by Fiona McAlpine

An Allegra production for BBC Radio 4.

THU 11:00 Crossing Continents (b06s9rzh)
Saving India's Parsis

India's Parsis are one of the subcontinent's most successful communities. But their future looks precarious because their numbers have fallen dramatically. Some Parsis believe the answer could be to accept converts, and re-write the rules on who's deemed a Parsi. Others are resistant to change. Now the Indian government has stepped in to fund fertility treatment for couples who dream of parenthood. For *Crossing Continents*, Linda Pressly travels to Mumbai to meet them.

THU 11:30 Brain Tingles (b06s9rxk)
The comedian and actor Isy Suttie sets out to explore how creativity is influenced by the mysterious and medically controversial phenomenon ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response). Ever since she was little, Isy has been experiencing what she and her family describe as 'head squeezing' - a euphoric, incredibly relaxing version of goose bumps that starts around the head or face and travels around the body. A few years ago she realised not everyone got this feeling, that it's got a name - ASMR, or 'brain tingles'. There are hoards of online videos designed to trigger the feeling - often involving whispering women offering to book you a golfing holiday, test your eyes, wrap your gifts or tutor you on how to fold the perfect towel. Isy watches some ASMR videos with fellow comedian Joe Lycett, who's also experienced it, as has the journalist and musician Rhodri Marsden. Zoe Fothergill and Claire Tolan are two artists who've made work inspired by ASMR videos. Isy speaks to Charlotte Luke aka The ASMR Angel who has thousands of internet followers. She meets Dr Nick Davis who's carried out research into ASMR and she heads off to Sheffield University where she's wired up to a machine which tests her responses to different videos, to try to unravel how and when ASMR occurs.

THU 12:00 News Summary (b06s6xn4)
The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

THU 12:04 Home Front (b06kvbfp)

24 December 1915 - Marion Wardle

On this day, the Turkish attacked the British Indian garrison at Kut al Amara, and Marion meets a charming soldier.

Written by Richard Monks
Directed by Jessica Dromgoole
Sound: Martha Littlehailes

THU 12:15 You and Yours (b06s9rzp)

Can the charity sector save its reputation?

It's been a bad year for the charity sector. Since the death of Britain's oldest poppy seller, Olive Cooke, in May, charities have been criticised for their fundraising techniques.

The big charities were exposed for harassing elderly and vulnerable people and buying and selling donors personal information between themselves.

The government has pushed through some new rules; we'll be speaking to the Minister responsible for the charity sector, Rob Wilson, about the changes he's made to make sure charities are properly regulated.

We go inside one of Britain's biggest charities - the British Heart Foundation - to see where they spend your money, and how they decide to contact their donors.

We'll also be speaking to the small charities, who have largely done nothing wrong, but have been tarred with the same brush as the big ones.

THU 12:54 Radio 4 Appeal (b06s6zm5)

[Repeat of broadcast at 07:54 on Sunday]

THU 12:57 Weather (b06s6xn6)

The latest weather forecast.

THU 13:00 World at One (b06s9rzz)

Analysis of news and current affairs, presented by Mark Maddell.

THU 13:45 Roger Law: Art and Seoul (b06tfs4w)

Artist Roger Law has long been fascinated by the culture of Korea. From stunning ceramics to films and music, South Korea has it all. Roger travels to the 21st century city of Seoul to find out what fires up the Korean imagination.

Roger travels out of Seoul to visit the island of Jeju. It's a holiday spot, but one with a remarkable selection of unusual museums. From teddy bears to stones, they all have their place in the cabinets of curiosities.

Producer Mark Rickards.

THU 14:00 The Archers (b06s915f)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Wednesday]

THU 14:15 Drama (b06tk8hw)

Suggs: My Mad-Life Crisis

The Madness frontman tells his funny and moving true-life story.

The death of Suggs' beloved cat on his fiftieth birthday triggers a personal quest to discover what happened to the father he never knew. Stunned by what he learns, Suggs takes us back to his childhood and his first appearance on Top Of The Pops at the age of eighteen.

Adapted for radio by Owen Lewis from the stage play My Life In Words And Music by Graham McPherson and Toby Follet.

Other parts played by Ewan Bailey and Philippa Stanton.

Pianist: Dean Mumford

Director: Owen Lewis
Producer: Karen Rose
A Sweet Talk production for BBC Radio 4.

THU 15:00 A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols (b06s9rzt)

Live from the Chapel of King's College, Cambridge

Hymn: Once in Royal David's City (desc. David Willcocks)
Bidding Prayer read by the Dean
What Sweeter Music? (John Rutter)
First lesson: Genesis 3 vv 8-19 read by a Chorister

This is the truth sent from above (Ralph Vaughan Williams)

Adam Lay Ybounden (Boris Ord)

Second lesson: Genesis 22 vv 15-18 read by a Choral Scholar
Ding, Dong, Merrily on High (David Willcocks)

In Dulci Jubilo (Robert Lucas Pearsall)

Third lesson: Isaiah 9 vv 2, 6-7 read by a member of the College staff.

Sussex Carol (arr. David Willcocks)

Hymn: It came upon the midnight clear (desc. Stephen Cleobury)

Fourth lesson: Isaiah 11 vv 1-3a, 4a, 6-9 read by a representative of the City of Cambridge.

A Tender Shoot (arr. Otto Goldschmidt)

A Spotless Rose (Philip Ledger)

Fifth lesson: Luke 1 vv 26-38 read by the Master over the Choristers.

