

**SATURDAY 23 DECEMBER 2023****SAT 00:00 Midnight News (m001tjml)**

The latest news and weather forecast from BBC Radio 4.

**SAT 00:30 Starborn: How the Stars Made Us and Who We Would Be Without Them by Roberto Trotta (m001tjkj)**  
A Black Canvas

From myth to science through timekeeping and navigation, the night sky is central to the human story. Roberto Trotta explores the many ways in which our lives are intertwined with the stars.

As light pollution increases and the night sky becomes ever more congested with satellites, how do we retain our connection with the cosmos?

Read by Khalid Abdalla  
Abridged by Anna Magnusson  
Producer: Eilidh McCreadie

**SAT 00:48 Shipping Forecast (m001tjmn)**

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping

**SAT 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (m001tjmq)**

World Service

**SAT 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (m001tjmq)**

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

**SAT 05:20 Shipping Forecast (m001tjms)**

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping

**SAT 05:30 News Briefing (m001tjmv)**

National and international news from BBC Radio 4

**SAT 05:43 Prayer for the Day (m001tjmx)**

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

Twas the night before Christmas

Good Morning.

Tomorrow is Christmas Eve! A day of waiting, preparation, expectation.

Remember the lovely verse: 'twas the night before Christmas and all through the house not a creature is stirring, not even a mouse!

In one way or another, we seem to spend quite a lot of time waiting: at a bus stop, for an appointment, for relief of pain. Sometimes we wait with patience, sometimes with growing irritation, sometimes with overwhelming helplessness.

Perhaps there is a kind of 'cosmic waiting', written into our nature, a hope that somehow things will get better.

Yet now this cosmic waiting is answered, in a way that is both unexpected yet perfectly understandable: in the birth of a child. Yes, to every child who brings a promise of new hope, something better, to come. But double yes to this Christmas child, for he is not an everyday child. He is a child from all eternity.

We recall again the birth of Christ, the anointed one. He brings us healing, resolves our contradictions, gives peace. For in him alone is brought together the brokenness of humanity and the fullness of God. In him God stoops down to embrace anxieties and burdens. In him we are lifted up to know the fullness of our truth and receive the promise of our fulfilment.

Waiting truly answered.

Heavenly Father, help us to wait with patience and to look forward with hope, this Christmas and always.

Amen.

**SAT 05:45 New Storytellers (m001p7bf)**

The Final Fanfayre

It's 1974 and, half a decade after The Beatles and Elvis Presley dominated the charts, a new generation of artists were capturing the hearts and minds of the nation's young female fans - The Jackson 5, The Bay City Rollers, and above all David Cassidy and The Osmonds.

The Final Fanfayre is a different kind of fan story. Fanfayre were a band of Osmond fans made up of two sets of sisters - Ali (15) and Bev (11), and Lou (16) and Anne (13). They played Osmond songs and loved the group so much that, when

an opportunity to audition to be their European Fanclub band arose, the four youngsters from Middlesbrough applied - and won!

It's 2023 and, 50 years on, broadcaster Paul Gambaccini reflects on fandom in the mid-70s, as sisters Ali and Bev reminisce about their time in Fanfayre and what it was like to be part of the group and travel to a London studio to record their single, Donny's Girl.

New Storytellers presents the work of new radio producers and this series features the winners of the Charles Parker Prize 2023 for the Best Student Radio Feature. These awards are presented every year in memory of the pioneering radio producer Charles Parker who produced the famous series of Radio Ballads with Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger. The series is introduced by Charles' daughter, Sara Parker, an award-winning radio producer in her own right.

The Final Fanfayre was produced by Dom Brown who is studying MA Radio, Audio and Podcasting at the University of Sunderland. The judges said of his feature, "What a blast!" "An Interesting subject, well put together" and "Evocative of the time. This simple piece works brilliantly because of the sheer power of the women's reminiscences."

Producer: Dom Brown  
A Soundscape production for BBC Radio 4

**SAT 06:00 News and Papers (m001tpvr)**

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

**SAT 06:07 Open Country (m001tj1b)**

Music of the Gloucestershire landscape

The rural landscapes of Gloucestershire have inspired many classical composers - including Herbert Howells, Gerald Finzi, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Ivor Gurney, to name just a few. In this programme, Rose Ferraby finds out about the links between landscape and music and learns about the extraordinary cluster of composers who were associated with Gloucester Cathedral in the early part of the 20th century. She talks to academics and musicians about how a love of the Gloucestershire countryside influenced composers of the time and visits some of the beauty spots which inspired them - including Chosen Hill, believed to be the only hill to have a piano quartet dedicated to it. At Gloucester Cathedral, she hears the choristers sing the Gloucester Service, a setting of the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis by Herbert Howells, and meets the cathedral's director of music - who was himself taught by Howells at the Royal College of Music.

Produced by Emma Campbell

**SAT 06:30 Farming Today (m001tpvt)**

23/12/23 Farming Today This Week: Welsh and Scottish rural budget cuts, Dental deserts, Agricultural hiphop, The Archers' comedy

Rural affairs budgets for next year are being cut by both the Scottish and Welsh governments. In Wales spending will fall by around 10% in comparison with this year's budget, while in Scotland agriculture faces an 8% cut. Both governments say the money is being "repurposed" to other areas like the NHS. The farming unions say it's disappointing.

A damning report this week described NHS dentistry as being in 'perilous decline' across England, with a particular issue for people living in rural and coastal areas.

We hear about The Archers' Christmas comedy night, called Gagriculture, mistletoe and the swede harvest, and the west country hip-hop singer who's championing farming.

Presented by Charlotte Smith and produced by Beatrice Fenton.

**SAT 06:57 Weather (m001tpvw)**

The latest weather reports and forecast

**SAT 07:00 Today (m001tpvy)**

Dr Nicola Fox, Head of Science at NASA, guest edits Today

Dr Nicola Fox, Associate Administrator for the Science Mission Directorate NASA is the first of our Christmas guest editors this year.

Her programme looks ahead to the launch of the Peregrine Lunar Lander next year which will start the ground work for sending a crewed mission back to the Moon.

Dr Fox, who revealed she was a fan of Duran Duran on her recent Desert Island Discs, talks to band member Nick Rhodes about the influence of space on music. She talks to her

counterpart at the European Space Agency, Carole Mundell, about her path into a top space job and she confronts the writers of the last Bond film.

**SAT 09:00 Saturday Live (m001tpw0)**

Mark Gatiss, Coinneach MacLeod, Lucy Claire Dunbar, Sandi Toksvig

The creative polymath Mark Gatiss; actor, writer, director, producer, funny man and excellent purveyor of Christmas ghost stories - shares his love for the macabre.

By car, train, bus and...canoe - .The Hebridean Baker, Coinneach MacLeod, reveals the festive traditions of the Isle of Lewis.

And illustrator Lucy Claire who came to fame by honouring the likes of The Queen and Matthew Perry with art drawn from behind - shares her joy for craft and creativity at this time of year.

Plus the Inheritance Tracks of broadcaster and Quizmaster extraordinaire; Sandi Toksvig.

Presenters: Nikki Bedi and Huw Stephens  
Producer: Ben Mitchell

**SAT 10:00 Your Place or Mine with Shaun Keaveny (m001tpw2)**

Eddie Kadi: Kinshasa, The Democratic Republic of the Congo

Will Shaun relax his hips and rumba his way to Kinshasa? Comedian and Strictly star Eddie Kadi pulls out all the stops to tempt Shaun to his hometown, the capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Shaun loves the sound of Congolese music and elegantly-dressed sapeurs, but he's also feeling trepidatious. Resident geographer, historian and comedian Iszi Lawrence helps him mull it over.

Your Place Or Mine is the travel series that isn't going anywhere. Join Shaun as his guests try to convince him that it's worth getting up off the sofa and seeing the world, giving us a personal guide to their favourite place on the planet.

Producers: Beth O'Dea and Sarah Goodman.

Your Place or Mine is a BBC Audio production for BBC Radio 4 and BBC Sounds

**SAT 10:30 The Kitchen Cabinet (m001tpw4)**

Series 42

Canterbury

Captain 'Jay' Hook and his rabble of food experts are in the Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury for a pantomime edition of The Kitchen Cabinet.

Joining Jay in the wings are food writer and Masterchef champion Tim Anderson, chefs Tim Hayward and Sophie Wright, and materials expert Dr Zoe Laughlin.

Head to toe in panto paraphernalia, the panellists discuss a variety of Christmas-themed cuisines, including meat-free Christmas dinners, pre-made canapés, and the star of every festive feast - the cheese and pineapple hedgehog.

In keeping with the pantomime season, the panel addresses the iconic custard pie and the best type of cream to "spat" with.

Also, Jay chats to Ayumi Kuwata, founder of Canterbury's sampuru store, Smile Labo, about the intricacies of Japan's fake food tradition.

Producer: Bethany Hocken  
Assistant Producer: Dulcie Whadcock  
Executive Producer: Hannah Newton

A Somethin' Else production for BBC Radio 4

**SAT 11:00 Living Free (m001tj0z)**

Almost £20,000 a year in free money, no strings attached. That's been the offer to all 18 year olds leaving the child care system in Wales, as part of the most generous trial of a basic income ever tried. The Welsh Government hope it will turn round the lives of those impacted by their time in care and save money in the long term, while opponents have called it a 'failed socialist experiment'.

We hear the stories of care leavers to find out what impact it has had on them.

Produced and presented by Gavin Fischer for BBC Audio in Wales

**SAT 11:30 From Our Own Correspondent (m001tpw6)**

A Pivotal Moment in Ukraine's War

Kate Adie presents stories from Ukraine, Tajikistan, Brazil and Mexico

Over recent weeks, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky has battled in vain to ensure further US funding for the war in Ukraine. Just one year ago, he received a standing ovation in Congress, such was the strength of support to see Ukraine victorious. Now, the reality is very different. James Waterhouse has been following events in Washington and in Kyiv and says why this is a defining moment for Ukraine in the war.

In Dnipro, away from the frontline in central-eastern Ukraine, Tim Whewell encounters a group of men who have not yet been called up to fight. He hears about everyday life in the country's economic hub and how young men are making a living by any means as they live under the looming threat of conscription.

When you're based full-time in a country the stories you cover as a correspondent, from political strikes to a pandemic, are often also the stories you live yourself – and that certainly has been the case for the BBC's South America correspondent Katy Watson. As she prepares to move on to a posting in Australia, she reflects on the past decade she's spent living in Brazil and Mexico.

In the mountains of Tajikistan, in the region of Gorno-Badakshan, locals decorate their homes, light up trees and celebrate the life of a saviour – but it's not Christmas. This is home to more than 200,000 Ismaili Muslims, whose spiritual leader is the Aga Khan, whose life is the focus of the festivities. Chris Aslan joined in on the fun.

Series Producer: Serena Tarling  
Editor: Richard Fenton-Smith  
Production Coordinators: Gemma Ashman and Janet Staples

**SAT 12:00 News Summary (m001tql3)**

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

**SAT 12:04 Money Box (m001tpwb)**

Scottish Budget, Core Maths and Christmas Winners

Higher earners in Scotland are to pay more income tax from April. That was one of the headlines from the Scottish government in its budget on Tuesday. We'll discuss that change and more with Professor Mairi Spowage, director of the Fraser of Allander Institute at the University of Strathclyde.

Tens of thousands of teenagers could benefit from studying the subject of core maths once they turn 16. That's according to the charity Maths in Education and Industry. The course was launched in 2014 and currently has around 12,000 teenagers studying it in around 30 per cent of schools across England. However, the MEI says it's vital to get as many students as possible signed up.

We have our top three Christmas crackers – tips to save you money in 2024. We also revisit some of the people we've helped this year.

Plus, festive music from the City of Lincoln Band.

Presenter: Paul Lewis  
Reporter: Dan Whitworth  
Researchers: Sandra Hardial and Jo Krasner  
Editor: Jess Quayle

(First broadcast 12pm Saturday 23rd December 2023)

**SAT 12:30 Dead Ringers (m001tjm0)**

Christmas Specials 2023

Episode 2

Topical satire, featuring all the people you'd least like to have Christmas dinner with.

There are debut appearances from Baroness Mone, Katherine Jenkins and the new Doctor Who, Ncuti Gatwa.

Rishi Sunak and King Charles give their end of year speeches, and there is a surprise guest on Naked Attraction.

This episode was written by: Nev Fountain & Tom Jamieson, Laurence Howarth, Ed Amsden & Tom Coles, Edward Tew, Robert Darke, Rachel E Thorn, Joe Topping, Alex Bertulis-Fernandes and Chris Donovan.

Performed by Jon Culshaw, Lewis MacLeod, Jan Ravens, Jess Robinson and Duncan Wisbey.

Produced and created by Bill Dare

A BBC Studios Production for Radio 4  
An EcoAudio certified production

**SAT 12:57 Weather (m001tpwd)**

The latest weather forecast

**SAT 13:00 News and Weather (m001tpwg)**

The latest national and international news and weather reports from BBC Radio 4

**SAT 13:10 News Review of the Year (m001tjmb)**

2023

In this special edition of The Today Podcast, Amol Rajan and Nick Robinson review the year in news, featuring the biggest moments and their favourite interviews from the Today programme in 2023.

They're joined by some familiar voices including Chris Mason, Martha Kearney and friend of the pod, statistician Prof Sir David Spiegelhalter. With Gabby Logan on the Lionesses, comedian Andy Zaltzman on The Ashes and Paddy O'Connell on Eurovision.

Episodes of The Today Podcast land every Thursday and watch out for bonus episodes. Subscribe on BBC Sounds to get Amol and Nick's take on the biggest stories of the week, with insights from behind the scenes at the UK's most influential radio news programme.

If you would like a question answering, get in touch by sending us a message or voice note via WhatsApp to +44 330 123 4346 or email us Today@bbc.co.uk

The Today Podcast is hosted by Amol Rajan and Nick Robinson, both presenters of BBC Radio 4's Today programme, the UK's most influential radio news programme. Amol was the BBC's media editor for six years and is the former editor of the Independent, he's also the current presenter of University Challenge. Nick has presented the Today programme since 2015, he was the BBC's political editor for ten years before that and also previously worked as ITV's political editor.

The senior producer is Tom Smithard, the producers are Joseph Wilkinson and Rufus Gray. Technical production from Mike Regaard and Emma Crowe. The editors are Jonathan Aspinwall and Louisa Lewis. The executive producer is Owenna Griffiths.

**SAT 14:00 You're Dead to Me (m001s50n)**

Shakespeare

In this episode, recorded live at the Shakespeare North Playhouse in Prescot, Greg Jenner is joined by Professor Farah Karim-Cooper and comedian Richard Herring to learn all about the life, legend and legacy of William Shakespeare himself. 2023 marks the 400th anniversary of the publication of the First Folio of Shakespeare's plays, which preserved his work for future generations. But how did a boy from the Midlands become the most famous playwright in the English-speaking world, and how did the publication of the folio contribute to his legacy? This episode explores Shakespeare's life, career and dramatic works, as well as the reception of his plays in the centuries after his death, and the creation of his legend in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Research by: Jon Mason  
Written by: Emmie Rose Price-Goodfellow, Emma Nagouse and Greg Jenner  
Produced by: Emmie Rose Price-Goodfellow and Greg Jenner  
Audio Producer: Steve Hankey  
Production Coordinator: Caitlin Hobbs  
Senior Producer: Emma Nagouse  
Executive Editor: Chris Ledgard

**SAT 14:45 Opening Lines (m001tpwj)**

Comet in Moominland

John Yorke takes a look at Tove Jansson's magical 1946 novel Comet In Moominland.

Comet In Moominland is the second Moomin book and it's a classic children's tale. A comet is heading straight for earth, indeed to Moomin valley – so Moomintroll and his best friend Sniff head off on an adventure to try and do something about it. Their journey is eventful; they meet lots of new people and make lots of new friends but remain focussed on their mission to find out more about these faceless dangers, and get back home to Moominmama and Moominpapa and the warmth, safety and cake they offer.

Tove Jansson was an acclaimed author, artist and illustrator. She was prolific in all these forms, writing 12 adult novels, many short stories, and producing illustrations throughout her life, but it is the Moomin characters and stories that endure. They are

one of Finland's biggest literary exports – translated into over 50 languages. In this episode, John Yorke asks where these fantastical characters come from, what is it about them that struck such a chord, and why do they remain so popular today.

John Yorke has worked in television and radio for nearly 30 years, and he shares his experience with Radio 4 listeners as he unpacks the themes and impact of the books, plays and stories that are being dramatised on BBC Radio 4. From EastEnders to the Archers, Life on Mars to Shameless, he has been obsessed with telling big popular stories. He has spent years analysing not just how stories work but why they resonate with audiences around the globe and has brought together his experience in his bestselling book Into the Woods. As former Head of Channel Four Drama, Controller of BBC Drama Production and MD of Company Pictures, John has tested his theories during an extensive production career working on some of the world's most lucrative, widely viewed and critically acclaimed TV drama. As founder of the hugely successful BBC Writers Academy, John has trained a generation of screenwriters – his students have had 17 green-lights in the last two years alone.

Contributors:

John Finnemore, British writer and actor who pays Moomintroll in Radio 4's dramatisation of Comet In Moominland.  
Tuula Karjalainen, Finnish art historian and writer, the author of Work and Love, A Biography of Tove Jansson.

Producer: Laura Grimshaw  
Executive Producer: Sarah Davies  
Readings: John Finnemore  
Researcher: Nina Semple  
Production Manager: Sarah Wright  
Sound: Sean Kerwin

A Pier production for BBC Radio 4

**SAT 15:00 Drama on 4 (m001tpwl)**

Comet in Moominland

Reuniting the same team that brought you Moominland Midwinter, John Finnemore reprises his role as Moomintroll, and Samantha Bond narrates.

We return to Moominvalley for another story concerning the Moomins, in which Moomintroll sets off on a quest to discover the truth about the Comet. He meets new friends, has exciting adventures, and faces up to what looks like it might be the end of the world, but still finds time for some late-night dancing and a few cups of palm wine.

NARRATOR . . . . . Samantha Bond  
MOOMINTROLL . . . . . John Finnemore  
MOOMINPAPA . . . . . Samuel West  
MOOMINMAMMA . . . . . Ann Bryson  
THE MUSKRAT . . . . . Cyril Nri  
SNIFF . . . . . Clare Corbett  
SNUFKIN . . . . . Alex Waldmann  
THE HEMULEN . . . . . Edalia Day  
SNORK MAIDEN . . . . . Jasmine Naziha Jones  
SNORK . . . . . Adam Colborne

Written by Tove Jansson  
Dramatised by Robin Brooks

Sound Design by Lucinda Mason Brown  
Directed and Produced by Fiona McAlpine

An Allegra production for BBC Radio 4 and BBC Sounds

Picture Credit : © Moomin Characters™

**SAT 16:00 Woman's Hour (m001tpwn)**

Weekend Woman's Hour - Gracie Spinks's parents, Gatekeeping your perfume, Child-free women at work

23-year-old Gracie Spinks was killed by a man who she had reported to the police for stalking her. The inquire into her death reported several failures by Derbyshire Police in how her case was handled. Now, her parents, Richard Spinks and Alison Ward, are campaigning for Gracie's Law, which would ensure better training for police officers around stalking, and the appointment of independent stalking advocates. They tell us about Gracie and the changes they want to be made in her memory.

Have you got a signature scent – and would you share where you got it from? Whether you are 'gatekeeping' your perfume or keen to spread the word about your favourite scent, smell is one of the most evocative and emotive of our senses. We talk all things fragrance with The Guardian's beauty editor, Sali Hughes, and Experimental Perfume Club's Roshni Dhanjee – why we want to smell unique, gifting perfume, and why smell is so connected to our emotions and identity.

\*There is an expectation that women like me – without children – will pick up the slack so the working mums can have time off

with their families'. Those are the words of Sam Walsh who has worked every Boxing Day for the last 20 years. She decided to quit her retail job in October because she resented having to work over the Xmas period. Sam, who runs The Non Mum Network Facebook group and website, says working parents shouldn't be given priority.

Kelly Simmons has recently left the Football Association after 32 years with the organisation. Best known for her time as Director of the Women's Professional Game, Kelly joins Jessica Creighton to discuss her long career and the future of the Women's Super League, which she helped to launch and transform.

Elle and The Pocket Belles describe themselves as an all-girl retro band. They are a vocal harmony group who have been singing together for more than a decade. They'll be creating more Christmas cheer for us.

Presenter: Jessica Creighton  
Producer: Rabeka Nurmahomed  
Editor: Rebecca Myatt

#### SAT 17:00 PM (m001tpwq)

Full coverage of the day's news

#### SAT 17:30 Sliced Bread Presents (m001tj0k)

Toast - Toys R Us

Why did Toys R Us have to close all of its UK superstores in 2018?

While Sliced Bread takes a break we serve up... Toast. A study of the spectacular failures of brands which had promised so much to consumers.

In each episode, the presenter and BBC business journalist, Sean Farrington, examines one big idea. What did it promise? Why did it fail? What can we learn from it today?

In this Christmas special, Sean examines the charming story behind one of our best-known toy brands before hearing how it faltered.

Expert commentators and employees reflect on why the business had been so successful and what went wrong.

Alongside them is the self-made millionaire and serial entrepreneur, Sam White, to analyse the missteps that changed the brand's fortunes.

Together, they hear how Toys R Us is making a comeback in the UK.

You can email the programme at toast@bbc.co.uk

Feel free to suggest topics which we could cover in future episodes.

From big tech to high street retail and, of course, food, Toast tackles the business ideas that, one way or another, ended up cooked.

Sliced Bread returns for a new batch of investigations in February. In the new series, Greg Foot will investigate more of the latest so-called wonder products to find out whether they really are the best thing since sliced bread. In the meantime, Toast is available in the Sliced Bread feed on BBC Sounds.

Toast is produced by Jon Douglas and Viant Siddique and is a BBC Audio North production for Radio 4 and BBC Sounds.

#### SAT 17:54 Shipping Forecast (m001tpws)

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping

#### SAT 17:57 Weather (m001tpww)

The latest weather forecast

#### SAT 18:00 Six O'Clock News (m001tpwx)

Israel says it's interrogating hundreds of suspected Hamas fighters in Gaza.

#### SAT 18:15 Loose Ends (m001tpwz)

Brian Cox, Toby Jones, Mary Beard, Richard Coles, Katherine Jenkins, Marisha Wallace, Annela Rice, Clive Anderson

Clive Anderson and Annela Rice are joined by Brian Cox, Toby Jones, Mary Beard and Richard Coles for an eclectic mix of conversation, music and comedy. With music from Katherine Jenkins and Marisha Wallace, recorded in the BBC Radio Theatre in London.

#### SAT 19:00 Profile (m001tpx1)

Polly Neate

Polly Neate. CEO of the housing and homelessness charity Shelter. Recently rescued in a dramatic cliff top drama, Neate was determined to fight social injustice from an early age. She started life as a journalist and then worked for the charities Action for Children and Women's Aid before taking the top job at Shelter. Her climbing injury has left her on crutches but she continues her professional work campaigning to help the homeless and is still determined to carry on climbing.

#### PRODUCTION TEAM

Presenter: Mark Coles  
Producer: Bob Howard  
Editor: Richard Vadon  
Sound: Graham Puddifoot  
Production Co-ordinator: Maria Ogundele

#### SAT 19:15 The Infinite Monkey Cage (p0gr7pqp)

Series 28

The Monkeys meet The Sky at Night

Brian Cox and Robin Ince are joined by the longest running science show in the world, The Sky at Night, alongside comedian and astronomy enthusiast Dara O Briain for the ultimate guide to studying the stars from your own back garden. Sky At Night presenters Dr Maggie Aderin Pocock, Chris Lintott and Pete Lawrence join the panel to offer their top tips to backyard astronomy over the winter season. From binoculars to telescopes and even the naked eye: meteor showers, planetary moons and odd behaving galaxies are just some of the heavenly phenomena visible with or without equipment from the comfort of your own garden or local park. An out of this world seasonal special. And you can catch the monkey's on a special edition of the Sky At Night on BBC iPlayer from November 13th.

Executive Producer: Alexandra Feachem

#### SAT 20:00 Archive on 4 (m001tpx4)

Stevie's Inner Visions

Fifty years ago, Stevie Wonder released his finest masterpiece in a career full of them. Innervisions is regularly voted as one of the top ten LPs of all time, of any genre. Days after its release, Stevie - still just 23 years old - was on the promo tour in North Carolina. He sat in the passenger seat of a rental car listening to his new record on headphones when he drifted asleep. Suddenly the automobile collided with a truck, plunging Stevie into a coma.

This is the story of the day we almost lost Stevie, just at the moment when America - and the world - needed him most. It's also the account of how that iconic body of work, Innervisions, bridged Stevie's transition from child star to voice of the people, cementing his place as one of the greatest of all time.

This Archive On 4 is told through Stevie's own words from the BBC vaults. It also features new interviews with musicians Corinne Bailey Rae, Jacob Collier, and Fred Hersch, as well as members of Stevie's Wonderlove band and crew, including his publicist Ira Tucker Jr, who spent days trying to bring his friend back to consciousness.

Producer: Tom Bonnett  
Additional Production: Jude Shapiro  
Executive Producer: Jack Howson  
Mixing: Mike Woolley

#### Additional Contributors:

DJ Spinna, Brooklyn music producer who runs Wonderful tribute parties in honour of Stevie.  
Kevin K. Gaines, Julian Bond Professor of Civil Rights and Social Justice at the University of Virginia.  
Lynda Laurence, singer with Stevie and then The Supremes.  
Professor Adrian Owen OBE, neuroscientist.  
Nicholas Schiff, neurologist.

A Peanut & Crumb production for BBC Radio 4

#### SAT 21:00 The Reith Lectures (m001thz1)

Ben Ansell: Our Democratic Future

4. The Future of Prosperity

This year's BBC Reith Lecturer is Ben Ansell, Professor of Comparative Democratic Institutions at Nuffield College, Oxford University and author of "Why Politics Fails."

In four lectures called "Our Democratic Future," he asks how we can build a politics that works for all of us with political systems which are robust to the challenges of the twenty first century, from climate change to artificial intelligence.

In this fourth and final lecture, recorded in Atlanta, Georgia in the United States, he interrogates a crucial question: can we

continue to grow our economies without despoiling the earth? Focusing on the existential threats created by our own innovation - from climate change to out-of-control artificial intelligence - Ansell asks whether our politics is up to the task of supporting sustainable growth.

The Reith Lectures are chaired by Anita Anand and produced by Jim Frank.

The Editors are China Collins and Clare Fordham, and the co-ordinator is Brenda Brown.  
The series is mixed by Rod Farquhar and Neil Churchill.

#### SAT 22:00 News (m001tpx6)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4

#### SAT 22:15 Screenshot (m001tjm4)

Double Acts

At this festive time of year it's hard to escape those classic double acts and their equally classic Christmas specials, think Morecambe & Wise, the Two Ronnies, French & Saunders. In this episode, Ellen E Jones and Mark Kermode explore the origins, legacy and evolution of the double act across film and TV, both in front of and behind the camera.

Guests include one half of a very famous double act, whose members have both gone on to have incredibly successful careers beyond the partnership but in very different ways. He is the Fry in Fry & Laurie, a genuine national treasure - Stephen Fry.

Producer: Tom Whalley  
A Prospect Street production for BBC Radio 4

#### SAT 23:00 Counterpoint (m001tgr6)

Series 37

Heat 2, 2023-4

(2/13)

Paul Gambaccini welcomes another three music-lovers to the Radio Theatre in London, for the second heat in this year's quest for the nation's musical mastermind.

They'll face Paul's questions on all genres of music, from the classical repertoire to jazz, Broadway musicals, novelty songs, Christmas music and rock and pop of all eras. They'll also each have to pick a special category on which to answer a set of questions, with no prior warning of the choices on offer.

Appearing today are:  
Paddy Baker from Brighton  
Nathan Hamer from West Sussex  
Liz Tray from North London.

The winner will go forward to the semi-finals in the new year.

Assistant Producer: Stephen Garner  
Producer: Paul Bajoria

#### SAT 23:30 Limelight (m00168rd)

Dead Hand

Dead Hand - Episode 3: Hierarchy of Victims

A contemporary thriller set in Northern Ireland written by Stuart Drennan.

Greg is the host of a true crime podcast dedicated to uncovering the identity of a serial killer, last active over twenty years ago, known only as Dead Hand. A killer named after a mysterious radio transmission which has been broadcasting an indecipherable code in the years since Dead Hand vanished. A code told in the voices of Dead Hand's victims; including Greg's missing father. However, when a new voice is added to the code, Greg realises that Dead Hand is active again. With time already running out, can he finally crack the code and catch the killer?

Cast:  
Greg ... Paul Mallon  
DS Murray ... Michelle Fairley  
Kate ... Roisin Gallagher  
Lucy ... Hannah Eggleton  
Stacey ... Eimear Fearon  
May ... Julia Dearden  
Freya ... Carol Moore  
Daniel ... Desmond Eastwood  
All other roles played by members of the cast.

Writer ... Stuart Drennan  
Script Editor ... Philip Palmer  
Producer ... Michael Shannon  
Executive Editor ... Andy Martin

A BBC Northern Ireland production for Radio 4.

### SUNDAY 24 DECEMBER 2023

#### SUN 00:00 Midnight News (m001tpx8)

The latest news and weather forecast from BBC Radio 4.

#### SUN 00:15 Poetry Please (m001thxk)

Jeanette Winterson

Jeanette Winterson joins Roger McGough, sharing a seasonal selection of listener requested poems. Together they explore light, love and religion, through the words of Carol Ann Duffy, Stevie Smith, Anne Sexton and many more.

Jeanette Winterson is an award-winning novelist, essayist and memoirist. She is best known for her semi-autobiographical novel 'Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit', which she wrote at the age of 23, inspired by her strict Pentecostal Evangelist upbringing in Accrington, Lancashire.

Produced by Alice McKee for BBC Audio

#### SUN 00:48 Shipping Forecast (m001tpxb)

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping

#### SUN 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (m001tpxd)

World Service

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

#### SUN 05:20 Shipping Forecast (m001tpxg)

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping

#### SUN 05:30 News Briefing (m001tpxj)

National and international news from BBC Radio 4

#### SUN 05:43 Bells on Sunday (m001tpxl)

The Church of St Giles, Cripplegate in the City of London

Bells on Sunday comes from the church of St Giles, Cripplegate in the City of London. St Giles is one of the few medieval churches left in the city of London to have survived the Great Fire of London although it was badly damaged by enemy action in 1940 and lost its ring of twelve bells. In 1954 a new ring of twelve were cast by Mears and Stainbank of Whitechapel with a Tenor weighing thirty four hundredweight and in the note of C sharp. We hear them ringing Stedman Cinques by the ringers of the Ancient Society of College Youths.

#### SUN 05:45 Profile (m001tpx1)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Saturday]

#### SUN 06:00 News Summary (m001tpz)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4

#### SUN 06:05 Something Understood (m001v7kd)

Stories of the Nativity

In a Christmas edition of Something Understood, Mark Tully considers the symbolism and meaning of the traditional nativity stories and asks what they can offer us in a contemporary context.

Some church historians now argue that, given inconsistencies in the Gospels and a variety of other empirical evidence, accounts of the Nativity should be viewed as stories rather than literal history. If this is the case, what is the significance of the stories that have been handed down to us about the birth of Jesus and what can we learn from them?

Mark Tully talks to church historian Professor Diarmaid MacCulloch about his approach to these 'stories' of the Nativity. Different approaches to the Christmas tales are found in the writing of novelist Elizabeth Goudge, poets Moira Andrew and T.S.Eliot and the Syrian mystic Deacon Ephrem and music is by Vaughan Williams, Kathy Mattea and the African Gospel Choir.

The readers are Derek Jacobi and Isla Blair.

Presenter: Mark Tully

Producer: Frank Stirling

A Unique production for BBC Radio 4

#### SUN 06:35 Natural Histories (b0bf59rs)

Narwhal

There can be few animals which inspire such fascination and intrigue as the Narwhal. Discoveries of their long spiral tusk which is actually a tooth which protrudes from the jaw of the male (and very occasionally the female), inspired legends about Unicorns. The horns were treasured for their purifying and health-giving properties and cups made from the horns were claimed to be able purify water and detect poisonous substances. But the true nature of the tusk is no less extraordinary than the fictional ones as Brett Westwood discovers when he explores our relationship with this Arctic legend. Producer Sarah Blunt

#### Contributors

Doug Allan - wildlife documentary cameraman

Dr Martin T. Nweeia - Lecturer at The Harvard School of Dental Medicine and Smithsonian research associate and content curator for the Smithsonian exhibit 'Narwhal : Revealing an Arctic legend'.

Dr William W. Fitzhugh - Arctic Curator and Director of the Smithsonian Institution's Arctic Studies Centre in the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C.

Barbara Drake Boehm - medievalist and Paul and Jill Rudduck Senior Curator at The Met Cloisters at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Dr Marianne Marcoux - Research Scientist with Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Dr Cortney Watt - Research Scientist with Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Ken Mantel - former geologist and owner of an Inuit Art Gallery

Ben Clanton - writer and illustrator of Narwhal and Jelly Books

Additional sound recordings of Narwhals courtesy of Dr Susanna Blackwell- Greeneridge Sciences Inc.

First broadcast in a longer form 14th August 2018

Original Producer (2018) : Sarah Blunt

Archive Producer (2023) : Andrew Dawes

#### SUN 06:57 Weather (m001tpzs)

The latest weather reports and forecast

#### SUN 07:00 News and Papers (m001tpz)

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

#### SUN 07:10 Sunday (m001tpzx)

Christmas in Bethlehem. 800th anniversary of the nativity scene. The stories behind our favourite carols

Edward Stourton presents a special Christmas Eve edition of Sunday, featuring live carols from Manchester Chamber Choir.

On Christmas Eve in 1223, in cave near the cliffside village of Greccio in Italy, St Francis of Assisi created what's thought to be the first nativity scene. It was staged for the local villagers and it was a 'living scene' featuring people and animals. Colm Flynn reports from Greccio, and the art historian Dr Geri Parly explores the nativity scene's fascinating story and enduring appeal.

There will be no Christmas celebrations in Bethlehem this year. Shaimaa Khalil reports from the birthplace of Jesus. Rev Dr Munther Isaac, Dean of Bethlehem Bible College, has created a nativity scene in his church directly inspired by the suffering endured as a result of the Israel-Gaza conflict. He reflects on it with Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner.

Carol singing is another much-loved tradition at this time of year. But how many of us have really thought about where our favourite carols come from? The composer and conductor Andrew Gant traces the weird and wonderful history of our carol tradition in his book "Deck The Hall". He says, "it can be a bit like trying to sweep up all the stray pine needles when you've taken down your Christmas tree: there's always a corner you find you haven't reached."

Producers: Dan Tierney and Alexa Good

Editor: Helen Grady.

#### SUN 07:54 Radio 4 Appeal (m001tpzz)

ShelterBox

Actress and presenter Joanna Lumley makes the Radio 4 Appeal on behalf of the charity ShelterBox.

To Give:

- UK Freephone 0800 404 8144

- You can donate online at [bbc.co.uk/appeal/radio4](http://bbc.co.uk/appeal/radio4)

- Freepost BBC Radio 4 Appeal. (That's the whole address.

Please do not write anything else on the front of the envelope).

Mark the back of the envelope 'ShelterBox'.

- Cheques should be made payable to 'ShelterBox'.

Please note that Freephone and online donations for this charity close at 23.59 on the Saturday after the Appeal is first

broadcast. However the Freepost option can be used at any time.

Registered charity number: 1096479

#### SUN 07:57 Weather (m001tq01)

The latest weather forecast

#### SUN 08:00 News and Papers (m001tq03)

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

#### SUN 08:10 Sunday Worship (m001tq05)

The Compassion of the Christ Child

For the Fourth Sunday in Advent, with the Chapel Choir of Methodist College, Belfast, this service concludes the Sunday Worship theme of God's justice with the Rev Dr Janet Unsworth exploring the Compassion of the Christ Child. The service is led by the College Chaplain, the Rev Emily Hyland.

Unto us a boy is born

The Sussex Carol

The Blessed Son of God

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

All the stars looked down

John 1:1-14

The Lamb

A Ukrainian carol

O Come all ye faithful

The Choir is directed by Ruth McCartney and accompanied by

Graeme McCullough

Producer: Bert Tosh

#### SUN 08:48 A Point of View (m001tjm8)

Taking Time

Michael Morpurgo reflects on why Christmas is the perfect time of year for 'taking your time.'

In a special edition of A Point of View, recorded on a walk near his home in Devon, Michael invites us to enjoy with him the crispness of a frosty morning, the dry leaves crunching underfoot and the 'frantic flurry of splashing and quacking ducks'.

He takes us to his favourite wood, past the hill he used to roll down, his children rolled down and now his grandchildren, and on to the River Torridge where, a few days ago, he sighted an otter for the first time in 50 years - 'the best Christmas present I've ever had'.

Producer: Adele Armstrong

Recording and sound design: Andy Fell

Production coordinator: Gemma Ashman

Editor: Richard Fenton-Smith.

#### SUN 08:58 Tweet of the Day (b03dx6vq)

Hawfinch

Tweet of the Day is a series of fascinating stories about our British birds inspired by their calls and songs.

Martin Hughes-Games presents the Hawfinch. The Hawfinch is a large thickset finch with a massive bill. It uses this to crack open hawthorn and cherry stones as well as hornbeam seeds to get at the soft kernels inside. In doing so, it exerts a force of around 180 pounds per square inch.

#### SUN 09:00 Broadcasting House (m001tq07)

The Sunday morning news magazine programme. Presented by Paddy O'Connell

#### SUN 10:00 The Archers Omnibus (m001tq09)

WRITER: Nick Warburton

DIRECTOR: Kim Greengrass

David Archer.... Timothy Bentinck

Jill Archer .... Patricia Greene

Pip Archer .... Daisy Badger

Alice Carter .... Hollie Chapman

Chris Carter .... Wilf Scolding

Susan Carter .... Charlotte Martin

Harry Chilcott .... Jack Ashton

Alan Franks .... John Telfer

Usha Franks .... Souad Faress

Emma Grundy.... Emerald O'Hanrahan

George Grundy .... Angus Stobie

Jakob Hakansson .... Paul Venables

Freddie Pargetter .... Toby Laurence

Stella Pryor.... Lucy Speed

Lynda Snell MBE .... Carole Boyd

Syksey .... Jasper Carrott

**SUN 11:15 Desert Island Discs (m001tq0c)**

Delia Smith, CH, CBE, cookery writer and broadcaster

Delia Smith CH CBE is one of Britain's most popular and successful cookery writers and broadcasters.

Her first book, *How to Cheat at Cooking*, was published in 1971 and she presented her first television series, *Family Fare*, two years later. Since then she has presented many more series and her books have sold more than 21 million copies in the UK alone. Her widespread influence has led to the phrase 'the Delia effect', when large numbers of shoppers sought out her recommendations.

Delia was born in Woking in 1941, and grew up in Bexleyheath. She attended the local secondary modern school, but left without any qualifications. She eventually found work as a pot washer and then a waitress in a French restaurant in London, where the chef encouraged her interest in cooking and food.

In 1969 she landed the job of cookery writer on the *Daily Mirror's* new colour supplement. There she honed her simple, no-nonsense instructions and met her husband, Michael Wynn-Jones.

She hung up her apron in 2013 to spend more time on her other passion - football. Delia and Michael have been long-standing supporters – and, since 1996, majority shareholders - of Norwich City FC. She lives in Suffolk countryside in the same cottage she and Michael bought as their first home.

DISC ONE: The Sound of Silence - Paul Simon  
 DISC TWO: Within You Without You - The Beatles  
 DISC THREE: Gnossienne No 1. Composed by Erik Satie and performed by Alexandre Tharaud  
 DISC FOUR: Caruso – composed by Lucio Dalla and performed by Luciano Pavarotti  
 DISC FIVE: Kyrie: Call To Prayer – Muezzin from the Muhammad Ali Mosque, Cairo. Performed by Bournemouth Symphony Chorus, Choristers of St. George's Chapel, Windsor and composed by David Fanshawe  
 DISC SIX: This Woman's Work - Kate Bush  
 DISC SEVEN: He Moved Through the Fair - Sinéad O'Connor  
 DISC EIGHT: Happy - Pharrell Williams

BOOK CHOICE: Sister Wendy's 100 Best-loved Paintings by Wendy Beckett  
 LUXURY ITEM: The Desert Island Discs archive  
 CASTAWAY'S FAVOURITE: Kyrie: Call To Prayer – Muezzin from the Muhammad Ali Mosque, Cairo. Composed by David Fanshawe and performed by Bournemouth Symphony Chorus, Choristers of St. George's Chapel, Windsor

Presenter Lauren Laverne  
 Producer Sarah Taylor

**SUN 12:00 News Summary (m001trtr)**

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

**SUN 12:04 I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue (m001tgtx)**

Series 80

Episode 6

Back for a second week at the Dorking Halls, panellists Fred Macaulay, Milton Jones, Lucy Porter and Omid Djalili compete with one another, with Jack Dee the unimpressed umpire. Piano accompaniment is provided by Colin Sell.