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came (arr. David Willcocks)

Nova, Nova (John Scott)

Sixth lesson: Luke 2 vv 1-7 read by the Chaplain

In The Bleak Midwinter (Harold Darke)

Dormi, Jesu (John Rutter)

Seventh lesson: Luke 2 vv 8-16 read by the Director of Music
The Shepherd's Carol (Bob Chilcott)

Hymn: God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen (arr. David Willcocks)

Eighth lesson: Matthew 2 vv 1-12 read by the Vice-Provost

The Flight (Richard Causton - newly commissioned)

Here is the Little Door (Herbert Howells)

Ninth lesson: John 1 vv 1-14 read by the Provost

Hymn: O come, all ye faithful (arr. David Willcocks)

Blessing

Hymn: Hark, the Herald Angels Sing (arr. David Willcocks)

Organ voluntaries:

In dulci jubilo (BWV 729) (Bach)

Sortie on 'In dulci jubilo' (David Briggs) [broadcast on Radio 3 on Christmas Day only]

Director of Music: Stephen Cleobury

Organ Scholar: Tom Etheridge

Producer: Philip Billson

For many around the world, A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, live from the candlelit Chapel of King's College, Cambridge, marks the beginning of Christmas. It is based around nine Bible readings which tell the story of the loving purposes of God. They are interspersed with carols old and new, sung by the world-famous chapel choir who also lead the congregation in traditional Christmas hymns.

Explanatory notes from Director of Music Stephen Cleobury:

"This year's selection has a very strong King's basis. The commissioned carol is from Richard Causton, a Fellow of King's College, and a university lecturer in composition. He has, in turn, commissioned a new text from George Szirtes, which has strong contemporary resonances.

In September we heard the sad news of the death of one of my predecessors here at King's, the legendary Sir David Willcocks. His many carol arrangements and descants are known the world over, and we include a number of these. Near the beginning and the end are pieces by Vaughan Williams and Howells, both composers having been very closely associated with David Willcocks.

Also, during the summer, the world of church and organ music mourned the loss of John Scott, whose setting of Nova, Nova comes after the Annunciation lesson.

We mark the 70th birthday of John Rutter by including two of the carols he has written for King's over the years. Bob Chilcott, 60 this year, is a former chorister and choral scholar of King's, and his commission for the Choir is also programmed.

Carols by Boris Ord, Harold Darke and Philip Ledger also find a place. Ord and Ledger were, respectively, the predecessor and successor of Willcocks, while Darke looked after the Choir during WW2."

Notes on the commissioned carol - Richard Causton writes: Earlier this year I spent a great deal of time in libraries looking for a suitable text for my new carol and although I unearthed many old and very beautiful poems about the Nativity, I struggled to find one that I really wanted to set to music. I had a growing sense that at this precise moment it is perverse to be writing a piece about a child born in poverty, away from home and forced to flee with his parents, without in any way paying reference to the appalling refugee crisis that is currently unfolding.

I phoned my friend, the poet George Szirtes to ask if he might be prepared to write me a poem which could encompass some of these ideas. By complete coincidence, the very day I phoned he was in Hungary, at Budapest railway station talking to the refugees who were stuck there while trying to leave the country. Within days, George sent me a poem that is at once beautiful, eloquent and hard-hitting.

THU 16:30 The Film Programme (b06s9rzw)

The Best Films of the Year

Francine Stock presents a festive edition with the best films of the year, as chosen by critic Tim Robey, film buyer and programmer Clare Binns and critic and producer Catherine Bray.

THU 17:00 PM (b06s9rzy)

News interviews, context and analysis.

THU 18:00 Six O'Clock News (b06s6xnb)

Further storm worries for flood hit Cumbria. A woman died when a car hit a coffee shop.

THU 18:15 Bridget Christie's Christmas List (b06s9s00)

Father Christmas helps Bridget bring about a feminist Christmas for 2015, whether he wants to or not.

Featuring (much to their surprise) Miles Jupp, Robin Ince, Jon Culshaw and Leo Wan.

A Christmas show for everyone. Even men.

Written by and starring Bridget Christie.

Producer: Alexandra Smith

A BBC Radio Comedy production for BBC Radio 4 first broadcast in December 2015.

THU 18:30 Tina C (b06s9s02)

Tina C: Herstory

Episode 4

Country music legend Tina C brings us right up to date with a (slightly) festive look at where she is today.

Bob Harris quizzes her about her ambitions for the future, and a live country band take us through some of her biggest hits.

Written and performed by Christopher Green.
Additional voices: Susan Jameson & Leo Wan.
The Band: Duncan Walsh-Atkins, Phil Hardisty, Mark Wraith.
Produced by Victoria Lloyd.

First broadcast on BBC Radio 4 in 2015.

THU 19:00 The Archers (b06s9s8d)

Lynda gives a reading as the village gathers at St Stephens for the service.

Pip gives Matthew a gift and he gives her a snog under the mistletoe. Pip has decided she needs to pay her way at Brookfield, as David talks about the Dairy crisis. Leonie's full of love for Lynda, remembering Lynda's comforting chat with her when she had her doubts about James and motherhood. Lynda seems contented enough, with her family around her. However, to top it off there's a sound at the door. Could it really be.... Scru!! Lynda is overcome with emotion as she scoops him up in her arms.