Producer - Jon Naismith.

It is a BBC Studios production for Radio 4.

**SUN 12:32 The Food Programme (m001tq0k)**

Christmas with The Food Programme

Cooking at Christmas is so much more than just the main meal, so this year Sheila Dillon, and chef Thomasina Miers, show us how to do more with less. Sheila Dillon joins chef Thomasina Miers in her kitchen who shows her why she thinks some of the most delightful meals at Christmas are made with the leftovers, and she shares her family tradition for doctoring mince pies, to make a much more extravagant treat. Plus the pair connect with friends whose lives this Christmas feel far from normal, to hear how tradition and food can bring joy, even in the most strained situations.

Presented by Sheila Dillon  
 Produced for BBC Audio in Bristol by Natalie Donovan

**SUN 12:57 Weather (m001tq0p)**

The latest weather forecast

**SUN 13:00 The World This Weekend (m001tq0x)**

Radio 4's look at the week's big stories from both home and around the world

**SUN 13:30 My Dream Dinner Party (m001r0sd)**

Simon Callow's Dream Dinner Party

Actor and writer Simon Callow hosts a dinner party with a twist - all his guests are from beyond the grave, long-time heroes brought back to life by the wonders of the radio archive.

Simon is joined by his old friend and agent Peggy Ramsay, actor and director Orson Welles, comedian and satirist Barry Humphries, writer and polemicist Christopher Hitchens - and Princess Margaret.

As Simon tops up the strawberry rum daiquiri glasses, he and his guests discuss press intrusion, alcoholism, spoiled childhoods - and Christopher Hitchens describes a fruity encounter with Margaret Thatcher.

Alongside fine dining and high brow conversation, there's a guest who comes clean about her embarrassing body search.

Written and presented by Simon Callow  
 Produced by Sarah Peters and Peregrine Andrews  
 Co-producer Tim Bano  
 Additional Editing: Jerome Watson  
 BBC Archivist: Tariq Hussain  
 Executive Producer: Iain Chambers

A Tuning Fork and Open Audio production for BBC Radio 4

**SUN 14:00 Gardeners' Question Time (m001tjlm)**

From the Archives: Christmas Edition

Kathy Clugston is visited by the ghosts of GQT Christmases Past, Present and Future for an archive edition of the show.

The panellists of past and present, share their knowledge on how to encourage the growth of moss in our gardens and answer gardening conundrums for the likes of Mary Berry and Anita Anand, who ask about indestructible plants that can survive harsh treatment and how you can maintain poinsettias during the festive period.

And later, we hear from three of GQT's wise men - James Wong, Marcus Chilton-Jones and Peter Gibbs - who'll be hoping to inspire you with the jobs they'll be getting on with this Christmas.

Producer: Bethany Hocken  
 Assistant Producer: Rahnee Prescod  
 Executive Producer: Hannah Newton

A Somethin' Else production for BBC Radio 4

**SUN 14:45 Opening Lines (m001tq15)**

The Greatest Gift

John Yorke looks at the short story *The Greatest Gift* by Philip Van Doren Stern. It's Christmas Eve and George Pratt is contemplating suicide when a stranger appears almost by magic, and grants George a wish, that he'd never been born.

When Stern wrote the story in 1943, he could find no one who wanted to publish it so he sent it out to friends as a Christmas card. One of those cards found its way to Frank Capra, one of the great film directors of the 1940s, and became a film that now defines Christmas for many people.

John shares a lifetime of experience with Radio 4 listeners as he unpacks the secrets behind the books, plays and stories that are being dramatised in BBC Radio 4's Sunday Drama series. He has been working in television and radio for nearly 30 years. From *EastEnders* to *The Archers*, *Life on Mars* to *Shameless*, he has been obsessed with telling big popular stories. He has spent years analysing not just how stories work but why they resonate with audiences around the globe and has brought together his experience in his bestselling book *Into the Woods*. As former Head of Channel Four Drama, Contoller of BBC Drama Production and MD of Company Pictures, John has tested his theories during an extensive production career working on some of the world's most lucrative, widely viewed and critically acclaimed TV drama. As founder of the hugely successful BBC Writers Academy John has trained a generation of screenwriters.

Contributors:  
 Award winning writer Lucy Caldwell, former winner of the BBC Short Story Award, and winner of the 2023 Walter Scott Prize for Historical Fiction for her novel, *These Days*.  
 Readings by Eric Stroud

Credits:  
 The Greatest Gift by Philip Van Doren Stern, published by Transworld Digital.

The Name Above the Title, An Autobiography by Frank Capra, published by Da Capo Press.

It's A Wonderful Life Started as the By-Product of A Shave by Philip Van Doren Stern, New York Herald Tribune, December 15th, 1946.

Marguerite Stern Robinson: YouTube

Produced by Caroline Raphael  
 Executive Producer: Sara Davies  
 Production Manager: Sarah Wright  
 Researcher: Nina Semple  
 Sound by Shane O'Byrne

A Pier production for BBC Radio 4

**SUN 15:00 A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols (m001th7d)**

Christmas 2023

A service of carols, hymns and readings live from the candlelit Chapel of King's College, Cambridge.

Hymn: Once in royal David's City (Irby, descant Ledger)  
 Bidding Prayer (read by the Dean)  
 Carol: Out of your sleep (Robin Nelson)  
 First lesson: Genesis 3 vv. 8-19 (read by a Chorister)  
 Carol: Adam lay ybounden (Matthew Martin)  
 Second lesson: Genesis 22 vv. 15-19 (read by a College student)  
 Carol: Illuminare Jerusalem (Judith Weir)  
 Third lesson: Isaiah 9 vv. 2, 6-7 (read by a member of College staff)  
 Carol: O radiant dawn (James MacMillan)  
 Hymn: O Little town of Bethlehem (Forest Green, descant Armstrong)  
 Fourth lesson: Isaiah 11 vv. 1-9 (read by the Master over the Choristers)  
 Carol: King Jesus hath a garden (Trad. Dutch arr. Wood, Cleobury)  
 Carol: A spotless rose (Philip Ledger)  
 Fifth lesson: Luke 1 vv. 26-38 (read by a Fellow)  
 Carol: Gabriel's message (Trad. Basque, arr. Willcocks)  
 Carol: Hereford Carol (arr. Robinson)  
 Sixth lesson: Luke 2 vv. 1-7 (read by the Mayor of Cambridge)  
 Carol: Sir Christemas (Mathias)  
 Hymn: The first Nowell the angel did say (The first Nowell, arr. Willcocks)  
 Seventh lesson: Luke 2 vv. 8-20 (read by the Director of Music)  
 Carol: The Cradle (Cheryl Frances-Hoad) – 2023 Commission  
 Eighth lesson: Matthew 2 vv. 1-12 (read by the Vice-Provost)  
 Carol: All the stars looked down (John Rutter)  
 Carol: Benedicamus Domino (Warlock)  
 Ninth lesson: John 1 vv. 1-14 (read by the Provost)  
 Hymn: O come, all ye faithful (Adeste Fideles, arr. Willcocks, Daniel Hyde)  
 Collect and Blessing  
 Hymn: Hark, the herald angels sing (Mendelssohn, arr. Willcocks)

Organ voluntaries:  
 In dulci júbilo, BWV 729 (Bach)  
 Dieu parmi nous (Messiaen)

Daniel Hyde (Director of Music)  
 Paul Grealley (Organ Scholar)  
 The Revd Dr Stephen Cherry (Dean)  
 The Revd Dr Mary Kells (Chaplain)

For millions listening 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. The service 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.

A new work has been commissioned for the Christmas Eve service every year since 1983, and this year Cheryl Frances-Hoad has written 'The Cradle', a setting of an English translation by Robert Graves of an anonymous seventeenth century Austrian text.

A number of pieces by twentieth century composers such as Robin Nelson, Matthew Martin, Judith Weir, James MacMillan, Philip Ledger, William Mathias, and Peter Warlock, sit alongside traditional carols in arrangements by David Willcocks and Christopher Robinson. The service also includes the carol 'All the stars looked down', composed by John Rutter in memory of the former Director of Music at King's, Stephen Cleobury.

Producer: Ben Collingwood

**SUN 16:30 Pilgrimage for a Pint (m001tq1k)**

Folk musicians Julie Fowlis and Karine Polwart set out on a journey to the most remote pub in mainland Britain - The Old Forge in Inverie.

Located on the Knoydart Peninsular on the west coast of Scotland, the pub is only accessible by a 15 mile hike through the hills from the nearest single-track road, or by sailing into Loch Nevis from the port of Mallaig.

Joining Julie and Karine are fellow musicians Iain MacFarlane and Ingrid Henderson, and the poets Sarah Grant and Doug Wilson Garry. They have set themselves the challenge of writing a new song and composing poetry about their two different pilgrimages for a pint, aiming to capture their experiences in words and music - and all in time for a special Sunday Session at The Old Forge where they join the locals for a fun evening celebrating the recent community buyout of this remotest of pubs.

More songs from the The Old Forge session can be found on BBC Radio 2's The Folk Show with Mark Radcliffe on BBC Sounds.

Producer: Lewis Harrower  
A Soundscape production for BBC Radio 4

#### **SUN 17:00 Uninsurable Planet (m001tgyd)**

Felicity Hannah explores how climate change is leaving communities 'uninsurable' because of the rising risk of them being hit by extreme weather events.

She speaks to one businessman living in 'Hurricane Alley' in Louisiana, who has seen his premiums rise by \$200,000 in just three years, and learns how many residents are now having to run the risk of living without insurance, because the cost is just too high.

In Australia, she speaks to residents resigned to the fact that their hometown is considered too much of a risk for the insurance industry. Instead, the government has bought their homes and they have been forced to leave.

In the UK too, Felicity meets business owners already deemed 'uninsurable' because of the frequency of flooding they have faced. Meanwhile British homeowners relying on a temporary fix that has helped reduce their premiums must hope flood defences are built before time runs out.

Could rising premiums be the canary in the coalmine for taking more decisive action on climate change?

Presenter: Felicity Hannah  
Producer: Nick Holland  
Production Coordinator: Gemma Ashman  
Editor Richard Fenton-Smith  
Sound Design: Graham Puddifoot

#### **SUN 17:40 Profile (m001tpx1)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Saturday]

#### **SUN 17:54 Shipping Forecast (m001tqlv)**

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping

#### **SUN 17:57 Weather (m001tq24)**

The latest weather forecast

#### **SUN 18:00 Six O'Clock News (m001tq2g)**

His company will take control of the club's football operations

#### **SUN 18:15 Pick of the Week (m001tq2s)**

Frank Cottrell-Boyce

Join Frank Cottrell-Boyce this Christmas Eve as he wraps the last of the presents and brings us the highlights of his listening week. He tells us ghost stories, indulges in a bit of seasonal gluttony and we find out the surprising origins of one of our most beloved Christmas songs. There are also tips for a more sustainable festive season and tributes to those we've lost this year.

Presenter: Frank Cottrell-Boyce  
Producer: Jessica Treen  
Production Coordinator: Lydia Depledge-Miller

#### **SUN 19:00 The Archers (m001tq35)**

Ed's on a mission to buy suet for Clarrie until Jazzer persuades him to have a drink at The Bull first. Ed then mithers on about Chris buying a pony for Martha, whereas he can't afford anything like that for Keira. Jazzer reassures him that a loving family is far more important, but really the issue for Ed is financial security. Clarrie's meltdown the other week brought home to him just how precarious their existence is. Ed wants to change that, so he's had an idea: to train up as a tree surgeon. Ed dreams of being truly independent and having long-term prospects, with the chance of making some real money. Jazzer points out that the training and kit he'd need won't come cheap.

Ed says he'll look into it more, before heading off to get Clarrie's suet.

Denise bumps into Alistair while delivering last-minute cards and he invites her to the annual divvying up of Christmas presents given to the surgery. Paul and Denise then swap banter about why she's there, before Alistair turns up with some champagne, announcing to everyone's delight that Lovell James want to appoint Denise as a second practice nurse in Ambridge. They raise a toast with Jakob, before choosing which gifts they want from a selection including cuddly toys, chocolate and socks. Then Alistair announces that he and Denise will be the small animals team, while Paul and Jakob will concentrate on equine. Denise declares she's really looking forward to next year - and so is Alistair.

#### **SUN 19:15 Stand Up Just William (m001tpjh)**

William's Truthful Christmas

A brand-new classic stand-up performance. Martin Jarvis entertains a packed house at the Riverhouse Barn Theatre in Walton on Thames, Surrey, with a great comic story by Richmal Crompton. This classic tale was written a hundred years ago, but the comic invention is timeless.

William, inspired by the Vicar's sermon, resolves to speak only the truth over Christmas. With unexpected results.

Previous press responses to Martin Jarvis' one-man, live Just William performances:

'Martin Jarvis in the funniest performance of the year. An astonishing one-man tour-de-force' - The Times  
'The man is an acting genius' - The Stage  
'Jarvis's performance was spot on...even funnier than on the page' - The Telegraph

Sound Engineers: Martin Mitchell and Tom Bullen  
Director: Rosalind Ayres  
A Jarvis & Ayres production for BBC Radio 4

#### **SUN 19:45 Love on the Main Line (m001tq3l)**

Episode 4 - Brighton

Jess Searle's life is mapped out like a timetable. A successful data analyst, she's created her own dating app to find your perfect match. It worked for her! She found devilishly handsome Jean-Baptise and they will be married at the start of the new year. Everything is running to schedule. Until she meets cynic and sceptic Kev Warmley - a stand up comedian who believes love cannot be determined by an algorithm but by the rhythm of your heart. And the odd fart joke. Is Jess's life about to be completely derailed? Or will she find Love On The Main Line...?

Written by Colin Bytheway

Read by Rasmus Hardiker and Tigger Blaize

Directed by Celia de Wolff  
Studio Manager - Matt Bainbridge  
Sound Design by Lucinda Mason Brown  
Production Manager - Sarah Wright

A Pier Production for BBC Radio 4

#### **SUN 20:00 Feedback (m001tjlt)**

The Feedback Interview of the Year

In the last episode of the series, Andrea Catherwood reveals the Feedback Interview of the Year and discusses the art of the interview with Mishal Husain, Justin Webb and Adrian Edmondson.

And do we need a new national anthem? That was the question posed on a recent edition of Radio 4's Antisocial which prompted a passionate response from Feedback listeners. Andrea talks to the programme's presenter Adam Fleming about how to shed light on hot topics.

Presenter: Andrea Catherwood  
Producer: Will Yates

A Whistledown Scotland production for BBC Radio 4

#### **SUN 20:25 Radio 4 Appeal (m001tpzz)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 07:54 today]

#### **SUN 20:30 Last Word (m001tjlr)**

Maureen Sweeney, Sir Tim Brighouse, Shirley Anne Field, Juanita Castro

Matthew Bannister on

Maureen Sweeney, the postmistress from the west of Ireland

whose weather forecast postponed D-Day by 24 hours.

Sir Tim Brighouse, the educationalist credited with transforming the performance of London's schools.

Shirley Anne Field, the actor who appeared in classic 1960s films like The Entertainer, Saturday Night and Sunday Morning and Alfie.

Juanita Castro, younger sister of the Cuban leader Fidel Castro, who became a CIA informer.

Interviewee: Fergus Sweeney  
Interviewee: Harry Brighouse  
Interviewee: Lord Blunkett  
Interviewee: Brian Latell  
Interviewee: Nicola Gill  
Interviewee: Anita Harris

Producer: Gareth Nelson-Davies

Archive used:

D-Day Greatest Combined Operation In World's History (1944), British Pathe News, British Pathe News YouTube channel, uploaded 13/04/2014; Maureen Sweeney interview, RTE News, 2005; Maureen (née Flavin) Sweeney interview, Blackod Lighthouse, Facebook, uploaded 17/12/2023; Tim Brighouse talks to Estelle Morris about his 45-year career in education, Alexander Street Video, uploaded 2006; Tim Brighouse on purpose of education, RM Education, YouTube uploaded 19/12/2023; Tim Brighouse news report, BBC News; Juanita Castro press conference, ABC News, 1964; Juanita Castro interview, AP Archive, 21/07/2015; Juanita Castro speaks out, New York Times, 28/11/2016; Castro Announces Take Over Of Us Owned Property (1960), British Pathe News, YouTube, uploaded 13/04/2014; Shirley Anne Field, Desert Island Discs, BBC Radio 4, 29/07/1994; Scene extract from the film The Entertainer, 1960; Scene extract from the film Saturday Night Sunday Morning, 1960;

#### **SUN 21:00 Archive on 4 (m001ghny)**

'Twas the Night Before Christmas: The poem that changed the world

It's thought the most popular American poem of all time isn't a protest poem, or a love poem, but is best known as 'Twas The Night Before Christmas' and officially called 'A Visit from St Nicholas'.

'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.'

Now poet and balladeer Luke Wright wants to write a updated version of this iconic Christmas poem, one that will captivate us like this one did so successfully. To this end, he is turning the 1823 poem inside out to try to understand why it has reigned supreme for so long (launching countless festive songs about reindeer and Santa costumes) but he also wants the new poem to speak to our moment.

Along the way, the bell-bright, rosy cheeked and holly strewn archive will help Luke understand the different myths that have informed our idea of a mysterious figure who brings us presents in midwinter. The Christmas poetry of John Betjeman, Raymond Briggs' 'Father Christmas' and the imagination of J.R.R. Tolkien offer writerly inspiration.

Including the voices of John Cooper Clarke, J.R.R Tolkien, Raymond Briggs, John Betjeman.

References:  
Letters from Father Christmas - J.R.R. Tolkien  
A Few Late Chrysanthemums - John Betjeman  
Father Christmas - Raymond Briggs

Produced by Faith Lawrence  
Mixed by Sue Stonestreet

#### **SUN 22:00 News (m001v0xt)**

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4

#### **SUN 22:15 Loose Ends (m001tpwz)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 18:15 on Saturday]

#### **SUN 23:00 Soul Music (h06s9dlh)**

Series 21

Fairy tale of New York

The tragi-comic tale of love gone sour and shattered dreams eloquently depicted in the Christmas classic Fairy tale 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 'Fairytale 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 fairytale we are sold, told through a seasonal favourite.

Producer: Maggie Ayre.

#### SUN 23:30 Midnight Mass (m001tq49)

The celebration of the first mass of Christmas will come live from Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King in Liverpool, with the preacher The Most Rev Malcom McMahan, the Archbishop of Liverpool and the choir of the Cathedral and Metropolitan Cathedral Brass Ensemble.

The mass setting is Jonathan Dove's Missa Brevis and there'll be favourite Christmas carols including O Come all ye faithful, Silent Night and Hark the herald angels sing. The Director of Music is Christopher McElroy, the organist Richard Lea and the Producer is Miriam Williamson.

#### MONDAY 25 DECEMBER 2023

##### MON 00:45 Bells on Sunday (m001tqxl)

[Repeat of broadcast at 05:43 on Sunday]

##### MON 00:48 Shipping Forecast (m001tq4r)

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping

##### MON 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (m001tq54)

World Service

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

##### MON 05:20 Shipping Forecast (m001tq5j)

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping

##### MON 05:30 News Briefing (m001tq5x)

National and international news from BBC Radio 4

##### MON 05:43 Prayer for the Day (m001tq65)

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

Christmas Day

Good morning, and a happy Christmas to you all.

One Christmas morning I was unlocking a town centre church when a young couple passed by, dressed to the nines, their partying finished and heading for their hotel. They came to greet me and, to my surprise, said: 'Oh we were just talking about God as we walked along. It's such a special day, isn't it?'

Indeed it is a special day and deserves a moment of deeper reflection.

A child born into poverty. A child first welcomed not by the well-to-do, but by shepherds, smelling of their sheep. A child who comes to answer all our need.

This child lies at the heart of all the efforts we make to express our love for each other – in the kitchen, the decorations, the presents – because all the love in our lives has its origin in the mystery of God, who is love. And this child is that love come totally into our flesh. So we recognise in him the best of ourselves, and all that lies beyond our achieving. We see in him a glimpse of the fulfilment for which we long.

For he has come to take us beyond ourselves, into the unfolding mystery of God, from whom comes our life and in whom lies our final destiny. Welcome him today: at the crib; in a moment of prayer of thanksgiving before you eat; in a kiss of greeting to those you love.

Father in heaven, we pray that today will be a great day, a happy day, as we celebrate the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

##### MON 05:45 Farming Today (m001tq6f)

25/12/23 - Christmas Trees

This year about eight million real Christmas trees have been sold in the UK. It's impossible to imagine the festive season without the sight of a handsome Nordmann Fir or Norway Spruce covered in shiny baubles and twinkling lights. In this Christmas Day edition of Farming Today, Vernon Harwood visits the Yattendon Estate in Berkshire, following the journey of Christmas trees from planting to purchase.

##### MON 05:57 Weather (m001tq6g)

The latest weather forecast for farmers.

##### MON 06:00 Ramblings (m001tq6r)

Clare's Highlights

Clare chooses some favourite moments from her Ramblings year:

Join brothers Manni and Reuben Coe who amble down to Hive Beach in Dorset on a calm summer's day. On the way they recall the emotional story of how Reuben, who has Down's Syndrome, was nurtured back to health partly by walking that very route. Head to Orkney where Clare battles 60mph winds in one of the wildest episodes we've yet recorded. Hike up Shutlingsloe with Frank Milner, in training to climb Kilimanjaro on his 82nd birthday. Hear David and Iain recall some youthful misadventures as they stroll along the cliffs towards Portpatrick on the remote Rhins of Galloway. And meet Sam and Roger by the waterfall in south Wales where their romance began thanks to an online walking group.

Boff Whalley of Chumbawamba leads his Commoners Choir in song as they march up to Gaddings Dam in Calderdale. On the Thames Path, Tina and Cas share how their adopted son's way of coping with the world is by long distance hiking. The inspirational Halifax Hikers lead Clare on their favourite local route. And Ali Allen, in Herefordshire, takes time out from running her tiny walking shop to march with Clare up to a section of the Offa's Dyke footpath.

Please scroll down to the 'related links' box on the Ramblings page of the Radio 4 website for links to all these individual episodes.

Presenter: Clare Balding

Producer: Karen Gregor

##### MON 07:00 Christmas Service (m001tq6z)

The Archbishop of York, The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Stephen Cottrell, preaches at a service for Christmas Day asking 'What makes a happy Christmas?' Responding to that question the service includes comments from the Minster's Child Bishop (a chorister nominated to role play a bishop at Christmas) and Wendy, the founder of a foodbank in Hull.

Music includes: Ding dong, merrily on high (arr Mack Willberg), O Come all ye Faithful (Adeste Fideles), Away in a Manger (Lucy Walker), Now may we singen (Cecilia McDowall), There is no rose (Robert Sharpe), God Rest ye merry Gentlemen (God rest you merry), O Little Town of Bethlehem (Forest Green). All this time this song is best (Walton), Hark the Herald Angels Sing (Mendelssohn). Readings from Luke 2, John 1, and Isaiah 52. Leaders: The Very Revd Dominic Barrington (Dean), The Revd Catriona Cumming (Successor and Acting Precentor); Director of Music: Robert Sharpe; Assistant Director of Music: Ben Morris; Producer: Philip Billson

##### MON 07:57 Tweet of the Day (b03k6slx)

Robin

David Attenborough presents the robin. Christmas cards became popular around 1860 and robins often featured, carrying letters in their beaks or lifting door-knockers and were often referred to as the 'little postmen'. Until 1861, postmen wore red coats and were nick-named redbreasts or Robins, so the association between a familiar winter bird and the person who brought Christmas greetings was irresistible.

Tweet of the Day is a series of fascinating stories about our British birds inspired by their calls and songs.

##### MON 08:00 Soul Music (b03m79cq)

Series 17

Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas

The story behind the song, 'Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas'.

It was first performed by Judy Garland in the 1944 MGM musical Meet Me In St Louis', for the now famous scene in which she and her seven year old sister, played by Margaret O'Brien are downcast about the prospect of moving away from their beloved home.

Garland asked the composer, Hugh Martin to modify his original lyric, explaining it to be too depressing for her to sing, or the audience to hear.

Martin's collaborator and friend, John Fricke, explains the importance this song had for the composer and the joy he experienced in hearing it covered by every major artist since, from Frank Sinatra to Chrissie Hynde. Punk band Fear to Cold Play, Rod Stewart to James Taylor.

It's clear that the song's enduring power lies in a beautiful melody with a melancholic feel that sums up our emotional ambivalence to the Christmas season.

We hear from those who have a special connection to the song.

Soul Music is a series exploring famous pieces of music and their emotional appeal.

Producer Lucy Lunt

First broadcast on BBC Radio 4 in December 2013.

##### MON 08:30 How to Play (m001tq78)

Tchaikovsky's The Nutcracker with the Royal Ballet Sinfonia

The Royal Ballet Sinfonia invite us into their rehearsal rooms as they prepare for their Christmas season with Birmingham Royal Ballet, and performances of Tchaikovsky's seasonal favourite: The Nutcracker.

On Christmas night, Clara is whisked away on a fairy-tale adventure with her Nutcracker doll, travelling through swirling snowflakes to an enchanted kingdom of sweets. Conductor, Thomas Jung and members of the orchestra explain how they work together to bring this magical ballet music to life, including the famous Waltz of the Flowers and Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy.

Produced by Chris Taylor for BBC Audio Cardiff

Photo: Birmingham Royal Ballet (credit Bill Cooper)

##### MON 09:00 The Reunion (m001tq7i)

Band Aid

Pop music of the mid 1980s was at the height of its foppish and glossy pomp. Bands like Duran Duran and Spandau Ballet epitomised unattainable glamour and dominated the charts on both sides of the Atlantic. But a world away, Mengistu Haile Mariam's military dictatorship in Ethiopia had exacerbated a catastrophic famine, threatening the lives of millions of his people.

The scale of the humanitarian disaster needed a heavyweight response. Musicians Bob Geldof and Midge Ure hatched a plan to pack as many pop stars as they could into a room to create what would become the best-selling charity single of all time – holding that record until 1997 - Do They Know It's Christmas?

Kirsty Wark is joined by Sir Bob Geldof and surprise guests to recall how members of Spandau Ballet and Duran Duran arrived at the studio still hungover after partying the night before; how halfway through the day Boy George was woken up in his bed in New York by a telephone call from a testy Bob Geldof who demanded that he get a Concorde flight back to London for the session; and how U2 singer Bono had huge reservations about singing his line.

The song went straight into at number one, outselling every other record in the charts put together, raising tens of millions for famine victims and kick-starting a new trend for pop stars as activists. To date, it has sold nearly four million copies.

Producer: Karen Pirie

Series Producer: David Prest

A WhistleDown production for BBC Radio 4

##### MON 09:45 Ian Fleming: The Complete Man by Nicholas Shakespeare (m001tq7x)

Episode 1. A Stormy Childhood

Today's episode tips back to Fleming's turbulent and stormy childhood.

Read by multi-Olivia Award winning actor, Alex Jennings.

Ian Fleming's greatest creation, James Bond, has had an enormous and ongoing impact on our culture, but Fleming was

only a thriller writer in his last twelve years. Fleming's personal life and impressive career in Naval Intelligence put him at the heart of critical movements in world history, whilst providing rich inspiration for his fiction. Exceptionally well connected, and widely travelled, from the US and Soviet Russia to his beloved Jamaica, Ian had access to the most powerful political figures at a time of profound change. Nicholas Shakespeare's fascinating biography, with unprecedented access to the Fleming family papers, uncovers new material and throws new light on an extraordinary man. Ian Fleming would strive all his life to throw off the shadows of his gifted older brother, and be a complete man, but ultimately was then overshadowed by his own famous creation.

Abridger - Rowan Routh  
Producer - Pauline Harris

**MON 10:00 Woman's Hour (m001tq8f)**  
The Queen of the Brassicas - the Brussels sprout!

Our Christmas Day special programme is devoted to the Brussels sprout, with some incredible women for whom they're playing a key role in their working lives. As a nation we eat more sprouts than any other country in Europe but it's a vegetable that, like marmite, divides opinion. Originally from the Middle East, they came to Europe as an export of the Roman Empire. We hear how they became known as Brussels sprouts with the head of the Royal Horticultural Society Clare Matterson and the food historian Dr Sue Bailey. Plant pathologist Dr Lauren Chappell and the brassica research expert Dr Rachel Wells explain how sprouts are being engineered to taste sweeter and withstand climate change. Nutritionist Charlotte Hunter says the phytoestrogens in these mini cabbages mean women should be eating more of them. And for ideas about how to cook your sprouts, chef and broadcaster Andi Oliver and her daughter Miquita are on hand, as well as the chef Rosalind Rathouse.

Presenter: Anita Rani  
Producer: Lisa Jenkinson  
Studio Manager Neva Missirian

**MON 11:00 The Infinite Monkey Cage (p0gr7pqp)**  
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:15 on Saturday]

**MON 12:00 News Summary (m001tq92)**  
The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

**MON 12:04 Pick of the Year (m001tq9j)**  
Pick of the Year 2023

Picking out the best bits of radio from 2023 from across the BBC is quite a challenge... but Rachel Burden and Jon Kay have stepped up to the plate. From hours and hours of fantastic content, they've chosen some outstanding moments. From the joy of the Proms and I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue, to the brilliance of The Skewer and Andy Zaltzman on The News Quiz. There are touching moments from Adrian Edmondson's Desert Island Discs, and Nicholas & Jonathan Dimpleby's affecting series The Bright Side Of Life. Andrew Malkinson's stand-out interview on the Today programme to the impeccable coverage of the King's Coronation.

Join us for all this - and so much more - from an unforgettable year of broadcasting.

Presenters: Rachel Burden & Jon Kay  
Producer: Elizabeth Foster  
Production Co-ordinator: Lydia Depledge-Miller

**MON 12:57 Weather (m001tq9x)**  
The latest weather forecast

**MON 13:00 News (m001v0y0)**  
The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4

**MON 13:15 Counterpoint (m001tqbb)**  
Series 37

Heat 3, 2023-4

(3/13)  
Whether it's Duke Ellington playing Jingle Bells, or Boney M with Mary's Boy Child, the competitors in this week's edition of the quiz can count on there being a Christmas flavour to the clips and questions. Paul Gambaccini hosts the wide-ranging music contest from London's Radio Theatre.

Taking part are:  
Farrar Hornby from London  
Vicky Johnson from Nottingham

Karen Rasmussen from London

They'll have to show the breadth of their knowledge of music, as well as choosing a special topic on which to answer their own individual questions in the second round, with no prior warning of what the categories are going to be. The questions cover all genres and eras, and the competitors can't always count on being in their comfort zone.

Assistant Producer: Stephen Garner  
Producer: Paul Bajoria

**MON 13:45 Mythical Creatures (m001tqbv)**  
6. Hobs

Fantasy writer Rhianna Pratchett takes us across an enchanted British Isles to discover mythical creatures that lurk in all corners of the land. She uncovers what they can tell us about our history, our world and our lives today.

Not all mythical creatures are found in the wilds of our landscape. Rhianna discovers there could be magical beings with us in our homes. She hears tales of helpful hobs in the North York Moors – small hairy creatures that do your chores while you're asleep. Like many other friendly household spirits they can be useful but also temperamental. You need to stay on the right side of your hob! Rhianna, keen for some help around the house, takes notes on how to keep your hob happy, and what happens when it's not. She also explores what stories of hobs and other household spirits can tell us about our lives past and present.

Storyteller: Rosie Barrett  
Other Contributors: Bob Fischer, Mark Norman, Natalie Lawrence

Presenter: Rhianna Pratchett  
Producers: Lorna Skingley and Sarah Harrison  
Executive Producer: Mel Harris  
Production Manager: Nikki Cannon  
Original Music by Ben MacDougall  
Sound Design and Mixing: John Scott

A 7digital production for BBC Radio 4

**MON 14:00 The Archers (m001tq35)**  
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Sunday]

**MON 14:15 Drama on 4 (m000qjdx)**  
Christmas by the Lake

Walter is 68 and Mary is 64. He is full of madcap ideas, she resists change. The only thing they have in common is they both hate Christmas.

A story with a twist on the Christmas theme and it's classic Rachel Joyce territory – relationships, loss and ordinary people doing extraordinary things.

Mary ..... Niamh Cusack  
Walter ..... Robert Lindsay  
Helen ..... Cecilia Appiah

Directed by Tracey Neale

It is in the park that Mary first spots Walter. He's drowning in the Lake and she calls for help. When she returns a few days later, Walter is there and berates her for interfering - all he was trying to do was learn to swim. It's a bad beginning but then their conversation begins ...

Mary is played by Niamh Cusack. Her television work includes Heartbeat, Father Brown and The Virtues. Her film credits include In Love with Alma Cogan. Niamh played Lady Macbeth for the RSC and most recently Lenu in the National Theatre's production of My Brilliant Friend.

Walter is played by award winning actor, Robert Lindsay. His theatre work covers many roles for the RSC and musical theatre too. This includes Me and My Girl in which he played the lead role on both the West End and Broadway stage. His television work includes My Family, Citizen Smith and G.B.H. His most recent film role was playing King John in Maleficent 2.

The award winning novelist Rachel Joyce had her sixth novel published earlier this year - Miss Benson's Beetle. Her first novel - The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry - began its life as a radio drama and was called To Be A Pilgrim. It won the Peter Timmiswood Award for Best Radio Drama. Her other novels include Perfect and The Music Shop. The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry and The Music Shop are now in development with Netflix.

**MON 15:00 HM The King (m001tqc7)**  
The King's Christmas message to the Commonwealth and the nation, followed by the national anthem.

**MON 15:05 News Summary (m001tqcp)**  
National and international news from BBC Radio 4

**MON 15:15 With Great Pleasure (m001tqcy)**  
Ruth Jones shares the poems and stories that have meant the most in her life as a writer and actress, for our festive delight.

The co-creator of the hugely-loved sit-com Gavin and Stacey shares some of her early comic inspirations as well as memories of growing up in Wales. Recorded in the BBC Radio Theatre, her readers are Steve Speirs and Yasmine Akram, with music from English folk musicians Kate Rusby and Damien O'Kane.

Readings include  
A Child's Christmas in Wales by Dylan Thomas  
Oh I Wish I'd Looked After Me Teeth by Pam Ayres  
David Copperfield by Charles Dickens  
At Seventeen by Janis Ian  
Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte  
The Mayor of Casterbridge by Thomas Hardy  
Ernie the Fastest Milkman in the West by Benny Hill  
A Prayer for the Hesitant by Henry Normal  
Oh What a Piece of Work is a Man, from Hamlet by William Shakespeare  
Sosban Fach by Talog Williams  
The Reverend Eli Jenkins prayer/Sunset Poem from Under Milk Wood by Dylan Thomas

Music includes  
Porthcawl by Chartered Hurricane  
The Rocking Carol by Kate Rusby & Damien O'Kane  
A Yorkshire Merry Christmas by Kate Rusby & Damien O'Kane  
Caledonia by Dougie MacLean

Producer...Mary Ward-Lowery

**MON 16:00 Drama on 4 (m001tqd6)**  
Christmas Miracle on Brighton Pier

Tim McInnerny, Mark Benton, Paul Ready and Emma Cunniffe star in Jonathan Holloway's homage to Philip Van Doren Stern's short story, The Greatest Gift, which became the basis for Frank Capra's award-winning movie, It's a Wonderful Life.

It's Christmas Eve and The Boss - father of all angels - has gathered together his flock in heaven. They are remembering the year 2023, known as the Year of the Dying Ley Lines, when the fate of humankind and Earth depended upon Eustace, an undistinguished angel on his last day of service.

His final task was to save William McFadden who, on Christmas Eve at the crack of dawn in Brighton, had stood on a Ley Line and decided he no longer wanted to live.

Only by convincing William that his life was worth living could these vital ancient powers be restored.

The past, present and alternate futures collide in this magical drama.

Cast:  
The Boss - Tim McInnerny  
Eustace - Mark Benton  
William McFadden - Paul Ready  
Ellen - Emma Cunniffe  
Bob - Ben Crowe  
All other parts were played by members of the cast.

Producer: Karen Rose  
Sound design: David Thomas  
Production coordinator: Sarah Tombling  
Executive producer: Rosalind Ward

Recorded on location in Brighton and Hove

A Sweet Talk production for BBC Radio 4

**MON 17:00 Open Book (m001tqdj)**  
The Year in Fiction

2023 has been a great year for fiction, and in this programme, Chris Power looks back at some of Open Book's highlights, including interviews with Zadie Smith, Bret Easton Ellis, Eleanor Catton and Richard Ford.

They reflect on their literary influences and the echoes of the past which help them write their way into the future.

Book List – Monday 25 December and Thursday 28 December

The Shards by Bret Easton Ellis  
Lunar Park by Bret Easton Ellis  
The World and All That It Holds by Aleksandar Hemon  
Birmingham Wood by Eleanor Catton  
Julia by Sandra Newman



The Future by Naomi Alderman  
 The Future Future by Adam Thirlwell  
 Macbeth by William Shakespeare  
 Nineteen Eighty-Four by George Orwell  
 The Fraud by Zadie Smith  
 Be Mine by Richard Ford  
 Watch Us Dance by Leila Slimani  
 Great Expectations by Charles Dickens  
 Fates and Furies by Lauren Groff  
 The Mill on the Floss by George Eliot  
 Lost Illusions by Honoré de Balzac

**MON 17:28 Seven Deadly Psychologies (m001tggm)**  
 Gluttony

Becky Ripley and Sophie Ward take a cold hard look at the psychology behind each of the seven deadly sins, in the order established by Pope Gregory the Great: pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath, and lazy old sloth. Why have we evolved these ugly emotions? What's going on in the brain and the body when we feel them? And how best can we live alongside them - in ourselves and with others?

Gluttony is on the menu today. On one hand, the odd bit of indulgence isn't such a bad thing. Eat, drink, and be merry. But sometimes we overdo it. We crave, we binge, we short circuit our dopamine reward systems, and before we know it, we can't stop.

But why do we crave? Can we control our cravings? And when does a little bit of binging become too much?

To guide us through this mess is evolutionary anthropologist Dr Anna Machin from the Department of Experimental Psychology at the University of Oxford, food writer Mark Schatzker, author of 'Steak', 'The Dorito Effect' and 'The End of Craving!', Dr Andrew Moynihan from the Department of Psychology at the University of Limerick, and writer AK Blakemore, author of 'The Glutton'.

Producer: Becky Ripley

**MON 18:00 Six O'Clock News (m001tqdv)**  
 The early evening national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

**MON 18:15 The Wombles (m001tqf3)**  
 Episode 1: Bungo

The Wombles live under Wimbledon Common, and it is their special responsibility to 'tidy up' everything that untidy human beings leave behind.

Radio 4 and BBC Sounds celebrate these much loved classic characters, marking 50 years since The Wombles first appeared on the BBC.

This joyful festive listen is based on the original books by Elisabeth Beresford, performed by Richard E Grant, directed by Johnny Vegas and nestled in a new soundscape for Christmas 2023.

Full of fun and warmth, with an underpinning environmental message - this is novelty and nostalgia combined and a gift of Christmas comfort-listening for all to enjoy.

Episode 1: 'Bungo'  
 We are introduced to the Wombles' burrow underneath Wimbledon Common. Young Bungo has just chosen his name from Great Uncle Bulgaria's atlas and is ready to become a Womble of the World as he embarks on his first day of work, tidying the Common.

Cast and Credits:  
 Performed by..... Richard E Grant  
 Written by..... Elisabeth Beresford  
 Abridged by..... Sally Harrison and Susan Vale  
 Script Consultant..... Kate Robertson  
 With thanks to..... Marcus Robertson

Music: The Wombling Song, composed and recorded by Mike Batt

Produced by..... Sally Harrison  
 Sound Engineer..... Wilfredo Acosta  
 Sound Designer..... Alisdair McGregor  
 Directed by..... Johnny Vegas

A Woolyback Productions and Mrs Mellor's Cellar collaboration for BBC Radio 4 and BBC Sounds

**MON 18:30 It's a Fair Cop (m001tqfj)**  
 Christmas Special

Copper turned comic Alfie Moore takes an audience through

real-life crime scenarios. The topic, crime at Christmas. What's it like to be a bobby on the beat in the festive season?