THU 19:15 Front Row (b06s9s8g)

Michael Palin, War and Peace, Diversity in film, Katie Puckrik's alternative Christmas

Michael Palin reveals how he uncovered the story of the 17th century Baroque artist Artemisia Gentileschi for a new BBC Four documentary Michael Palin's Quest for Artemisia.

Andrew Davies explains how he adapted Tolstoy's War and Peace for television and how hard it is to select the best bits from this 1000-page novel.

In the year that gave us Star Wars, Mad Max, Straight Outta Compton and Sisters, film critic Larushka Ivan-Zadeh discusses whether 2015 was a breakthrough year for diversity in film.

Forget Jingle Bells, the music presenter Katie Puckrik chooses her alternative Christmas song.

THU 19:45 15 Minute Drama (b06s9rzt)

[Repeat of broadcast at 10:45 today]

THU 20:00 The Report (b06s9s8j)

A not so merry migrant Christmas in Vienna

Thousands of migrants are stuck in Vienna, their journey to Germany cut short. Will they ever realise their European dreams? Frances Stonor Saunders reports.

Producer: Lucy Proctor.

THU 20:30 In Business (b06s9shq)

Christmas, Made in China

Peter Day visits the Chinese city which makes most of the world's Christmas decorations

Producers: Charlotte Pritchard & David Rhodes.

THU 21:00 BBC Inside Science (b06s9shs)

New Horizons Pluto update; friendly predatory bacteria; Christmas in the lab; human ancestry

Since the epic flyby of Pluto in July, NASA has been regularly downloading staggering images from the New Horizons mission. Pluto is not a dead rock, but a geologically active dwarf planet, with tectonic movements, ice plains, glaciers, dunes and cryo-volcanoes. For an end of year update on the observations and outstanding mysteries, Adam meets Alan Stern, the Principal Investigator on New Horizons, who is still marvelling at the success of this humble craft.

Scientists have discovered how a potentially useful predatory bacterium called *Bdellovibrio* protects itself against its own weapons when it invades other bacteria. Professor Liz Sockett discusses how the work offers insights into early steps in the evolution of bacterial predators and how this will help to inform new ways to fight antimicrobial resistance

Science stops for no one .So how are researchers nurturing their experiments over the festive period? Marnie Chesterton has gone on the hunt for scientists for whom Christmas Day will be yet another day in the lab.

This year there's has been an explosion of papers of using DNA to reconstruct human history. We've invented new techniques for extracting DNA from the long dead, and for analysing ancient genomes. Professor Matthew Cobb from the University of Manchester assesses recent key developments in reconstructing the lives and population structures of ancient civilisations.

Producer Adrian Washbourne

THU 21:30 In Our Time (b06s9rz9)

[Repeat of broadcast at 09:00 today]

THU 22:00 The World Tonight (b06s9shv)

The Year in Review

Senior BBC correspondents discuss 2015 with Ritula Shah.

THU 22:45 Book at Bedtime (b06t2h53)

A Snow Garden and Other Stories

Christmas Day at the Airport

Rachel Joyce's new collection "A Snow Garden and Other Stories" glides through the festive season with interlinked stories which delight and surprise. From an unexpected birth at an airport full of stranded travellers, a famous son wanting to escape the madness for a normal family dinner, to a divorced father's wish to give his two little boys the one thing they really want, a white Christmas. Five stories as funny, joyous, poignant and memorable as Christmas should be.

Rachel Joyce is the author of the Sunday Times and international bestsellers *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry*, *Perfect* and *The Love Song of Miss Queenie Hennessy*. The *Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry* was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Book Prize and longlisted for the Man Booker Prize and has been translated into 34 languages.

She is the award-winning writer of over 30 original afternoon plays and classic adaptations for BBC Radio 4.

Read by Rachel Joyce

Produced & Directed by Gemma McMullan.

THU 23:00 Love in Recovery (b06s9szk)

Christmas Eve

Heart-warming comedy drama set in Alcoholics Anonymous on Christmas Eve, written by Pete Jackson and inspired by his own road to recovery. Starring Sue Johnston, John Hannah, Eddie Marsan, Rebecca Front, Paul Kaye and Julia Deakin.

It's Christmas Eve and the church hall is empty - except for self-appointed group leader Andy, who's waiting for the rest of his Alcoholics Anonymous group to turn up. Just in case anyone needs him. After all, Christmas can be a difficult time for recovering alcoholics - especially when your support group is

this load of idiots.

But nothing proves more difficult than this particular Christmas Eve as, one by one, the members arrive, each with a different reason for seeking out the meeting hall. But whatever their troubles, one thing is clear - no one is there for a meeting.

Writer Pete Jackson is a recovering alcoholic and has spent time in Alcoholics Anonymous. It was there he found, as most people do, support from the unlikeliest group of disparate souls, all banded together due to one common bond. As well as offering the support he needed throughout a difficult time, AA also offered a weekly, sometimes daily, dose of hilarity, upset, heartbreak and friendship.

There are many different kinds of AA meetings. Love in Recovery is about meetings where people tell their stories. There are funny stories, sad stories, stories of small victories and milestones, stories of loss, stories of hope, and those stories that you really shouldn't laugh at - but still do, along with the storyteller.

A second series of *Love in Recovery* will return to Radio 4 next year.

Written and created by Pete Jackson

Producer/Director: Ben Worsfield

A Lucky Giant production for BBC Radio 4.