This merry jaunt introduces us to a fun cavalcade of Christmas characters, including a gas station Grinch, an inebriated Mary and Joseph, and a Christmas Eve saviour...

Written and presented by Alfie Moore  
 Script Editor: Will Ing  
 Production Co-ordinator: Becky Carewe-Jeffries  
 Producer: Sam Holmes

A BBC Studios Production

**MON 19:00 The Archers (m001tqdk)**

Paul, Lily and Denise are preparing Christmas lunch at The Stables, when Josh texts Paul saying the oven at Brookfield has packed up. They agree the only course of action is to squeeze the Brookfield Archers in with them for lunch. Later, Ruth has joined them in the kitchen, while Lily sees to the drinks. She reports on how well David, Joy, Jill, Stella, Ben, Pip, Rosie, Leonard and John, Denise's husband, are getting on. Then Alistair calls Paul - he's got to perform an emergency operation on a dog. Denise offers to help him, even if it means missing the meal and leaving Lily to finish making the gravy.

In a field in Ambridge Chris and Alice have introduced Martha to Champion, the Shetland pony. Alice can't help criticising Chris for buying Martha such a big present without mentioning it to her. She doesn't know what's going on in Chris's head. Chris apologises for keeping it a secret, before Alice softens a little, agreeing that Champion is an amazing present. It just threw her, that's all.

Post-prandial Paul, Ruth and Lily reflect on a very successful meal. But now it's the others' turn to do the clearing up, while they collapse in an overfed heap. Post-op Alistair tells Denise to get back to The Stables, but she insists on staying. They pull a cracker together before Denise reveals that she and John are now living very separate lives. Alistair says Denise looks beautiful in her paper hat, only for oblivious Paul to interrupt, saying they've missed a fabulous Christmas Day.

**MON 19:15 This Cultural Life (m001kppn)**  
 Margaret Atwood

Margaret Atwood talks to John Wilson about the formative influences and experiences that shaped her writing. One of the world's bestselling and critically acclaimed authors, Atwood has published over 60 books including novels, short stories, children's fiction, non-fiction and poetry. She's known for stories of human struggle against oppression and brutality, most famously her 1985 novel The Handmaid's Tale, a dystopian vision of America in which women are enslaved. She has twice won the Booker Prize For Fiction, in 2000 for The Blind Assassin and again in 2019 for her sequel to The Handmaid's Tale, The Testaments.

Growing up in remote Canadian woodland with her scientist parents, she traces her career as a story-teller back to sagas that she invented with her older brother as a child, and her first 'novel' written when she was seven. She recalls an opera about fabrics that she wrote and performed at high school for a home economics project, and how she staged puppet shows for children's parties. Margaret Atwood also discusses the huge impact that reading George Orwell had on her, and how his novel Nineteen Eighty-Four especially influenced The Handmaid's Tale. She reveals how that novel - written whilst she was living in Berlin in 1985 - was initially conceived after the 1980 election of President Ronald Reagan and the resurgence of evangelical right-wing politics in America.

Producer: Edwina Pitman

**MON 20:00 You're Dead to Me (p0gnwlmj)**  
 Medieval Ghost Stories

Greg Jenner is joined by Dr Michael Carter and actor Mathew Baynton to learn all about ghost stories in the European Middle Ages. From the twelfth century onwards, medieval Europe produced a huge number of ghost stories, often written in monasteries. But why were monks so interested in ghosts? How were ghost stories related to wider Christian beliefs about death and the afterlife? And what happened to these beliefs with the arrival of the Protestant Reformation? From creepy child ghosts to friendly apparitions via the fires of purgatory, this is a glimpse into the strange, spooky and sometimes sinister side of medieval beliefs.

Research by: Emmie Rose Price-Goodfellow and Jon Mason  
 Written by: Emmie Rose Price-Goodfellow, Emma Nagouse and Greg Jenner  
 Produced by: Emmie Rose Price-Goodfellow and Greg Jenner  
 Audio Producer: Steve Hankey  
 Production Coordinator: Caitlin Hobbs

Senior Producer: Emma Nagouse  
 Executive Editor: Chris Ledgard

**MON 21:00 The Food Programme (m001tq0k)**  
 [Repeat of broadcast at 12:32 on Sunday]

**MON 21:30 The Tim Vine Chat Show (m0001qw7)**  
 Christmas Special 2018

Tim Vine hears the Christmas stories of the British public.

And he offers up a sack full of seasonal one-liners, definitely not traditional songs and fiendishly silly seasonal games.

Featuring a seasonal lawn-mowing song and a man who lost his Christmas dinner.

Producer: Richard Morris

A BBC Studios production for BBC Radio 4, first broadcast in December 2018.

**MON 22:00 Uncanny (m001tqgh)**  
 Series 3

S3 Christmas Special: The Haunting of Daisy May Cooper

Daisy May Cooper believes her house is haunted. Three years ago, the award-winning actress and writer moved to a new-build house in the Cotswolds, but within weeks odd events start to trouble Daisy and her family: phantom footsteps, objects moving by themselves and ghostly apparitions. Now she's called on the help of Danny to investigate. Will he survive the night in Daisy's haunted house?

Written and presented by Danny Robins  
 Editing and sound design: Charlie Brandon-King  
 Music: Evelyn Sykes  
 Theme music by Lanterns on the Lake  
 Produced by Danny Robins and Simon Barnard

A Baffleleg and Uncanny Media production for BBC Radio 4

**MON 22:45 The Other Side of Christmas (m001tqgz)**  
 On Christmas Day in The Morning (Part 1)

A selection of classic English stories begins with a tale by Margery Allingham, one of the queens of the Golden Age of Detective fiction, featuring her much loved sleuth, Campion. This is the first of two parts.

Later in the series, Mackenzie Crook reads a comic tale from his favourite author Thomas Hardy, in which a group of villagers on their return from market, reminisce about Christmases past.

Then it's back to the early 20th century with a couple of short pieces from Hector Hugh Munro, better known as Saki, whose skill for skewering the manners and pretensions of the upper classes is turned on the business of giving and receiving Christmas presents.

To conclude the series, another wintry mystery - The Lion's Tooth by Edmund Crispin finds the author's amateur detective, Fen, assisting a convent in finding a young victim of kidnap.

On Christmas Day in the Morning by Margery Allingham  
 Read by Celia Imrie  
 Abridged and produced by Jill Waters  
 A Waters Company production for BBC Radio 4

**MON 23:00 Loose Ends (m001tqhy)**  
 Loose Ends Lounge: Suzanne Vega, Carminho, Joesef, Ondara, Sacha T, Romeo Stodart plus many more

Clive Anderson with the first of two programmes showcasing some of the best music performances on Loose Ends this year, including Suzanne Vega, Carminho, Joesef, Rae Morris, Ondara, Romeo Stodart and Sacha T.

**TUESDAY 26 DECEMBER 2023**

**TUE 00:00 Midnight News (m001tqjd)**  
 The latest news and weather forecast from BBC Radio 4.

**TUE 00:15 Christmas Meditation - Hope for Heavenly Peace (m001tqjx)**  
 Angela Berners-Wilson was the first female Church of England priest ordained in 1994. She was one of thirty two women at the first Ordination of Women in the Church of England. 2024 marks 30 years since she became a priest. In her retirement,

Angela has taken on a new role as a spiritual tour guide and this Christmas she will be away in Austria on the Eve of Christmas Eve - in Obendorf, the village where Silent Night was first performed on Christmas Eve 1818. Angela will explore the spirit and spirituality of Christmas with Christmas music, reflection and poetry.

Producer: Carmel Lonergan  
Editor: Tim Pemberton

**TUE 00:30 The Haunting (m001d51j)**  
Series 4

WordHell

Travel through the bad gateway in this modern ghost story as Tom Neenan discovers what horrors lurk in our apps and gadgets. In this episode a simple wordgame turns N\*STY.

Modern technology is terrifying. The average smartphone carries out three-point-three-six billion instructions per second. The average person can only carry out one instruction in that time. Stop and think about that for a second. Sorry, that's two instructions - you won't be able to do that.

But what if modern technology was... literally terrifying? What if there really was a ghost in the machine?

Starring:  
Tom - Tom Neenan  
Heidi - Jenny Bede  
Ken - Steve Brody

Written by Tom Neenan

Produced and directed by David Tyler

A Pozzitive production for BBC Radio 4

**TUE 00:48 Shipping Forecast (m001tqkh)**  
The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping

**TUE 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (m001tql0)**  
World Service

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

**TUE 05:20 Shipping Forecast (m001tqlh)**  
The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping

**TUE 05:30 News Briefing (m001tqm1)**  
National and international news from BBC Radio 4

**TUE 05:43 Prayer for the Day (m001tqmh)**  
A spiritual comment and prayer to begin the day with Cardinal Vincent Nichols

On the Feast of Stephen

Good Morning, It's Boxing Day and that name comes from the custom of opening the Christmas boxes when the heavy work was done. On this day there was time to pause and appreciate more clearly the goodness of gifts and the small wonders of life, even in the most pressing circumstances.

Today is the Feast of Stephen, generously observed so the carol tells us by Good King Wenceslas. St Stephen was the first person to die a martyr's death for his faithfulness to Jesus. As he died he made two remarkable statements.

First he said, 'I can see the heavens opened!' That was the great gift he received, his Boxing Day moment. For at that point Stephen knew for sure that death is not a trapdoor that we have to enter and through which we plunge into oblivion. No! What was shown to him was that death is but a step towards a longed-for fulfilment. The heavens were opened and were waiting for him. And that's a gift worth having!

Then Stephen said: 'Father, forgive them'. Oh, another great gift!

The capacity to forgive comes with seeing that this life is not the whole story, that there is something more to come. In the perspective of eternity the trials of this life acquire a new quality, rather as a bare tree, when seen against the bright blue of a winter's sky, takes on a beauty that is new and unexpected. What seemed stark and dead is redeemed. It fills us with unexpected wonder.

May the coming of Jesus enrich this Boxing Day. May we receive in abundance his gifts of lasting hope and forgiveness.

Amen.

**TUE 05:45 Farming Today (m001tqn5)**  
Saving the rainforest is great in principle - but what if to do it, you face driving a 10-mile road through the very forest you're trying to save? That was the dilemma facing conservationists at Loch Arkraig in the West Highlands, who wanted to extract non-native trees planted 70 years ago. However, with a bit of thinking outside the box and some canny engineering skills they built a very special barge to ship out the lumber and leave the forest undisturbed. Richard Baynes took a trip on it to find out more.  
Produced and presented by Richard Baynes

**TUE 05:58 Tweet of the Day (b03k5c63)**  
Snow Bunting

Tweet of the Day is a series of fascinating stories about our British birds inspired by their calls and songs.

David Attenborough presents the snow bunting. The ornithologist and author, Desmond Nethersole-Thompson, described the snow bunting as 'possibly the most romantic and elusive bird in the British Isles'. When you disturb a flock of what seem to be brownish birds, they explode into a blizzard of white-winged buntings, calling softly as they swirl around the winter strandline.

**TUE 06:00 Today (m001tq8r)**  
Writer Hanif Kureishi guest edits Today

A year ago, award-winning author and screenwriter Hanif Kureishi sustained life changing injuries after a fall in Rome. Since then he has documented his experiences in a blog.

His guest edited edition of Today broadcast exactly a year after his accident explores the impact his injuries have had on his relationships and how his approach to writing has had to change. He chose to do many of the interviews himself, whilst still being treated at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital.

**TUE 09:00 Life Changing (m001tq94)**  
Harriet: what happened next

In this special edition of Life Changing, recorded in front of a live audience at the Hay Festival, we are catching up with Harriet Ware-Austin, who was a guest on the programme in 2021.

Harriet had a difficult but important story to tell, concerning the deaths of her two sisters in a plane crash in Addis Ababa in April 1972. Harriet was only eight at the time and witnessed the event. Almost 50 years on, Harriet joined us to talk about the profound and long-lasting effects it had on her family. She also wanted to see if there was anyone else out there who had a connection to East African Airways Flight 720, but was totally unprepared for the extraordinary response her interview received.

Two years later, this is the story of what happened after that interview and how it has been life-changing all over again.

You can hear Harriet's original interview here:  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000v8w8>

**TUE 09:45 Ian Fleming: The Complete Man by Nicholas Shakespeare (m001trty)**  
Episode 2. A Secret Service - The War Years.

Today's episode explores Fleming's important and vital work in Naval Intelligence, heading a top secret unit "30 A-U...stands for Number Thirty Assault Unit... basically, the unit's job is to seize enemy equipment, ciphers, scientific know-how before such material can be destroyed". Ian's covert intelligence-gathering unit would grow from twenty-four men in 1942, to 450 in 1945.

Alex Jennings reads.

Abridger - Rowan Routh  
Producer - Pauline Harris

Ian Fleming's greatest creation, James Bond, has had an enormous and ongoing impact on our culture, but Fleming was only a thriller writer in his last twelve years. Fleming's personal life and impressive career in Naval Intelligence put him at the heart of critical movements in world history, whilst providing rich inspiration for his fiction. Exceptionally well connected, and widely travelled, from the US and Soviet Russia to his beloved Jamaica, Ian had access to the most powerful political figures at a time of profound change. Nicholas Shakespeare's fascinating biography, with unprecedented access to the Fleming family papers, uncovers new material and throws new light on an extraordinary man. Ian Fleming would strive all his

life to throw off the shadows of his gifted older brother, and be a complete man, but ultimately was then overshadowed by his own famous creation.

**TUE 10:00 Woman's Hour (m001tq9z)**  
Women who dig for the truth

A special Woman's Hour episode all about women who dig for the truth.

Marianne Asher-Chapman from Holts Summit, Missouri has been searching for her daughter, Angie Yarnell, for more than 20 years now. Angie went missing in 2003. Her husband, Michael pled guilty to involuntary manslaughter in 2009. He was released in 2013. He has so far refused to tell Marianne or the authorities where he buried Angie - and Marianne has been unable to find her - despite physically digging in the property where she thinks her daughter may have been buried. She joins Nuala to discuss what she's done to find her daughter and how she's now helping other families with missing relatives.

Terri Lyne Carrington, a multi-Grammy-winning drummer and jazz artist, saw a distinct lack of songs by female composers being learned by jazz musicians - and decided to fix it. As a 'gender justice advocate' she decided to create a project, the New Standards: 101 Lead Sheets By Women Composers, and an accompanying album which won a Grammy, to shine a light on female jazz composers. She joins Nuala to discuss the project and jazz and gender justice on our special programme about women digging for the truth.

Many of us have stayed up late, spending the night scrolling through the internet, looking for clues or information we might be on the hunt for. But have you ever felt like you need help to find out something? Someone to confirm your worst fears or set you free? Alison Harris is a private investigator and began her career in investigations later in life. She speaks to Nuala about how being a PI isn't always the glamorous job we imagine - and what it's like to find the truth for people.

In 2018, Helen McLaughlin and Karen Whitehouse got married in Amsterdam - but they had their day forever changed in their memories, after someone defecated on the floor of a toilet cubicle in the ladies' bathroom. They enlisted the help of their friend, 'Detective' Lauren Kirby to find out who did it - and why. Karen Whitehouse, one of the brides, and 'Detective' Lauren join Nuala to talk about their unusual investigation - and why they couldn't let it go.

A name you may be familiar with when it comes to the search for the truth is historian, Philippa Langley. Known now by many as the woman who found King Richard III underneath a car park in Leicester, she's turned her attention to his nephews, the missing Princes, who for centuries have been said to have been murdered by their uncle, King Richard, after he took the throne. Her new research suggests otherwise - and she joins Nuala to talk all about the search for the truth and what it means to her.

**TUE 11:00 Seven Deadly Psychologies (m001tqbf)**  
Wrath

Becky Ripley and Sophie Ward take a cold hard look at the psychology behind each of the seven deadly sins, in the order established by Pope Gregory the Great: pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath, and lazy old sloth. Why have we evolved these emotions? What's going on in the brain and the body when we feel them? And how best can we live alongside them - in ourselves and with others?

Wrath is today's hot topic, and things can get pretty ugly when our blood starts to boil. Some of us are quick to flip, some of us brood, and some of us push down our anger. But ultimately anger is a motivator; a driver for change in the face of a perceived injustice. The question is, how are you going to act on it? For bad? Or for good?

To guide us through this mess is evolutionary anthropologist Dr Anna Machin from the Department of Experimental Psychology at the University of Oxford, psychology professor Dr Ryan Martin (aka "The Anger Professor"), multidisciplinary artist and former Children's Laureate of Wales, Connor Allen, and Jake Hall from the Destroy'd Rage Rooms.

Producer: Becky Ripley

**TUE 11:30 Hotel Room Art (m001tqbs)**

The inside story of art in hotel rooms - and why hoteliers think it's so important to get it right. Ian McMillan has always been fascinated by the artworks he finds on his travels. Here he encounters mass produced flowers, abstract excitement and ancient artefacts. In three very different hotel bedrooms he meets curators, designers and artists - but most importantly he meets the art, and asks why we have 'art' hotels.

**TUE 12:00 News Summary (m001trv0)**

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

**TUE 12:04 Archive on 4 (m001s52d)**

Joni Mitchell: Verbatim

As part of the celebrations for Joni Mitchell's 80th birthday, this programme describes the legendary singer/songwriter's life and career - in her own words.

Over a singular career that has spanned many different cultural eras, Joni Mitchell has explored in public, to an almost unprecedented degree, exactly what it means to be female and free, in full acknowledgement of all its injustice and joy.

And there are two major physically and emotionally charged life changing events that defined Joni's artistic development and deeply influenced her creative output - a severe bout of polio as a child and an unwanted pregnancy as a teenager, which forced Joni to support her and her baby as a destitute single mother. Fearing her inability to cope, Joni gave the baby up for adoption.

The lessons learned from dealing with these traumas have shaped every personal and professional decision Joni has ever made, recalling them as transformative, character-building episodes that caused her to develop self-reliance and a slow, almost meditative way of being in the world.

With the same determination Joni used to prove to doctors that she would walk again, she set about proving that a woman could make it in the patriarchal world of folk music and very quickly blazed a trail as a fiercely independent spirit through one of the most exciting and influential periods in modern music, producing a catalogue of deeply influential albums.

As her success grew, so did her strength and, as we'll hear, Joni remains defiant and determined. She suffered a brain aneurism in 2015 and, summoning the same spirit that enabled her to survive polio and walk again as a child, Joni has been slowly re-building her life and recently played her first live concert in over 25 years.

A Zinc Media production for BBC Radio 4

**TUE 12:57 Weather (m001tqcs)**

The latest weather forecast

**TUE 13:00 World at One (m001tqd1)**

Forty-five minutes of news, analysis and comment.

**TUE 13:45 Mythical Creatures (m001tqd9)**

7. Giants

Fantasy writer Rhianna Pratchett takes us across an enchanted British Isles to discover mythical creatures that lurk in all corners of the land. She uncovers what they can tell us about our history, our world and our lives today.

As a child Rhianna was told of sleeping giants on the hilltops near her grandparents' house in Wales. Now she returns to the Welsh mountains and to Cader Idris – a striking mountain in the Eryri National Park – to meet a particularly intriguing giant. Rhianna discovers why giants have been important to humans for centuries. She explores what they can reveal about ourselves and our landscape, and what giant tales might offer us in the present day.

Storyteller: Peter Stevenson

Other Contributors: Erin Kavanagh, Dr Mary Bateman

Presenter: Rhianna Pratchett

Producers: Lorna Skingley and Sarah Harrison

Executive Producer: Mel Harris

Production Manager: Nikki Cannon

Original Music by Ben MacDougall

Sound Design and Mixing: John Scott

A 7digital production for BBC Radio 4

**TUE 14:00 The Archers (m001tqdk)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Monday]

**TUE 14:15 Drama on 4 (m001tqdy)**

A Single Act

by A.L. Kennedy

Simon Pratt ..... Bill Nighy

Joyce Zani ..... Amelia Bullmore

Ben Vane ..... Sebastian Croft

Directed by Sally Avens

Celebrating 100 years of Radio Drama, A.L. Kennedy's play is an homage to the inventiveness of radio and the world of sounds.

Simon Pratt has always wanted to be part of a double act but he has ended up a single man. Now his damaged grandson needs Simon but he can't seem to connect with him nor his neighbour Joyce, with whom he has had an aborted affair. Could the magic of conjuring laughter out of sounds be the key to a happier life for all three of them?