THU 23:30 Midnight Mass (b06s9szm)

The First Mass of Christmas comes live from Brentwood Cathedral in Essex. The service is led by the Bishop of Brentwood, the Rt Rev Alan Williams, and the preacher is the Dean, Fr Martin Boland. Music includes hymns 'O come all ye faithful', 'On Christmas Night all Christians Sing' and 'Hark! The herald angels sing'. Brentwood Cathedral Choir is directed by Andrew Wright and the organists are Stephen King and James Devor. Producer Andrew Earis.

FRIDAY 25 DECEMBER 2015

FRI 00:48 Shipping Forecast (b06s6xpr)

The latest shipping forecast.

FRI 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (b06s6xpt)

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

FRI 05:20 Shipping Forecast (b06s6xpw)

The latest shipping forecast.

FRI 05:30 News Briefing (b06s6xpy)

The latest news from BBC Radio 4.

FRI 05:43 Prayer for the Day (b06sb18w)

A spiritual comment and prayer to begin the day with Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

FRI 05:45 Farming Today (b06sb18y)

Flowers at Christmas

Sarah Swadling joins the winter Narcissi harvest on the Isles of Scilly.

FRI 05:58 Tweet of the Day (b040vfj)

Northern Cardinal

Michael Palin presents the northern cardinal from a New York's Central Park. Northern Cardinals are finch-like birds and make British robins look positively anaemic. They are common residents in the south and east of North America where they live in woods, parks and gardens. Your first sighting of these vermilion birds with their black masks and outrageous crests comes as a shock. They seem too tropically colourful to brave the dull North American winter.

Only the male Cardinals are bright red. Females are browner with flashes of red on their wings and red bills. Both sexes obtain their red colours from seeds and other foods which contain carotenoid pigments.

Their familiarity and eye-catching colours have endeared cardinals to North Americans. No fewer than seven states, including Kentucky, Illinois and Ohio have adopted cardinals as their state bird and it's also the mascot of many famous sports clubs including the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team.

FRI 06:00 Natural Histories (b05w9drk)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 on Wednesday]

FRI 07:00 Desert Island Discs (b06s7y34)

[Repeat of broadcast at 11:15 on Sunday]

FRI 07:45 Christmas Is a Sad Season for the Poor by John Cheever (b06sb190)

Martin Freeman reads John Cheever's classic Christmas tale about the power of giving. On Christmas day Charlie, a down on his luck lift attendant, laments his lack of upward mobility. But the generosity of the residents in the wealthy New York apartment building where he works takes him by surprise. A cautionary tale of generosity, indulgence and the law of unintended consequences.

FRI 08:00 Just a Minute (b06sb192)

Junior Just a Minute

25/12/2015

The classic BBC Radio panel game gets a youthful twist, as 11-13 year olds join established players of the game to speak for a minute without hesitation, repetition or deviation.

Paul Merton and Josie Lawrence make up the grown-up half of each team, along with young players Joe from Leicester and Sophie from Burton-on-Trent.

Recorded at the BBC's Radio Theatre with the same wonderful host as *Just a Minute*, Nicholas Parsons.

FRI 08:30 Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats (b06t3skh)
Episode 1

On Christmas Day 1937, nearly two years before book publication, five of T.S Eliot's Practical Cats poems were broadcast as readings by Geoffrey Tandy on BBC Radio. The *Radio Times* wrote 'For some time past Mr Eliot has been amusing and instructing the offspring of some of his friends in verse on the subject of cats. These poems are not the kind that have been usually associated with his name'.

Over 75 years later, one of our greatest actors, Oscar-winning Jeremy Irons re-visits the original five poems along with the further ten which make up the *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*.

In this treat for Christmas day you will find familiar much-loved characters including Groultiger, Mungojerrie, Rumpelsteaser, Old Deuteronomy, Mr Mistoffelees, Macavity Gus and Skimbleshanks. These are cats who are notorious, lurk in shadows, baffle Scotland yard, dance by the light of the moon and who must not be woken. They are found on trains, in the theatre, in the high street. They juggle, sleep, conjure, are curious and bore but they all show another side of one of our most important British poets.

T.S Eliot's poems have been enjoyed by many in the musical *Cats*, but here we return to the poems without any music and celebrate the inventiveness in the original words. Following on from his powerful readings of *The Waste Land*, *Four Quartets* and *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* for BBC Radio 4 Jeremy Irons continues his radio journey through the works of T.S Eliot with the cats.

The Naming of Cats
Skimbleshanks The Railway Cat
Groultiger's Last Stand
The Rum Tum Tugger
The Song of the Jellicles
Mungojerrie and Rumpelsteaser
Old Deuteronomy
Of the Awefull Battle of the Pekes and the Pollicles
Mr Mistoffelees
Macavity: The Mystery Cat

Directed in Salford by Susan Roberts.

FRI 09:00 Christmas Service (b06sb194)

Nick Baines is the Anglican Bishop of Leeds, known for 'musing' on social media as a 'restless bishop'. As Bishop of the Church of England's newest diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales, he'll preach from Ripon Cathedral - the Cathedral for North Yorkshire - where each year a unique tradition of distributing apples takes place at the Christmas morning service. The Cathedral is at the heart of what since mediaeval times has been a thriving market town. Monasteries have stood on this site since the 7th century and both city and cathedral retain strong and intimate links with the surrounding North Yorkshire countryside, where stables and shepherds are practical everyday realities. Worship is led by the Dean, The Very Rev'd John Dobson. Organist and Director of Music Andrew Bryden conducts the Girl Choristers and the Lay Clerks of Ripon's Cathedral Choir, accompanied by Lowry Brass, and on the organ by Assistant Director of Music Tim Harper. Producer: Rowan Morton Gledhill.

FRI 09:45 Book of the Week (b06t4pw9)

The Man Who Made Things Out of Trees

Episode 5

In 2012, Robert Penn felled (and replanted) a great ash from a Welsh wood. He set out to explore the true value of the tree of which we have made the greatest and most varied use in human history. How many things can be made from one tree?

Over the next two years he travelled across Britain, to Europe and the USA, to the workshops and barns of a generation of craftsmen committed to working in wood. He watched them make over 45 artefacts and tools that have been in continual use for centuries, if not millennia.

For his final project, Rob wants to create a totem to embody his reverence not just for his tree, but for all Ash trees - a writing desk. It's an ambitious project. With his friend Andy Dix, he selects the perfect piece of timber for each component. The finished product and its distinctive smell takes Rob back to the day his tree was felled. As his time with the tree comes to an end, his new rapport with the ash is just beginning.

This is a tale about the joy of making things in wood, of its touch and smell, its many uses, and the resonant, calming effect of running our hands along a wooden surface. It is a celebration of man's close relationship with this greatest of natural materials and a reminder of the value of things made by hand and made to last.

Abridged by Jo Coombs

Produced by Hannah Marshall

A Loftus Media production for BBC Radio 4.

FRI 10:00 Woman's Hour (b06sbpmz)

Claudia Winkleman, Romesh and Shanthi Ranganathan, Frank Gardner and Odette Toilette

Jenni and Jane host an extended Woman's Hour this Christmas day with Claudia Winkleman, comedian Romesh Ranganathan and his mother Shanthi, BBC security correspondent Frank Gardner, scent expert Lizzie Ostrom, author of *Perfume: A Century of Scents*, drinks expert Alice Lascelles, author of *Ten Cocktails: The Art of Convivial Drinking*; Jeremy Lee, chef at London restaurant, Quo Vadis, Charles Collingwood, better known as Brian Aldridge in the Archers; children singing in a carol service at Holy Trinity Church in Coventry, two women, aged 100 and 102, talking about Christmases past and last, but not least, the London United Voices with choirmaster Tommy Ng.

FRI 11:15 15 Minute Drama (b06sbpn1)

I Am the Very Model of a Modern Major General

Piano and I

The story of the rise and fall of a collaboration between three men who dominated Victorian musical theatre and have left a lasting legacy. Everyone has heard of the immortal Gilbert and Sullivan, but who knows about the man who brought them success, George Grossmith, the original Modern Major General?

Simon Butteriss and Robin Brooks' delightful comedy drama about the entertainer George Grossmith, who was plucked from his humble touring circuit to become the star of the Gilbert & Sullivan Savoy Operas, staying for twelve years. Grossmith was central to why Gilbert and Sullivan operas became so successful and continue to be so today.

Simon Butteriss, who plays Grossmith, is best known as a performer in the Gilbert and Sullivan patter roles, which he continues to sing all over the world to a huge fan base. Robin Brooks' work for Radio 4 includes *Ulysses*, *I Claudius*, *The Great Scott* and *Iris Murdoch: Dream Girl*. His recent dramatisation of *Iris Murdoch's The Sea*, *The Sea* starring Jeremy Irons has been shortlisted for a BBC Audio Drama Award, 2016.

Episode Five: Piano and I

It's 1889 and, after twelve years at the Savoy Opera, Grossmith decides to go solo. Gilbert and Sullivan lose their golden goose. While he flies, they struggle to replace him. Will there be a reunion? And if so, will they all be able to bear it?

Pianist: Gretel Dowdeswell

Sound Designer: Alisdair McGregor

Written by Simon Butteriss and Robin Brooks

Directed by Simon Butteriss and Fiona McAlpine

Produced by Fiona McAlpine

An Allegra production for BBC Radio 4.

FRI 11:30 Count Arthur Strong's Radio Show! (b06sbpn3)

The Christmas 'Do'

Christmas creeps up on Arthur, leaving him little time to plan his festive arrangements.

Count Arthur and his erstwhile protégé Malcolm (Terry Kilkelly) are surrounded by a host of regular characters created by his Radio Repertory Company - Mel Giedroyc, Alastair Kerr and Dave Mounfield. Dave, who played, among others, the much-loved characters Jerry and Geoffrey, sadly died in March 2020. His final Count Arthur recordings were two Christmas specials recorded in Autumn 2019, the first of which aired on Christmas Day 2019 and the second is yet to air. The 2020 hybrid return of the ever-popular family friendly sitcom is dedicated to his memory.

The long running series first aired on BBC Radio 4 in 2005 and ran for seven series until the former variety star transferred to BBC TV in his eponymous sitcom in 2013. A TV series that started out on BBC2 and transferred to BBC1, running for three series until 2017. The 52 episodes of Count Arthur Strong's Radio Show! comprise seven series and ten specials since the programme first aired in December 2005.

Highlights include winning the Sony Radio Award for Best Comedy in 2009 and being voted as the Best Radio Sitcom by the British Comedy Guide in 2016, 2018 and 2019. The TV series also enjoyed wide critical acclaim and was nominated for the BAFTA for Best Sitcom and Best Comedy Writing, as well as getting the nod for three British Comedy Awards. In August 2019, Count Arthur Strong's TV sitcom featured in the top three of the Most Missed TV Shows of the 21st Century poll conducted in the Radio Times. Since 2014, Count Arthur has returned to BBC Radio 4 annually with his celebrated Christmas specials.