Bill Nighy is an academy award nominee for the film Living, he appears regularly on Radio 4 in the titular role of Charles Paris. Amelia Bullmore is an actress and playwright. She has appeared in Coronation Street, I'm Alan Partridge and Scott and Bailey. Sebastian Croft has appeared in Game of Thrones, Horrible Histories - the Movie and Heartstopper

A.L. Kennedy is an award winning novelist. She also writes for stage, screen and radio and performs occasionally as a stand up comic.

**TUE 15:00 The Kitchen Cabinet (m001tpw4)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 10:30 on Saturday]

**TUE 15:30 Doctor, Doctor (m001tqf6)**

Psychiatrist, comedian and author Dr Benji Waterhouse

Doctor Doctor reveals the stress, excitement and challenges facing a 21st Century medic. These are life-affirming stories of highs and lows, of commitment, bravery, skill, heartache and love.

Dr Phil Hammond dissects the medical lives of professionals at all levels of the health service - surgeons, intensive care nurses, NHS executives, junior doctors, psychiatrists - fascinating jobs, the titles of which we know very well, but our understanding of which may be lacking.

In this episode, Dr Phil discusses mental health issues and their treatment with psychiatrist, author and comedian Dr Benji Waterhouse.

Details of support with mental health and self-harm are available at [bbc.co.uk/actionline](http://bbc.co.uk/actionline).

Producer: David Morley

Original Music by Chris O'Shaughnessy

A Perfectly Normal production for BBC Radio 4

**TUE 16:00 How to Play (m001tq78)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 08:30 on Monday]

**TUE 16:30 Great Lives (m001tqfg)**

Eartha Kitt proposed by Faye Tozer

Eartha Kitt was born in South Carolina in 1927. She had a tough upbringing but found her talent whilst in theatre school in New York. She became a star of stage and then screen, most notably as Catwoman in the series 'Batman'. She upset President Johnson's wife with her comments about the Vietnam War. Her sultry cabaret performances and trademark growl were celebrated. She would play-up to her image as a lover of men but lived much of her life alone, and she worked tirelessly until the end. Her best-known songs are 'Old Fashioned Girl', 'C'est si bon', 'Uska Dara' and the Christmas standard 'Santa Baby'.

Singer, dancer and actor Faye Tozer met Eartha Kitt on the set of a TV show. Kitt wrapped her leg around the door frame of the dressing room and purred "Hello darlings" to Faye and her Steps bandmates. It was Faye's Mum who introduced her to Eartha's music and together they listened to hits like 'Old Fashioned Girl' and 'The Day That the Circus Left Town' with Faye soon learning how to do Eartha's trademark growl.

Presenter: Matthew Parris

Guest: Faye Tozer

Expert: John L. Williams, author of 'America's Mistress: Eartha Kitt, Her Life and Times'

Producer: Toby Field for BBC Audio in Bristol.

**TUE 17:00 PM (m001tqft)**

Afternoon news and current affairs programme, reporting on breaking stories and summing up the day's headlines

**TUE 18:00 Six O'Clock News (m001tqgm)**

But the head of the Israeli forces warned the war will go on for months

**TUE 18:15 The Wombles (m001tqh5)**

Episode 2: The Christmas Party and Mr D Smith

The Wombles live under Wimbledon Common, and it is their special responsibility to 'tidy up' everything that untidy human beings leave behind.

Radio 4 and BBC Sounds celebrate these much loved classic characters, marking 50 years since The Wombles first appeared on the BBC.

This joyful festive listen is based on the original books by Elisabeth Beresford, performed by Richard E Grant, directed by Johnny Vegas and nestled in a new soundscape for Christmas 2023.

Full of fun and warmth, with an underpinning environmental message - this is novelty and nostalgia combined and a gift of Christmas comfort-listening for all to enjoy.

Episode 2: The Christmas Party and Mr D Smith

The Wombles are feeling very festive, and in true Christmas spirit, Great Uncle Bulgaria invites an elderly gentleman to join in with celebrations in the burrow.

Cast and Credits:

Performed by..... Richard E Grant

Written by..... Elisabeth Beresford

Abridged by..... Sally Harrison and Susan Vale

Script Consultant..... Kate Robertson

With thanks to..... Marcus Robertson

Music: The Wombling Song, composed and recorded by Mike Batt

Produced by..... Sally Harrison

Sound Engineer..... Wilfredo Acosta

Sound Designer..... Alisdair McGregor

Directed by..... Johnny Vegas

A Woolyback Productions and Mrs Mellor's Cellar collaboration for BBC Radio 4 and BBC Sounds

**TUE 18:30 The Missing Hancocks (m0012p1b)**

Series 4

The Christmas Eve Party

The Missing Hancocks recreates those episodes of the classic Hancock's Half Hour that have been wiped or lost from the archive.

The first modern sitcom, Hancock's Half Hour made stars of Tony Hancock, Sid James and Kenneth Williams, and launched Ray Galton and Alan Simpson as one of the most successful comedy-writing partnerships in history. But 20 episodes of the show were missing from the BBC archives. Now, after four highly successful series, the final batch of those episodes have been lovingly re-recorded in front of a live audience at the BBC Radio Theatre.

Tonight's episode: When Hancock throws a noisy party his neighbours, full of the Christmas spirit, take him to court.

Written by Ray Galton and Alan Simpson, and with the classic score re-recorded by the BBC Concert Orchestra, the show stars Kevin McNally, Kevin Eldon, Simon Greenall, Robin Sebastian and Margaret Cabourn-Smith. The Christmas Eve Party was first broadcast on the 28th December, 1954.

Produced by Neil Pearson & Paul Sheehan.

Written by Ray Galton & Alan Simpson

Music recorded by the BBC Concert Orchestra, conducted by Levon Parikian.

A BBC Studios Production.

This programme was first broadcast in December 2021

**TUE 19:00 The Archers (m001tqhq)**

At Little Grange Emma's about to drive in to The Bull to work her Boxing Day shift. Despite Emma reassuring him Ed is upset that he couldn't afford bigger and better presents for everyone. Outside, a tree blows over in the wind, falling onto Emma's car and damaging it badly. Meanwhile at The Bull, Tracy tells Kenton how Jim ended up sharing his Christmas Day with the Horrobbins, after Alistair disappeared to operate on the dog. Lillian joins them, taking refuge from Justin, who is still not forgiven. Emma phones to let Kenton know she'll be late in because of her car. Kenton's sympathetic but testy Lillian isn't keen to crack the whip. Later, Lillian confides in Jolene how disappointed she was in Justin's response when she got back from James and Leonie's. Justin told her that his Christmas alone was pretty good. She admits hers was utterly miserable and she isn't speaking to Justin at all.

For Ed and Emma the damage to the car is potentially yet another financial blow. Ed then reveals his idea about becoming a tree surgeon. He thinks he'll be able to get a grant, but admits the costs would still come to seventeen grand on top. Emma says they'll talk later. Right now she's dreading the prospect of Lilian in a foul mood.

As predicted, Lilian is snippy with Emma, before she takes Tracy to task for not being smiley enough with the customers. Tracy and Emma commiserate with each other, before Tracy swears she'll get Lilian and Justin back together, for everyone's sake.

#### **TUE 19:15 This Cultural Life (m001m4dh)**

Nick Cave

Nick Cave, the Australian born singer-songwriter and author, reveals the formative influences and experiences that have inspired his own creativity. With his band The Bad Seeds, Cave is renowned for the darkness and drama of his narrative based work. His lyrics are often populated by flawed people doing bad things, but seeking redemption in love or God, or both. His musical output is diverse, ranging from rock'n'roll, to piano-based love songs. The tragic death of his 15 year old son Arthur in 2015 has informed recent work, with songs about devastating loss, grief and love explored throughout the albums *Ghosteen* and *Carnage*. Nick Cave has also written novels, poetry, a screenplay, and has recently published *Faith, Hope and Carnage* - a book exploring his ideas about creativity and belief.

Nick Cave talks to John Wilson about the influences of his father, an English teacher, and his mother, a school librarian, in encouraging his love of literature from a young age. He recalls seeing *The Johnny Cash Show* on television at the age of 10 and being spellbound by the country music star, with whom he later worked. He also remembers the life-changing effect of hearing Leonard Cohen's *Songs Of Life and Death* album for the first time, and the profound influence the Canadian poet and songwriter had on his own lyrics. He reveals that fellow Australian Barry Humphries was another artist who inspired his own work, having seen a *Dame Edna Everage* show in Melbourne in the early 1970s. Nick Cave also discusses the impact that the death of his son had on his life, work and marriage.

Producer: Edwina Pitman

#### **TUE 20:00 Incandescent: The Phoebus Cartel (m001tj9)**

A century ago, businessmen from around the world gathered in Geneva, Switzerland, to form a shadowy international organisation called the Phoebus Cartel. Their purpose? To control the production and distribution of lightbulbs across the world - and also, it's alleged, to deliberately shorten their lifespans to make them burn out quicker in order to sell more.

It's a manufacturing tactic called planned obsolescence and it's claimed the Phoebus Cartel invented it.

In this documentary, Shaun Keaveny goes in search of the mysterious Phoebus Cartel, a journey which takes him from the Industrial Midlands to Switzerland, a testing laboratory in Belgium, and the bizarre story of an immortal light bulb called Byron. Shaun investigates the rise of today's throwaway culture and looks at its enormous environmental impact, with millions of low-cost, poorly-made products ending up in landfill within a year of being bought.

Is this a legacy of the Phoebus Cartel? Where does the conspiracy theory end and reality begin?

Shaun also hears from the repairers, the activists, the campaigners and the designers who are fighting back against today's culture of accelerating obsolescence.

Featuring contributions from: Chris Setz and the team at Haringey Fixers, Helen Peavitt (Science Museum), Catherine Shanahan (Rugby Art Museum), Markus Krajewski (University of Basel), James Hooker (Head of Laboratories for international lighting company), Scott Butler (Material Focus), Jack Holloway (Product Designer), Tim Cooper (Nottingham University), Kate Raworth (Environmental Change Institute, Oxford University)

Readings... Joseph Millson  
Presenter... Shaun Keaveny  
Producer... Andrew Smith  
Executive Producer... Kris Dyer

A Rakkit production for BBC Radio 4

#### **TUE 20:40 In Touch (m001tj1t)**

The Blind Chocolatier

Stuart Hann is The Blind Chocolatier and he has a small shop in the Lake District.

Stuart worked as a pastry Chef before he was diagnosed with

Leber's Hereditary Optic Neuropathy in 2015. It is a rare eye condition that impacts his central vision. Stuart is now registered legally blind and uses various adaptations in his kitchen and shop to create a variety of artisan chocolates. Here at *In Touch* we love chocolate and so we couldn't resist paying him a visit to hear about his process and, most importantly, to sample some of his work.

Presenter: Peter White  
Producer: Beth Hemmings  
Production Coordinator: Liz Poole

Website image description: Peter White sits smiling in the centre of the image and he is wearing a dark green jumper. Above Peter's head is the BBC logo (three separate white squares house each of the three letters). Bottom centre and overlaying the image are the words "In Touch" and the Radio 4 logo (the word Radio in a bold white font, with the number 4 inside a white circle). The background is a bright mid-blue with two rectangles angled diagonally to the right. Both are behind Peter, one is a darker blue and the other is a lighter blue.

#### **TUE 21:00 With Great Pleasure (m001tqcy)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 15:15 on Monday]

#### **TUE 22:00 The World Tonight (m001tqkl)**

In depth reporting, intelligent analysis and breaking news from a global perspective

#### **TUE 22:45 The Other Side of Christmas (m001tq4)**

On Christmas Day in The Morning (Part 2)

A selection of classic English stories begins with a tale by Margery Allingham, one of the queens of the Golden Age of Detective fiction, featuring her much loved sleuth, *Campion*. This is the second of two parts.

Later in the series, Mackenzie Crook reads a comic tale from his favourite author Thomas Hardy, in which a group of villagers on their return from market, reminisce about Christmases past.

Then it's back to the early 20th century with a couple of short pieces from Hector Hugh Munro, better known as Saki, whose skill for skewering the manners and pretensions of the upper classes is turned on the business of giving and receiving Christmas presents.

To conclude the series, another wintry mystery - *The Lion's Tooth* by Edmund Crispin finds the author's amateur detective, Fen, assisting a convent in finding a young victim of kidnap.

On Christmas Day in the Morning by Margery Allingham

Abridged and produced by Jill Waters

Read by Celia Imrie

A Waters Company production for BBC Radio 4

#### **TUE 23:00 Now You're Asking with Marian Keyes and Tara Flynn (m001tqll)**

The Moving Problem

From broken bones to moving homes by way of orgasms (or the lack of) and a best friend who undermines your big day for their own ends - the depth and breadth of listener questions continues to amaze us. Marian and Tara unpick, unpack and address the issues from as many different angles as they can think of, calling on their own life experience to guide them. They may not have the answer to everything, but they'll do their best to find it.

Marian Keyes is a multi award-winning writer, with a total of over 30 million of her books sold to date in 33 languages. Her close friend Tara Flynn is an actress, comedian and writer. Together, these two friends have been through a lot, and now want to use their considerable life experience to help solve the biggest - and smallest - of things that keep us awake at night.

Previous series were welcomed by listeners and critics: "Both are warm and kind enough to not only be funny but also offer genuinely thoughtful, if left-field, advice." (Miranda Sawyer, *The Observer*) "Keyes and Flynn are my new favourite double-act." (Jane Anderson - *Radio Times*) "I found their compassion endlessly soothing." (Rachel Cunliffe - *The New Statesman*)

Recorded in Dublin with emails received from listeners around the world.

Got a problem you want Marian and Tara to solve? Email: [marianandtara@bbc.co.uk](mailto:marianandtara@bbc.co.uk).

Producer: Steve Doherty.

A Giddy Goat production for BBC Radio 4 and BBC Sounds

#### **TUE 23:30 My Dream Dinner Party (m001qxs0)**

Suggs's Dream Dinner Party

Singer-songwriter Suggs hosts a dinner party with a twist - all his guests are from beyond the grave, long-time heroes brought back to life by the wonders of the radio archive.

Suggs is joined by poet and broadcaster Sir John Betjeman, reggae legend Bob Marley, politician Tony Benn, and singer-songwriters Amy Winehouse and Aretha Franklin.

As the mackerel sizzles on the BBQ, Suggs and his guests keep warm around the fire bowl to discuss fathers, the poetry of London, the lyrics of love - and the search for goodness.

There's music, laughter - and a man in a fez makes a late appearance...

Written and presented by Suggs  
Produced by Sarah Peters and Peregrine Andrews  
Researcher: Brook Plumpton  
Additional Editing: Jerome Watson  
BBC Archivist: Will Mort  
Executive Producer: Iain Chambers

A Tuning Fork and Open Audio production for BBC Radio 4

### **WEDNESDAY 27 DECEMBER 2023**

#### **WED 00:00 Midnight News (m001tqm3)**

The latest news and weather forecast from BBC Radio 4.

#### **WED 00:15 BBC National Short Story Award (m001qdqm)**

BBC National Short Story Award 2023

Comorbidities by Naomi Wood

Charlotte Ritchie reads the first story in this year's BBC National Short Story Award with Cambridge University.

After the realisation that their sex life isn't exactly on fire, a couple with two young children decide they must take action. But how to spice things up?

Reader: Charlotte Ritchie is an acclaimed stage and TV actor, known most recently for her roles in *Ghosts*, *Call the Midwife* and *Fresh Meat*.

Writer: Naomi Wood is the author of *The Godless Boys* and the award-winning *Mrs. Hemingway*, which won the British Library Writer's Award and the *Jerwood Fiction Uncovered Award*. She teaches at the University of East Anglia and lives in Norwich.

Producer: Justine Willett

#### **WED 00:48 Shipping Forecast (m001tqmn)**

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping

#### **WED 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (m001tqn7)**

World Service

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

#### **WED 05:20 Shipping Forecast (m001tqns)**

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping

#### **WED 05:30 News Briefing (m001tqp8)**

National and international news from BBC Radio 4

#### **WED 05:43 Prayer for the Day (m001tqpt)**

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

The Sharp Eyed Eagle

Good Morning. The Christmas buzz is receding. But it has not gone, not yet! And today there's an image that can help us to keep the Christmas spirit alive, for today is the Feast of St John, the Gospel writer. His symbol is an eagle, that sharp-eyed bird that hovers over mountains and deserts with a far-seeing eye. With an eagle-like perception, John tells us that the child whose birth we celebrate is actually from the very beginning, the most distant origin. 'In the beginning' he says, 'was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word is God'. It is this Word that has taken our flesh in the person of Jesus and is now among us, in our hearts, in his power.

So as we think of Christmas we slowly acquire that far-seeing eye of the eagle. Now we can see far beyond the everyday and know that our very breath comes from God, through His Word now among us in this child.

The sharp-eyed eagle is also the first to spot the presence of

food and water in the desert. And John tells us that in Jesus we find both food for eternal life and a living water that can well up inside of each of us. These are enough to transform the desert places of our hearts and world into places of growth and flourishing.

Heavenly Father, give us the sight to see the meaning and purpose in our lives, so that we may truly contribute to growth and flourishing in our world.

Amen.

#### WED 05:45 Farming Today (m001tqqb)

The Welsh Grand National is one of the biggest dates in the racing calendar and a favourite with those in rural communities. Many of its winners have gone on to success in the Aintree Grand National and The Gold Cup at Cheltenham, so today's winner will be hoping for the same.

Mariclare Carey-Jones presents this special episode of Farming Today from Chepstow Racecourse, home of the Welsh Grand National. She hears from the jockey who won last year's race, and the trainer who is hoping to win for the first time this year.

Produced and presented by Mariclare Carey-Jones

#### WED 05:58 Tweet of the Day (b03k21n6)

Blackbird

Tweet of the Day is a series of fascinating stories about our British birds inspired by their calls and songs

Chris Packham presents the blackbird. Resident blackbirds are on the alert just now because their territories are under siege. Large numbers of Continental blackbirds pour in to the UK each winter to escape even colder conditions elsewhere.

#### WED 06:00 Today (m001trv2)

James May guest edits Today

James May, the Grand Tour and former Top Gear presenter, has chosen to use his guest edit to look at what the future holds for autonomous cars. James has been out reporting for Today speaking to manufacturers and software developers.

He investigates whether coffee culture in Britain is overtaking our love of tea.

And is James right? Could hobbies actually be good for us? Barbara Sahakian, professor of clinical neuropsychology at the University of Cambridge, joins James at an evening for hobby enthusiasts.

#### WED 09:00 The Long View (m001trq3)

Aged Premiers

If Donald Trump is elected to a second term as President of the United States he would be 82 at the end, if Joe Biden is re-elected he would be 86. Age has become a campaign weapon. How effective have the octogenarian leaders of the past been shown to be?

One was William Ewart Gladstone who was Prime Minister four times, the last when he was 82. Dr Ruth Windscheffel Head of Teaching and Learning Enhancement at York St John University and author and editor of a number of books and articles about Gladstone discusses how his advanced age affected his final administration.

Emperor Gordian I acceded to Rome's Imperial throne in 238 AD in his early eighties. Dr James Corke-Webster is Reader in Classics, History and Liberal Arts at King's College London. He discusses with Jonathan Freedland the events surrounding Gordian's rise to power in ancient Rome's most turbulent year.

Reader: Josh Bryant-Jones

Producer: Harry Parker

#### WED 09:30 New Storytellers (m001p7lk)

Out at Sea, Out of Mind

Take a deep dive into the sonic realms of the sea. With natural soundscapes recorded beneath the surface, this is a journey of discovery into how important sound is for all sea creatures - from whales, dolphins, and porpoises, to the smallest invertebrates, sound is an essential part of their being.

Since the discovery that whale song can be heard across entire oceans, many researchers have been exploring how human-produced sounds and frequencies may affect communication among the mammals. But as we on the surface can't hear the sounds beneath the sea, we can be oblivious to the devastating effects some of these noises can have on underwater life. As

humans we bring to the vast arena of the oceans much louder sounds than would occur naturally on the evolutionary scale - shipping, sonar used for underwater navigation, and the loud seismic gun testing blasts produced when surveying the ocean bed for oil and gas.

Do we need to start listening to our oceans?

With contributions from: Professor Volker Deecke, marine pollution consultant Tim Deere-Jones, researchers Sarah Dickson, Jordan Burgess, Jo Garrett, and writer Jay Richardson.