A 7Digital Komedia production for BBC Radio 4

FRI 12:00 News Summary (b06s6xq0)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

FRI 12:04 Home Front (b06kvc3t)

Christmas Day 1915 - Adeline Lumley

On this day, J M Barrie presented the Peter Pan cup to a 13 year old who swam the Serpentine, and Adeline Lumley makes a Christmas wish.

Written by Richard Monks & Shaun McKenna

Directed by Jessica Dromgoole

Sound: Martha Littlehales

FRI 12:15 Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats (b06t3tq6)

Episode 2

On Christmas Day 1937, nearly two years before book publication, five of T.S Eliot's Practical Cats poems were broadcast as readings by Geoffrey Tandy on BBC Radio. The Radio Times wrote 'For some time past Mr Eliot has been amusing and instructing the offspring of some of his friends in verse on the subject of cats. These poems are not the kind that have been usually associated with his name'.

Over 75 years later, one of our greatest actors, Oscar-winning Jeremy Irons re-visits the original five poems along with the further ten which make up the *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*.

In this treat for Christmas day you will find familiar much-loved characters including Growltiger, Mungojerrie, Rumpoleaser, Old Deuteronomy, Mr Mistoffelees, Macavity Gus and Skimbleshanks. These are cats who are notorious, lurk in shadows, baffle Scotland yard, dance by the light of the moon and who must not be woken. They are found on trains, in the theatre, in the high street. They juggle, sleep, conjure, are curious and bore but they all show another side of one of our most important British poets.

T.S Eliot's poems have been enjoyed by many in the musical Cats, but here we return to the poems without any music and celebrate the inventiveness in the original words. Following on from his powerful readings of *The Waste Land*, *Four Quartets* and *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* for BBC Radio 4 Jeremy Irons continues his radio journey through the works of T.S Eliot with the cats.

Gus: The Theatre Cat

The Old Gumbie Cat

Bustopher Jones: The Cat about Town

Cat Morgan introduces himself

The Ad-dressing of Cats.

FRI 12:30 June Whitfield: 90 Not Out (b06s8556)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:15 on Sunday]

FRI 13:00 News Summary (b06sbqs7)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

FRI 13:15 Singing Piaf with No Regrets (b06rzd4b)

The Paris-based singer Caroline Nin listens to those drawn to sing the music of the legendary French performer, born 100 years ago this week in the working class Parisian district of Belleville.

Edith Piaf's influence on French popular song and, more widely, on French and European culture has barely waned since she first found fame and, to this day, her legend lives on - in the myths that surround her life and in the songs that people still sing.

Caroline Nin is intimate with Piaf, through her own show based on the singer's legacy. For this anniversary programme, she meets some of those - including employees at the French National Library, a Japanese tribute singer, Piaf's biographer Carolyn Burke and Rosen, a former prostitute who worked the bars of Pigalle - who can't resist singing Piaf. With no regrets.

Caroline Nin's performance of *l'Accordéoniste* is accompanied by pianist Antoine Lefort and doublebass player Shankar Kirpalani.

Produced by Catherine Guilyardi and Alan Hall

A Falling Tree production for BBC Radio 4.

FRI 13:45 Roger Law: Art and Seoul (b06tfxh9)

Artist Roger Law has long been fascinated by the culture of Korea. From stunning ceramics to films and music, South Korea has it all. Roger travels to the 21st century city of Seoul to find out what fires up the Korean imagination.

In the last in the series, Roger Law tries some Korean food for Christmas Day. Not all of it is to his taste, but the national dish of kimchi hits the spot.

Producer Mark Rickards.

FRI 14:00 The Archers (b06s9s8d)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Thursday]

FRI 14:15 Drama (b06sbrxb)

Lewis Carroll - The Hunting of the Snark

Tony Robinson narrates this fresh adaptation of Lewis Carroll's classic masterpiece following a strange assortment of characters on their quest for an elusive beast.

Led by a bell-ringing Captain, this motley crew must brave terrifying danger in their chaotic pursuit of a creature known as Snark. Accompanied by specially composed music and songs, this surreal tale questions whether anything is really what it seems.

Music and songs composed by Katie Chatburn

Music performed by Katie Chatburn, Dorry Macaulay, Kathryn Williams, Stephen Cordiner and Jasper Wilkinson

Director: Charlotte Riches.

First broadcast on BBC Radio 4 in December 2015.

FRI 15:00 HM The Queen (b06sbrxk)

The Queen's Christmas message to the Commonwealth and the nation, followed by the national anthem.

FRI 15:05 News Summary (b06sbrxm)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

FRI 15:15 Alice Is Still in Wonderland (b06pb5pw)

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland has become an icon of British culture - the bizarre story and flamboyant illustrations have inspired all kinds of imagery, fashion, architecture, theatre, decoration and events. But its sinister undercurrents and dreamscape have also impressed artists and musicians.

On the 150th anniversary of the publication of Lewis Carroll's book, lead singer and song writer of alternative rock band Siouxsie and the Banshees, Siouxsie Sioux, explores its strange allure.

"From 8 onwards, I returned to those pictures of a strange, impossible animals and freakish, devious adults as I followed the solitary, brave girl, from one weird encounter to the next. I was struck that Alice could grow or shrink at the bite of a cake or the sip of a drink - my body was changing by the day and I was desperate to be older and taller, like my sister, as I wobbled around in my mum's high heels. The Mad Hatter, the Dozy

Dormouse, the Mock Turtle, the Duchess' baby pig and playing croquet with flamingos as mallets all made me laugh and I loved the floating head of the grinning Cheshire Cat who couldn't be beheaded.