This series of New Storytellers features the winners of this year's Charles Parker Prize 2023 for the Best Student Radio Feature. Out at Sea, Out of Mind was produced by recent University of Sunderland MA Radio, Audio and Podcasting student Lottie Steele and the feature is, in the words of the judges, "skillfully creative" and "expertly montaged so that there is a great sense of flow". And they admired the "beautiful use of sound and music. A shocking and important programme."

Producer: Lottie Steele  
A Soundscape production for BBC Radio 4

#### WED 09:45 Ian Fleming: The Complete Man by Nicholas Shakespeare (m001trv4)

Episode 3. Writing Bond

Today's episode sees how Fleming's bachelorhood was coming to an end, and the fear of his impending marriage, helped spur him to create the supreme, everlasting bachelor 007. He starts writing his world famous thrillers, at Goldeneye, in Jamaica.

Multi Olivia award winning Alex Jennings reads.

Abridger - Rowan Routh  
Producer - Pauline Harris

Ian Fleming's greatest creation, James Bond, has had an enormous and ongoing impact on our culture, but Fleming was only a thriller writer in his last twelve years. Fleming's personal life and impressive career in Naval Intelligence put him at the heart of critical movements in world history, whilst providing rich inspiration for his fiction. Exceptionally well connected, and widely travelled, from the US and Soviet Russia to his beloved Jamaica, Ian had access to the most powerful political figures at a time of profound change. Nicholas Shakespeare's fascinating biography, with unprecedented access to the Fleming family papers, uncovers new material and throws new light on an extraordinary man. Ian Fleming would strive all his life to throw off the shadows of his gifted older brother, and be a complete man, but ultimately was then overshadowed by his own famous creation.

#### WED 10:00 Woman's Hour (m001trv6)

UTI treatment, Being dumped by text, Lighthouse keeper

Up to half of women will have a UTI at some point in their life. Earlier this year the NHS launched a new awareness campaign which the filmmaker and author Kate Muir has criticised for not mentioning vaginal oestrogen as a treatment. Kate joins Krupa Padhy alongside Dr Olivia Hum, a GP who is on the Council of the British Menopause Society.

Dr Ronny Cheung speaks to Krupa about the double-edge sword of children building their immunities in their early years and the disruption caused to working parents and carers. What do parents need to know about caring for a child with seasonal colds and coughs?

Sally Snowman is the last official lighthouse keeper in the United States and at the end of this month she will retire after two decades of service. She's the first and last woman to be the lighthouse keeper for Boston Light in Massachusetts. She joins Krupa to discuss what it's like being a lighthouse keeper and how she feels about leaving it.

We know that Christmas and New Year, although filled with joy for some, can put a really big strain on relationships and it can be a time when people in an unhappy relationship decide to end them. But is there ever a good way to break up a relationship? And is it ever acceptable or kinder to end something by text? Krupa is joined by Olivia Petter, journalist and author of Millennial Love and Vicky Spratt, journalist and documentary maker.

The award winning comedian, writer, playwright and actor Meera Syal - known for her comedy series such as Goodness Gracious Me and The Kumars - has been talking to Rod Akins on Radio 4's Media Show, we can hear some of that interview.

Presenter: Krupa Padhy  
Producer: Emma Pearce

#### WED 11:00 The Banksy Story (m001trv8)

Bonus Episode: The Lost Banksy Interview

James Peak isn't an art critic, or even a journalist. He's a Banksy super-fan, and in this series he, and his soundman Duncan, get closer than close to Banksy's secret world - telling the story of the graffiti kid who made spraying walls into high art, the household name who is completely anonymous, the cultural phenomenon who bites the hand that feeds him.

In this bonus episode, James is on the trail of a revealing early Banksy interview from 2003 when the artist was starting to cut through.

Written, Produced and Presented by James Peak

Sound & Commentary: Duncan Crowe.

Music: Alcatraz Swim Team & Lilium

Series Mixing: Neil Churchill

Executive Producer: Philip Abrams

With special thanks to Steph Warren, Eddie, Duncan Crowe, Nigel Wrench, Keith Wickham, Helen Toland, Anna Mears, Rob Shiret, Tracey Williams, Neil Churchill, Roger Mahony, Mohit Bakaya and Dan Clarke.

An Essential Radio production for BBC Radio 4

#### WED 11:30 Bob Servant Says Cheerio (m001trvb)

1. What a Life!

After an astonishing business career in Broughty Ferry, Bob Servant (Brian Cox) is proud and humbled to announce his retirement from public life.

This event has rightfully been honoured with two special radio programmes as Bob looks back on his career - righting wrongs, bearing grudges and offering what he has learnt about life, romance, and running a relatively profitable burger van.

Bob is a largely respected expert on most topics, and his front-footed determination is unfailing - whether providing advice on the best way to approach a funeral or compliment a woman, negotiating a pardon from Tayside Police for a litany of minor criminal charges, urging his doctor to provide on-air confirmation of his physical attributes, or - most importantly - persevering in his attempts to re-establish contact with Lulu, who he met outside a petrol station in 1983 and with whom, in his words, he formed a 'genuine lifelong connection'.

The two episodes feature Jonathan Watson, Phyllis Logan, Greg McHugh and Rufus Jones, as well as the promise of a climactic reunion between Bob Servant and Lulu.

In episode 1, Bob reflects on his childhood and his status as a largely respected writer of romantic fiction. We'll hear extracts from his finest works - Lord Dundee's Lover and Fifty Shades of Broughty Ferry. With the help of his lifelong pal Frank, Bob also recounts the momentous occasion when he first encountered Lulu.

Alongside the archive of the Dundee Courier, where '30 years of slander' can be found, Bob Servant's life has been detailed in Neil Forsyth's award-winning books and cult TV series (also starring Brian Cox). Neil Forsyth is the writer and creator of the BBC's multi award-winning Guilt, as well as the hit BBC1 series The Gold, inspired by the Brink's Mat robbery.

A Tannadice Pictures production for BBC Radio 4

#### WED 12:00 News Summary (m001trvd)

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

#### WED 12:04 Archive on 4 (m00187c6)

Ziggy Stardust at 50

June 1972 saw the release of David Bowie's album The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars which propelled the South London singer to stardom.

Bowie's creation of the Ziggy Stardust persona was more than just a whimsical costume change, the whole concept had a meticulously planned gestation period and evolved many facets of his creativity.

In a Melody Maker interview in January 1972, a few months before the album's release, Bowie openly discussed his bisexuality. Back then, it was a radical and potentially career harming gesture, but it became a defining moment for many gay people around the world.

In this Archive on 4, Tris Penna, who worked alongside Bowie at EMI Records, assesses the origins of the album, artists Michael Weller and George Underwood discuss their schooldays and early friendship with Bowie, and Ziggy Stardust co-producer Ken Scott recalls the studio experience.

"Young dude" Wendy Kirby, record plugger Anya Wilson, and former music exec Laurence Myers remember their time with "Ziggy" and singer Marc Almond talks movingly about the profound impact of Ziggy on his life.

Singer and actor Toyah Wilcox talks about the creative inspiration Bowie has had for her since the age of 12, and brings the reviews of the time alive.

The programme also includes rare archive material including a lost Bowie interview (as Ziggy) recorded in the Top of the Pops dressing room, a 1972 press conference, and insightful reflections from former band members Mick Ronson and Trevor Bolder.

We also hear studio outtakes – as well as a lost BBC session version of the title song.

Producers: Tris Penna and Sue Clark  
Executive Producer: David Prest  
A Whistledown production for BBC Radio 4.

**WED 12:57 Weather (m001trvg)**  
The latest weather forecast

**WED 13:00 World at One (m001trvj)**  
Forty-five minutes of news, analysis and comment.

**WED 13:45 Mythical Creatures (m001trvl)**  
8. Selkies

Fantasy writer Rhianna Pratchett takes us across an enchanted British Isles to discover mythical creatures that lurk in all corners of the land. She uncovers what they can tell us about our history, our world and our lives today.

In this episode, Rhianna heads to the Scottish coast to meet shape-shifting sea creature, the Selkie. Selkies are seals in the water but can remove their seal skins and become humans on the land.

Rhianna explores the best known Selkie story, The Selkie Wife. She delves into what it reveals about some murky parts of our own history, and asks how it can be used to empower and help people today.

Storyteller: Shona Cowie  
Other Contributors: Sharon Blackie, Lari Don

Presenter: Rhianna Pratchett  
Producers: Lorna Skingley and Sarah Harrison  
Executive Producer: Mel Harris  
Production Manager: Nikki Cannon  
Original Music by Ben MacDougall  
Sound Design and Mixing: John Scott

A 7digital production for BBC Radio 4

**WED 14:00 The Archers (m001tqhq)**  
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Tuesday]

**WED 14:15 Drama on 4 (m001trvn)**  
Good Morning, Yvette's Nan

Gwen used to be a DJ on hospital radio. Now she's in Bleak Park retirement home. But she's determined to liven things up a bit – with the help of David Bowie, The Kinks and The Who. Neil Williams' Welsh comedy drama about a pirate radio station stars Siw Hughes.

By Neil Williams

Gwen ..... Siw Hughes  
Yvette ..... Gabrielle Creevy  
Kelly ..... Alexandria Riley  
Seren ..... Lisa Zahra  
Miss Bates ..... Claire Cage  
Janice ..... Sue Roderick  
Bob ..... William Thomas  
Charlie ..... Georgia Henshaw

Production Co-ordinator, Lindsay Rees  
Sound Design, Catherine Robinson and Nigel Lewis  
Assistant Producer, Pip Swallow  
Director and Producer, Fay Lomas

A BBC Audio Drama Wales Production

**WED 15:00 Money Box (m001v0xw)**  
Money Box Live: Survival Guide

Are you putting down the mince pies and opening your bank statements? Well, you're in the right place as we're dedicating some time to the kinds of money topics that come up between Christmas and New Year.

Perhaps you want to know your consumer rights before hitting the sales, what to do with unwanted gifts or maybe you've spent

more than you can afford this festive season? If so, then you've come to the right place.

We'll hear why for hundreds of thousands of people, their tax return has become a festive tradition.

And we'll also look ahead to Summer 2024 and how to get some holiday bargains.

Felicity Hannah is joined by, etiquette coach William Hanson, Emma Munbodd, the money news editor at The Telegraph, Anna Hall the head of money and debt operations at the Money and Pensions Service and Rob Staines an independent travel expert.

Presenter: Felicity Hannah  
Reporter: Luke Smithurst  
Producer: Sarah Rogers  
Editor: Jess Quayle

(This is a slightly shorter version of an episode was first broadcast on Wednesday the 27th of December 2023 at 3pm on Radio 4)

**WED 15:30 The Screening Dilemma (m001trvs)**

Ronnie Helvy is on his way for a screening test. He's in his sixties and wants an assessment to check for a variety of cancers. He isn't currently displaying any symptoms but is seeking reassurance. His blood will undergo a series of tests in exchange for over a thousand pounds. The outcome might be able to determine whether he is susceptible to cancers that some of his family have died from. It sounds like a good thing. Or is it?

Advances in health screening have allowed us to see far into our bodies' future. During the pandemic home testing became an everyday routine. The same technology has helped develop new tools that can sequence our DNA quickly. Simple tests are making the process less intrusive than ever before.

These improvements have also seen the development of a number of major national screening programmes. Including Our Future Health and the UK Biobank. Both of these are large scale research studies to help researchers prevent chronic health conditions. They could also inform the NHS on how to implement generalised screening across more of the population.

Private health clinics are also offering health check-ups -- tests that could spot future warning signs. Home-testing kits can be ordered from the internet. But what does this information tell us? And is it information we can trust? We look at whether the private industry is acting responsibly when it comes to genetic testing.

The BBC's Health Correspondent Matthew Hill finds out whether screening programmes can really help us live both better and longer lives. And he asks: can diagnosing conditions decades before they might affect us cause more harm than good?

The promise of diagnosing conditions early is an exciting one. But there are fears among some health professionals that more screening might not be entirely helpful.

We take a look at what lessons from the past could tell us about the current surge in screening. And we consider some of the dilemmas it might present us with.

Presenter: Matthew Hill  
Producer: Robbie Wojciechowski  
Editor: Richard Collings

Contributors:

Dr Paul Cornes, Oncologist and International Advisor on cancer  
Prof. Clare Turnbull, Division of Genetics and Epidemiology at the Institute of Cancer Research  
Helen Wallace, Deputy Director of GeneWatch UK  
Prof Sir John Bell, Regius Professor of Medicine at the University of Oxford and the UK's Life Sciences Champion

**WED 16:00 Crossing Continents (m001tj02)**

Ukraine: Building back better

Rebuilding Ukraine after the destruction inflicted by Russia will be a gigantic task. Foreign donors have pledged billions of dollars. But they want reassurances that the money will be properly spent, in a country which still has high levels of corruption. For Crossing Continents Tim Whewell visits Bucha, near the capital Kyiv, site of some of the worst Russian atrocities, to see the beginning of reconstruction. A series of shocking reports by Ukrainian journalists into alleged misuse of rebuilding funds have forced local authorities in the area to explain themselves. But a new state reconstruction agency committed to transparency has now also started work in Bucha. And anti-corruption campaigners believe a new digital accounting and monitoring system they are developing in collaboration with the authorities will help turn Ukraine into a

world beacon of openness. The government's slogan is "build back better." But what exactly does that mean? And can it be achieved?

Produced and presented by Tim Whewell  
Studio Mix: Neil Churchill  
Production coordinator: Gemma Ashman  
Editor: Penny Murphy

**WED 16:30 The Media Show (m001trvv)**  
Meera Syal

When she graduated from university, Meera Syal says she couldn't see a future for a young Asian woman in showbusiness. Four decades later, on top of an MBE and CBE for services to drama and literature, in 2023 she's been awarded a prestigious BAFTA Fellowship and this month Women in Film and TV has given her a Lifetime Achievement Award. Meera tells Ros about her trailblazing career showcasing unheard British Asian stories, including hit comedies Goodness Gracious Me and The Kumars at No. 42, and her early screenplay Bhaji on the Beach. Meera also reflects on how the TV industry has changed and the work still left to do.

Presenter: Ros Atkins

Producer: Simon Richardson

**WED 17:00 PM (m001trvx)**

Afternoon news and current affairs programme, reporting on breaking stories and summing up the day's headlines

**WED 18:00 Six O'Clock News (m001trvw)**

His drive for greater European integration often led to clashes with Margaret Thatcher.

**WED 18:15 The Wombles (m001trw1)**

Episode 3: The Snow Womble

The Wombles live under Wimbledon Common, and it is their special responsibility to 'tidy up' everything that untidy human beings leave behind.

Radio 4 and BBC Sounds celebrate these much loved classic characters, marking 50 years since The Wombles first appeared on the BBC.

This joyful festive listen is based on the original books by Elisabeth Beresford, performed by Richard E Grant, directed by Johnny Vegas and nestled in a new soundscape for Christmas 2023.

Full of fun and warmth, with an underpinning environmental message - this is novelty and nostalgia combined and a gift of Christmas comfort-listening for all to enjoy.

Episode 3: The Snow Womble

It's snowing on Wimbledon Common and all work is suspended. Bungo, Orinoco and Alderney are wondering at this strange new outside world.

Cast and Credits:

Performed by..... Richard E Grant  
Written by..... Elisabeth Beresford  
Abridged by..... Sally Harrison and Susan Vale  
Script Consultant..... Kate Robertson  
With thanks to..... Marcus Robertson

Music: The Wombling Song, composed and recorded by Mike Batt

Produced by..... Sally Harrison  
Sound Engineer..... Wilfredo Acosta  
Sound Designer..... Alisdair McGregor  
Directed by..... Johnny Vegas

A Woolyback Productions and Mrs Mellor's Cellar collaboration for BBC Radio 4 and BBC Sounds

**WED 18:30 Whatever Happened to Baby Jane Austen?**

(m001trtl)

Series 2

Episode 3 – Lucy Lassoes the Moon

To Florence's horror, someone has reprinted her first novel. Selina's in EastEnders, as the new landlady of the Vic. And still nobody's interested in Lucy's Moon shot.

The first series of Whatever Happened To Baby Jane Austen? won the Writers' Guild Award for Best Radio Comedy and the Comedy.co.uk award for Best Radio Sitcom.

"Thank you, Mr Quantick – this is nigh on perfect" Radio

Times

Written by David Quantick

Florence - Dawn French  
 Selina - Jennifer Saunders  
 Mrs Ragnarrok – Meera Syal  
 Lucy – Georgia Tennant  
 All the men - Alistair McGowan

Producer: Liz Anstee  
 A CPL production for BBC Radio 4

**WED 19:00 The Archers (m001tqsb)**

Despite not officially working there yet Denise is back organising appointments at the Surgery. She suggests to Alistair that they have lunch outside in the sun. Later, Denise remembers the last time they had sandwiches together like this – it was the day she told Alistair she was moving to another practice. She admits she regrets moving, before they retreat back inside as it's too cold. Alistair takes Denise's hands in his to warm them up. They both confess to missing each other, but a phone call from John with a mundane query for Denise spoils the moment. Suddenly awkward, Alistair and Denise agree it's a good idea to just finish their lunch.

Brian and Kate have brought some Christmas cake to The Nest for Alice, worried she might be feeling lonely while Martha's with Chris. But in fact Alice has arranged to have lunch with someone. Brian and Kate manage to get out of her that this lunch date is with her new man and want to know all about him. Alice tries fending off their questions, but unfortunately Harry arrives early, so she cannot avoid introducing them to him. Their small talk is relatively unexciting, before Alice and Harry set off, leaving Kate and Brian to finish their coffee. Brian thoroughly approves of Alice's choice, but Kate doesn't like Harry's aura and thinks there is something off about him. Brian scoffs, remarking on how happy Alice looks. He then gets Kate to promise she won't make things awkward for Alice. She must give Harry a chance.

**WED 19:15 This Cultural Life (m001gjyd)**

Sam Mendes

Theatre and film director Sam Mendes first made his mark when he launched London's Donmar Warehouse theatre in the early 90s. He has won Olivier and Tony Awards for numerous productions including Cabaret, The Ferryman and most recently, The Lehman Trilogy. He made his cinematic debut directing American Beauty in 1999, and won the first of two Oscars - the second was for the war film 1917. He also directed the two James Bond movies Skyfall and Spectre, and was knighted in 2020.

Sam tells John Wilson about his earliest memories of feeling the thrill of live performance, at the London production of Godspell in 1971. Later, how the work of Shakespeare came alive for him while watching productions at the RSC, and in particular, a memorable performance of Antony and Cleopatra starring Michael Gambon and Helen Mirren. He reveals how his directorship of the Donmar Warehouse, which established his reputation as a ground-breaking theatre director, all began with a chance late night stroll around Covent Garden.

Seeing Wim Wenders' 1984 film Paris, Texas was to be a formative influence on Sam when he eventually came to direct his debut feature American Beauty and later films including Jarhead and Revolutionary Road. Casting the actor Daniel Craig in his second film Road to Perdition, despite a poor audition was to have a significant impact on both their careers. Sam also talks about moving into writing and making more personal films including 1917 based on the war stories of his grandfather, and Empire of Light, partly inspired by his childhood experiences of witnessing his own mother's struggles with her mental health.

Producer: Edwina Pitman

**WED 20:00 AntiSocial (m001tjzk)**

Culture wars in Europe

An AntiSocial special, charting the culture wars across Europe.

In Italy, there's a battle over surrogacy - bringing into question the rights of same-sex couples, the exploitation of women, and the influence of the Church.

In Spain, more than half the country thinks that men are being discriminated against with the push for women's equality. And across borders, both progressive and conservative activists are creating international networks to spread their message.

Presenter: Adam Fleming

Producer: Ellie House

Reporter: Sofia Bettiza

Researcher: Thomas Farmer

Editor: Richard Vadon

Studio Managers: Graham Puddifoot and Matt Cadman

Production Coordinators: Janet Staples and Katie Morrison

**WED 20:45 New Storytellers (m001p7bf)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 05:45 on Saturday]

**WED 21:00 When It Hits the Fan (m001trw4)**

Gerald Ratner special

In this special episode, David Yelland and Simon Lewis take you into the eye of a media storm and talk to a person who has lived through it. What's it like to wake up to a world where everyone knows your name, and you wish they didn't?

In 1991, Gerald Ratner had one of Britain's most famous fan-hitting moments. Having built a billion-pound chain of high-street jewellery shops, he saw his business collapse around him after making a seemingly harmless, yet ill-fated, joke.