But there was something else that drew me into Wonderland that I couldn't have named then, though I sensed its irreverence - something darker about adults and their rules and their craziness and endless unreasonableness. Alice was an ally and the book helped me dream myself out of the London suburbs." Siouxsie Sioux

Siouxsie Sioux travels to Oxford to retrace Lewis Carroll's inspiration and influence. With an Un-Oxford soundtrack.

A Cast Iron Radio production for BBC Radio 4.

FRI 15:45 Shorts (b06scz8q)
New Irish Writing

A World of One's Own

A new series of original stories from some of Ireland's most exciting writers.

In wintry Newry an elderly man embarks on a new adventure in a story by Eugene O'Hare while Lisa McInerney brings us a kid doing a bunk off school, and a man thinks fondly of his glamorous new girlfriend in Kevin Maher's story of love and leather jackets.

Writer Eugene O'Hare
Reader Ian McElhinney

Producer Jenny Thompson.

FRI 16:00 A Good Read (b0639w3x)
Miriam Margolyes and Mark Haddon

Harriett Gilbert is joined by actress Miriam Margolyes and writer Mark Haddon to discuss favourite books, including 'Great Expectations' by Charles Dickens, 'Breakfast at Tiffany's' by Truman Capote and 'To the Lighthouse' by Virginia Woolf. Producer...Mary Ward-Lowery.

FRI 16:27 The Infinite Monkey Cage (b06scz8s)
The Infinite Monkey Cage Christmas Special

The Science of Doctor Who
Brian Cox and Robin Ince celebrate the festive season with a look at the science of Doctor Who. Swapping the infinite cage for the Tardis, they are joined on stage by comedian Ross Noble, Professor Fay Dowker, Oscar winning special FX director Paul Franklin, author and Doctor Who writer Simon Guerrier and the Very Reverend Victor Stock. They discuss the real science of time travel, the tardis and why wormholes are inaccurately named (according to Ross!).

FRI 16:55 The Listening Project (b06scz8v)
Aiden and Jack – Growing Up With Rugby

Fi Glover introduces a conversation recorded at the CBBC Live and Digital Festival in Hull, between friends who have been training together since they were six years old and have a very advanced knowledge of Rugby League. Another conversation in the series that proves it's surprising what you hear when you listen, and this one can be seen, animated, on <http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc>

The Listening Project is a Radio 4 initiative that offers a snapshot of contemporary Britain in which people across the UK volunteer to have a conversation with someone close to them about a subject they've never discussed intimately before. The conversations are being gathered across the UK by teams of producers from local and national radio stations who facilitate each encounter. Every conversation - they're not BBC interviews, and that's an important difference - lasts up to an hour, and is then edited to extract the key moment of connection between the participants. Most of the unedited conversations are being archived by the British Library and used to build up a collection of voices capturing a unique portrait of the UK in the second decade of the millennium. You can learn more about The Listening Project by visiting bbc.co.uk/listeningproject

Producer: Marya Burgess

FRI 17:00 With Great Pleasure (b06scz8x)
With Great Pleasure at Christmas: Penelope Keith

Penelope Keith, star of The Good Life and To The Manor Born, presents her favourite and funniest writing to the audience at the Radio Theatre, with readings by Tamsin Greig and Michael Cochrane, and carols sung by The Bach Choir

Voices.

Penelope plays scenes from The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde and from Star Quality by Noel Coward: her audition piece for the RSC. Her other picks reflect her life and her passions. They include a Christmas parody by Keith Waterhouse, an extract from Emma by Jane Austen, Swifts by Ted Hughes, The Snow Goose by Paul Gallico, Peter Rabbit by Beatrix Potter, The Donkey by GK Chesterton and A Countrywoman's Notes by Rosemary Verey.

Also featuring an unforgettable moment from Brian Johnston on Test Match Special..
Producer Beth O'Dea.

FRI 18:00 Six O'Clock News (b06s6xqb)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4. Queen speaks of finding hope in the "moments of darkness" confronting the world.

FRI 18:15 Pam Ayres at Christmas (b06scz8z)

Much-loved poet, comedienne and broadcaster Pam Ayres brings us 'Operation Christmas'.

This Christmas for the first time ever, long-married Pam and Gordon are on their own. But how to spend the festive season? A posh hotel? A cruise? Extreme sports?

Fortunately the crisis is resolved by a letter from the NHS...

Written by Pam Ayres
Starring Pam Ayres as Pam and Geoffrey Whitehead as Gordon.
Produced by Claire Jones

FRI 18:30 Dead Ringers (b06scz91)

Christmas Special

Politicians, media pundits and celebrities are given a Christmas roast, with lashings of satirical gravy. The perfect antidote to all the tears you've shed over the Christmas TV ads.

Where can you experience the last ever episode of Downton Abbey, a preview of The Archers, and the shock revelation that none of the news on Radio 4's Today programme during the Christmas season is real. It's all pre-recorded while Sara, Jon and the rest of the team sun themselves in the Bahamas. All that and more in the Christmas edition of Dead Ringers.

Starring Jon Culshaw, Lewis MacLeod, Jan Ravens, Debra Stephenson and Duncan Wisbey.
Producer...Bill Dare
A BBC Radio Comedy Production.

FRI 19:00 The Archers (b06scz93)

Lynda luxuriates in having Scruff home - it's a little Christmas miracle. Elizabeth feels for David, who's missing Ruth. David opens up - he worries that Ruth won't want to stay with him. It's a lovely family occasion for the Grundys. Having missed out on Christmas turkey, and refusing to eat a Fairbrother goose, Joe stubbornly eats a pork chop - but eventually gives in and has some goose - even deciding that they should think about getting into geese next year. Eddie has a surprise gift for Clarrie - a new sideboard, to replace her beloved old one. With all her family by her side, Clarrie gives an emotional toast.

FRI 19:15 Front Row (b06scz95)

Roy Hudd

Samira Ahmed talks to the comedian, actor and music hall veteran Roy Hudd, whose career spans seven decades.

Starting out as a redcoat at Butlins in the 1950s, Roy became one of the UK's best-loved entertainers. His show The News Huddlines ran for 26 years on Radio 2.

As he approaches his 80th birthday, Hudd is playing a Dame for the first time in Panto, in Dick Whittington at Wilton's Music Hall.

He talks about his close relationship with Dennis Potter, who left Hudd a role in his will, and his grandmother, who raised him, and to whom he owes his passion for variety and music hall.

Producer: Timothy Prosser.

FRI 19:45 15 Minute Drama (b06sbnp1)

[Repeat of broadcast at 11:15 today]

FRI 20:00 Archive on 4 (b06386cs)

Shhhhhhh

Examining the nature of silence might not seem the most

obvious thing to do on the radio, the medium most wholly given over to noise and which was in its day seen as a direct threat to the realm of silence in our personal and public lives.

It might seem, too, that silence is a singular thing, an absence that offers little to any would-be investigation. But it's a subject that's fascinated Lucy Powell ever since she was set a koan by a Zen master, who asked her what the sound is before the bird sings.

Now she sets out to answer that problem through an analysis of archive recordings from religious scholars, authors, comedians and poets, as well as conducting fresh interviews with the likes of conductor Edward Gardner, neuro-scientist Jan Schnupp and Buddhist nun Tenzin Palmo, who spent seven years on silent retreat in a Himalayan cave.

Lucy hears a freshly composed improvisation on the theme of silence from the classical duo 'Folie a Deux Femmes' and argues that in fact silence is a rich, multiple property that can vary dramatically depending on the context within which it is placed.

Producer: Geoff Bird
Presenter: Lucy Powell

First broadcast on BBC Radio 4 in 2015.

FRI 21:00 Home Front - Omnibus (b06kvjhx)
21-25 December 1915 (Season 6 start)

The first omnibus edition of Season 6 covering a week following a huge landslide at the Warren and when the townsfolk are preparing for Christmas.

Written by Richard Monks
Directed by Jessica Dromgoole

Story-led by Shaun McKenna
Sound: Martha Littlehailes
Composer: Matthew Strachan
Consultant Historian: Maggie Andrews.

FRI 21:58 Weather (b06s6xqd)
The latest weather forecast.

FRI 22:00 Drama (b05pmrtk)

Neil Brand - A Year at the Races

Nearing the end of his career Groucho Marx meets a young star-struck fan, who also happens to be a wisecracking horse doctor. Determined to keep her idol's star shining, she attempts to teach the old funny man some new comedy tricks.

Neil Brand's fast-talking comedy drama about fame and the lasting power of a witty-one-liner.

Groucho Toby Jones
Selma Jenna Augen
Loretta Tracy-Ann Oberman
Eddie Ewan Bailey

Director: Helen Perry

A BBC Cymru Wales production for BBC Radio 4 first broadcast in April 2015.

FRI 22:45 Book at Bedtime (b06t2hm4)

A Snow Garden and Other Stories

Trees

Rachel Joyce's new collection "A Snow Garden and Other Stories" glides through the festive season with interlinked stories which delight and surprise. From an unexpected birth at an airport full of stranded travellers, a famous son wanting to escape the madness for a normal family dinner, to a divorced father's wish to give his two little boys the one thing they really want, a white Christmas. Five stories as funny, joyous, poignant and memorable as Christmas should be.

Rachel Joyce is the author of the Sunday Times and international bestsellers The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry, Perfect and The Love Song of Miss Queenie Hennessy. The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry was shortlisted for the Commonwealth Book Prize and longlisted for the Man Booker Prize and has been translated into 34 languages.

She is the award-winning writer of over 30 original afternoon plays and classic adaptations for BBC Radio 4.

Read by Rachel Joyce
Produced & Directed by Gemma McMullan.

FRI 23:00 Tim Key's Christmas Poetry Programme (b06sddm9)

Tim Key has pulled out all the stops for his Christmas special - he's hired a stable, a cow and a set of sleigh bells for his long suffering musician, Tom Basden. He also has a fist-full of festive poems ready for recital. But no amount of yuletide joy can hide Tom's despair at having to work on Christmas day.

Written by Tim Key

Produced by James Robinson
A BBC Cymru Wales Production.

FRI 23:30 Great Lives (b06s9d1w)

[Repeat of broadcast at 16:30 on Tuesday]

FRI 23:55 The Listening Project (b06sddmc)

Yasmin and Lana – Sharing a Room

Fi Glover introduces a conversation recorded at the CBBC Live and Digital Festival in Hull, between sisters negotiating the early morning wake-up call, once the younger one joins the elder at secondary school. Another conversation that proves it's surprising what you hear when you listen, and this one can be seen, animated, on <http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc>

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Producer: Marya Burgess