In fact, what happened to him has become so synonymous with a fan-hitting moment that he's become a verb – in business English, "Doing a Ratner" is shorthand for really screwing up in an entirely avoidable way. But, 25 years later, he says there are many silver linings to losing a billion pounds in 10 seconds flat.

Producer: Eve Streeter  
 Editor: Sarah Teasdale  
 Executive Producer: William Miller  
 Researcher: Sophie Smith  
 Music by Eclectic Sounds  
 A Raconteur production for BBC Radio 4

**WED 21:30 The Media Show (m001trvv)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 16:30 today]

**WED 22:00 The World Tonight (m001trw6)**

Israel warns of mounting tensions on the border with Lebanon

We reflect on the life of Jacques Delors, the former President of the European Commission.

Also: the Hollywood sign that overlooks Los Angeles turns one hundred this year.

**WED 22:45 The Other Side of Christmas (m001trw8)**

The Longpudde Players

A selection of classic English stories continues with Mackenzie Crook reading a comic tale from his favourite author Thomas Hardy's collection A Few Crusted Characters. A group of villagers on their return from market, reminisce about Christmases past.

Later in the series there will be a couple of short pieces from Hector Hugh Munro, better known as Saki, whose skill for skewering the manners and pretensions of the upper classes is turned on the business of giving and receiving Christmas presents.

And to conclude, another wintry mystery - The Lion's Tooth by Edmund Crispin finds the author's amateur detective, Fen, assisting a convent in finding a young victim of kidnap.

The Longpudde Players by Thomas Hardy

Abridged and produced by Jill Waters

Read by Mackenzie Crook

A Waters Company production for BBC Radio 4

**WED 23:00 We Forced a Bot to Write This Show (m001trwb)**

2: Pizza, Power Ballad, and Panto.

We forced Artificial Intelligence to digest massive amounts of human media and then write its own versions. Everything from The One Show, Game of Thrones, Friends, Songs of Praise and more via movies, fables, adverts, Shakespeare, poetry and, er, gardening tips (and much much more) are all forever ruined by technology.

We take the scripts, push them word-for-word into the mouths of actors, and the result is absurdly, joyously - and then absurdly again - hilarious.

This is the comedy that conclusively proves that AI is an absolute idiot.

Based on materials by Keaton Patti.

Forcing A Bot To Write This Show are:

Jon Holmes

Sarah Dempster

Gareth Ceredig

Performed by:

Isy Suttie  
 James Lance  
 Lauren Douglin  
 Esmonde Cole  
 and  
 Craig Parkinson as The Narrator  
 Olivia Williams as The Storyteller

Original Music by Jake Yapp. Lyrics: Holmes / Ceredig / Patti

Produced and Directed by Jon Holmes

Technical Wizardry: Tony Churnside  
 Production Co-ordinator: Laura Grimshaw

An unusual production for BBC Radio 4

**WED 23:15 Jokes (m001trwd)**

Nora Meadows' Week of Wellness

Nora Meadows' Week Of Wellness - 4. The VIP Gold Clean

This week, Nora's introduction of a grounding exercise for one of her clients is unfortunately interrupted by an underlying health issue of Nora's own.

To locate the source of another client's fear of flying she delves deeper and deeper into their past and, finally, Nora once again squeezes in a bit of self-care to visit a hypnotist in a bid to overcome one of her own long held fears.

Nora Meadows... Katy Wix

Chris...David Elms

Claire...Emily Lloyd-Saini

Sam...Alexander Owen

Giles... Adam Drake

Brian... Sunil Patel

Gwen... Shivani Thussu

Hypnotist...Alistair Green

Written and directed by Will Farrell and Ben Rowse, with additional material from the cast

Producer: Nick Coupe

A Hat Trick production for BBC Radio 4

**WED 23:30 The Green Backlash (m001t3rv)**

As the individual costs of the EU's Green Deal are becoming clearer, many people across Europe say they are unwilling or unable to pay the price associated with it. Anna Holligan explores the increasing popularity of anti-green political parties across the continent. She talks to dairy farmers in the Netherlands, who fear government green targets would endanger a sector which makes the country the world's second biggest exporter of food. She also travels to Bremen in Germany where concern over the phasing out of new gas and oil boilers for houses, dubbed the "heating hammer" by the nation's tabloids, has led to the government slowing down the pace of change. In the meantime, the city's Green Party vote fell by almost half in recent local elections while Citizens in Rage, which is highly sceptical about how green deal policies are being implemented, came from almost nowhere to capture close to ten per cent of the vote.

The experiences in both countries suggests that the political consensus that seemed to exist only four years ago when the EU announced its Green Deal targets seems to have broken down. What might the possible repercussions be on Europe's politics and its approach to tackling climate change?

Produced by Bob Howard.

**THURSDAY 28 DECEMBER 2023****THU 00:00 Midnight News (m001trwg)**

The latest news and weather forecast from BBC Radio 4.

**THU 00:15 BBC National Short Story Award (m001qdqw)**

BBC National Short Story Award 2023

Guests by Cherise Saywell

Natalie is a young Australian woman, carefree and adrift. A mother, Bilien is a similarly young Eritrean woman, less carefree and adrift in a different way. The two neighbours live in close physical proximity, kept apart by a contested swimming pool. They are brought together by a shared coffee ceremony, but wider tensions percolate underneath the surface...

Reader: Nahel Tzegai has starred in Miracle Workers, The Swimmers and Cold Storage (forthcoming). Most recently she appeared at the National Theatre in Grenfell: in the words of survivors.

Writer: Cherise Saywell is author of two novels, *Desert Fish* and *Twitcher*. Her short stories have previously won the Pindrop, Mslexia and V.S. Pritchett prizes. She currently works for the Royal Literary Fund's Bridge Project and lives in Edinburgh.

Producer: Ciaran Bermingham

**THU 00:48 Shipping Forecast (m001trwj)**

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping

**THU 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (m001trwl)**

World Service

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

**THU 05:20 Shipping Forecast (m001trwn)**

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping

**THU 05:30 News Briefing (m001trwq)**

National and international news from BBC Radio 4

**THU 05:43 Prayer for the Day (m001trws)**

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

The Feast of the Holy Innocents

Good Morning, There is a heavy cloud over these days of festivities, that of conflict and war. Even in the midst of our celebrations we cannot forget the suffering of so many. And children are always the most innocent victims of warfare. This we have seen, with heart-rendering sadness, in Israel and in Gaza and conflicts across the globe.

Today in the Church we keep the feast of the Holy Innocents, those children murdered in cold blood because the powers that be feared for their future. Today we might think of the woman of the Old Testament of the Bible, Rachel, weeping for her children, a figure repeated so many times in these last months.

Let us know a time of sadness today as we think of the innocent victims of war, of parents whose hearts are broken, of every callous destruction of innocent life.

Again, we turn to the vulnerable baby in the cave of cattle in Bethlehem. He has come to embrace the broken-hearted and to carry the soul of every lost child into the arms his loving Father. This too, is part of the Christmas message. Just so our Christmas greetings are never an expression of escapism but of profound love in the midst of all the sadness and tragedy of our world. For the child Jesus too, will be led to the slaughter. He will embrace it, make it his sacrifice, for the sake of the world and of all humanity.

We pray for all victims of war and conflict. We pray for the broken hearted. We pray that they may find solace in the promise of eternal life.

Amen.

**THU 05:45 Farming Today (m001trwv)**

Charlotte and Charlie Bennett are on a mission. Over the last four years they've been converting their ancient estate in Northumberland to how it would have been farmed in 1805. It's all thanks to a long forgotten map from that year, which Charlie discovered in the Lit and Phil, a famous independent library in Newcastle. Drawn up when the land was owned by the Greenwich hospital in London, it revealed a landscape of pastures with ancient field names, and hedgerows and woodland that had long disappeared. Inspired also by the work of the engraver Thomas Bewick, who was illustrating wildlife in the same period, they decided they would recreate that landscape, taking the land out of arable and back to grass, putting all the ancient hedgerows back in and creating habitats for the species that would have been prevalent at the time. It's a project which has seen astonishing results for wildlife, with species not seen for generations reappearing.

Produced and presented by Jo Lonsdale

**THU 05:58 Tweet of the Day (b03szzrm)**

Mallard

Tweet of the Day is a series of fascinating stories about our British birds inspired by their calls and songs.

Chris Packham presents the mallard. Mallards are our commonest ducks. In winter, mallards from Continental Europe join our resident birds. Some may have flown from as far away as Russia and many infiltrate local flocks, so the bills which

snatch your bread may have been born hundreds, if not thousands of kilometres away.

**THU 06:00 Today (m001tqms)**

Singer Ellie Goulding guest edits Today

News and current affairs, including Sports Desk, Weather and Thought for the Day.

**THU 09:00 In Our Time (m001tqnd)**

Twelfth Night, or What You Will

Melvyn Bragg and guests discuss one of Shakespeare's great comedies, which plays in the space between marriage, love and desire. By convention a wedding means a happy ending and here there are three, but neither Orsino nor Viola, Olivia nor Sebastian know much of each other's true character and even the identities of the twins Viola and Sebastian have only just been revealed to their spouses to be. These twins gain some financial security but it is unclear what precisely the older Orsino and Olivia find enduringly attractive in the adolescent objects of their love. Meanwhile their hopes and illusions are framed by the fury of Malvolio, tricked into trusting his mistress Olivia loved him and who swears an undefined revenge on all those who mocked him.

With

Pascale Aebischer

Professor of Shakespeare and Early Modern Performance Studies at the University of Exeter

Michael Dobson

Professor of Shakespeare Studies and Director of the Shakespeare Institute at the University of Birmingham

And

Emma Smith

Professor of Shakespeare Studies at Hertford College, University of Oxford

Produced by Simon Tillotson, Victoria Brignell and Luke Mulhall

Reading list:

C.L. Barber, *Shakespeare's Festive Comedies: A Study of Dramatic Form and Its Relation to Social Custom* (first published 1959; Princeton University Press, 2011)

Simone Chess, 'Queer Residue: Boy Actors' Adult Careers in Early Modern England' (*Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 19.4, 2020)

Callan Davies, *What is a Playhouse? England at Play, 1520-1620* (Routledge, 2023)

Frances E. Dolan, *Twelfth Night: Language and Writing* (Bloomsbury, 2014)

John Drakakis (ed.), *Alternative Shakespeares* (Psychology Press, 2002), especially 'Disrupting Sexual Difference: Meaning and Gender in the Comedies' by Catherine Belsey

Bart van Es, *Shakespeare's Comedies: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2016)

Sonya Freeman Loftis, Mardy Phillipian and Justin P. Shaw (eds.), *Inclusive Shakespeares: Identity, Pedagogy, Performance* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2023), especially "I am all the daughters of my father's house, and all the brothers too": Genderfluid Potentiality in *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*' by Eric Brinkman

Ezra Horbury, 'Transgender Reassessments of the Cross-Dressed Page in Shakespeare, Philaster, and The Honest Man's Fortune' (*Shakespeare Quarterly* 73, 2022)

Jean Howard, 'Crossdressing, the theatre, and gender struggle in early modern England' (*Shakespeare Quarterly* 39, 1988)

Harry McCarthy, *Boy Actors in Early Modern England: Skill and Stagecraft in the Theatre* (Cambridge University Press, 2022)

Stephen Orgel, *Impersonations: The Performance of Gender in Shakespeare's England* (Cambridge University Press, 1996)

William Shakespeare (eds. Michael Dobson and Molly Mahood), *Twelfth Night* (Penguin, 2005)

William Shakespeare (ed. Keir Elam), *Twelfth Night* (Arden Shakespeare, 2008)

Emma Smith, *This is Shakespeare: How to Read the World's Greatest Playwright* (Pelican, 2019)

Victoria Sparey, *Shakespeare's Adolescents: Age, Gender and the Body in Shakespearean Performance and Early Modern Culture* (Manchester University Press, 2024)

**THU 09:45 Ian Fleming: The Complete Man by Nicholas Shakespeare (m001tqny)**

Episode 4. Dinner with JFK

Today's episode looks at how the future US president, John F. Kennedy, a 007 fan, and Fleming, bonded over dinner. 'The rapport was instantaneous,' Jack was mesmerised by Ian. JFK paid attention when Fleming answered his questions about the Castro problem. Also, this episode touches on British Prime Minister Anthony Eden's ill-conceived stay at Goldeneye at the height of the Suez crisis, and the subsequent effect on sales for Fleming's thrillers. Alex Jennings reads.

Abridger - Rowan Routh

Producer - Pauline Harris

Ian Fleming's greatest creation, James Bond, has had an enormous and ongoing impact on our culture, but Fleming was only a thriller writer in his last twelve years. Fleming's personal life and impressive career in Naval Intelligence put him at the heart of critical movements in world history, whilst providing rich inspiration for his fiction. Exceptionally well connected, and widely travelled, from the US and Soviet Russia to his beloved Jamaica, Ian had access to the most powerful political figures at a time of profound change. Nicholas Shakespeare's fascinating biography, with unprecedented access to the Fleming family papers, uncovers new material and throws new light on an extraordinary man. Ian Fleming would strive all his life to throw off the shadows of his gifted older brother, and be a complete man, but ultimately was then overshadowed by his own famous creation.

**THU 10:00 Woman's Hour (m001tqph)**

Highflying care-leavers, Freebirths, 'Trouser-less' trend

This summer, the region of Manipur in India made headlines after two women were viciously attacked and assaulted by a mob of men. With a similar case happening this month in the south west of the country, Krupa Padhy is joined by Geeta Pandey, BBC Women and Social Affairs Editor in Delhi, and Professor of Modern Indian History at the University of Nottingham, Dr Udit Sen, to find out why these incidents continue to happen and whether anything is being done at a higher level to stop them.

Just 14% of care leavers go to university, compared to 47% of young people who didn't grow up in care, according to a report by the think tank Civitas. The figures have barely changed over the past 10 years and at the current rate of progress, it will take 107 years to close the gap. Two care-experienced young women who did manage to smash the so-called care ceiling share their experiences with Krupa: Rebecca Munro, who graduated with a masters in business and is now an Education Liaison Officer at the University of St Andrews and Lucy Barnes, a barrister.

A freebirth is defined as giving birth without a healthcare professional in attendance. It is also known as an unassisted birth. Anecdotally, more women are making this choice in the UK - but why? What sort of experiences are they having and is it a safe and responsible decision? Krupa speaks to Naomi Nygaard, a psychotherapist and a mother who chose to freebirth both her children and Mavis Kirkham, a retired midwife and emeritus Professor of Midwifery at Sheffield Hallam University and co-editor of *Freebirth Stories*, a collection of stories from women choosing to give birth this way.

Would you swap your trousers for a pair of statement knickers? Julia Hobbs from *Vogue* tells Krupa about the new trouser-less trend that's been sweeping the catwalks and social media, and the reactions she got when testing it out on the London Underground.

Presenter: Krupa Padhy

Producer: Rebecca Myatt

Studio manager: Emma Harth

**THU 11:00 Crossing Continents (m001tqq1)**

Bolivia's giant fish intruder

Some people said it was created by Peruvian scientists, that it gorged on the blood of farm animals, that it was a monster. Many myths have grown up in Bolivia around the Paiche, one of the world's largest scaled freshwater fish which is native to Amazonian rivers of Brazil and Peru and can grow up to four metres long. But after young fish were accidentally released from a Peruvian fish farm, the Paiche has arrived big time in Bolivian rivers.

Every year, it reaches another 40 km of river and is eating all before it, especially smaller native fish stocks including even



the deadly piranha. At the same time, the Paiche is proving a boon to many local fisherman who sell it to families and restaurants who are acquiring a taste for it in a land-locked country where meat has always been the favourite form of protein. This gives scientists and the authorities a dilemma. Do they try and control or even eradicate the Paiche from rivers famed for their biodiversity where new species are being identified all the time? Or let its spread continue unabated and provide a useful livelihood for fishermen and a healthy addition to the Bolivian diet? For Crossing Continents, Jane Chambers takes to the rivers of Bolivia

Produced by Bob Howard  
Mixed by Rod Farquhar  
Production coordinator: Gemma Ashman  
Series editor: Penny Murphy

**THU 11:30 Great Lives (m001tqfg)**  
[Repeat of broadcast at 16:30 on Tuesday]

**THU 12:00 News Summary (m001tqgh)**  
The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

**THU 12:04 Archive on 4 (m000wbyw)**  
Bob Dylan: Verbatim

The many variations of Bob Dylan's life and music told in his own words, combining rare interviews, studio outtakes, archive and musings, all set to his music. Part of Radio 4's celebrations of Dylan's 80th birthday.

From his very first interviews when he arrived in New York in 1961 in search of Woody Guthrie and a path to musical eminence, Dylan created mystique and drama by offering obfuscatory descriptions of his early life, as he set about creating a bohemian troubadour myth that transcended the real suburban Zimmerman upbringing.

He enjoyed these early fabrications and, realising they gave him power over journalists, he continued to use contradiction, dissension and confutation in interviews to avoid being labelled and typecast.

As his reputation grew, his patience withered and, before long, the media began describing him as tense, belligerent, taciturn, grim and irascible. All these iterations of one of the most acclaimed and admired singer songwriters in modern music are incorporated in to this unique soundscape.

A Zinc Media production for BBC Radio 4

**THU 12:57 Weather (m001tqr4)**  
The latest weather forecast

**THU 13:00 World at One (m001tqrm)**  
Forty-five minutes of news, analysis and comment.

**THU 13:45 Mythical Creatures (m001tqrz)**  
9. Banshees

Fantasy writer Rhianna Pratchett takes us across an enchanted British Isles to discover mythical creatures that lurk in all corners of the land. She uncovers what they can tell us about our history, our world and our lives today.

In this episode, Rhianna is on a quest to find out about an Irish death omen, The Banshee. Rhianna explores the importance of this creature's cry, the significance of her haggish female form, and why the belief of her remains strong today.

Storyteller: Liz Weir  
Other Contributors: Dr. Kelly Fitzgerald, Sharon Blackie

Presenter: Rhianna Pratchett  
Producers: Lorna Skingley and Sarah Harrison  
Executive Producer: Mel Harris  
Production Manager: Nikki Cannon  
Original Music by Ben MacDougall  
Sound Design and Mixing: John Scott

A 7digital production for BBC Radio 4

**THU 14:00 The Archers (m001tqsb)**  
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Wednesday]

**THU 14:15 Drama on 4 (m0015vc5)**  
Waterloo Station

Two strangers look back on an incident that happened a couple of years ago, just before the world turned upside down. As they do so, they take stock of what's happened over the last two

years.

Ray ..... Ralph Ineson  
Christa. .... Christine Bottomley

Written by Katie Hims  
Directed by Mary Peate

Waterloo Station was named Best Radio Drama at the 2023 Writers' Guild of Great Britain Awards.

**THU 15:00 Open Country (m001tqsk)**  
Seeking asylum in nature

Helen Mark joins a group of asylum seekers as they help with a tree-planting project in Denbighshire. She hears how - without a car, and with rural buses both scarce and expensive - refugees rarely get access to the countryside. The group of people she meets have travelled to Wales from Liverpool for the day, but come originally from all over the world. She hears about the experiences of four of them - from Iraq, Iran, Namibia and Togo. They spend the day working alongside local conservation volunteers from the nearby village of Tremeirchion, sharing food, stories and songs.

The project is organised by the charity Action Asylum, which has joined forces with the North Wales Wildlife Trust to get more than two thousand trees planted on former farmland near Offa's Dyke path. For the asylum seekers, who are not allowed to work while their cases are being assessed, it's a chance to contribute and do something constructive. With incredible views of the mountains in the distance and the Welsh coast spread out beneath them, Helen hears how working in the countryside is beneficial for both the environment and the refugees' mental health.

Produced by Emma Campbell

**THU 15:27 Radio 4 Appeal (m001tpzz)**  
[Repeat of broadcast at 07:54 on Sunday]

**THU 15:30 Open Book (m001tqdj)**  
[Repeat of broadcast at 17:00 on Monday]

**THU 16:00 Rewinder (m001tqsx)**  
Talking Dogs!

Greg James dives into the BBC Archive to track down audio gems, using listener requests, overlooked anniversaries and current stories to guide the way.

As the Famous Five returns to our screens, Greg looks for Enid Blyton in the archives and almost comes up short: why are interviews with the prolific and beloved children's author so rare? He uncovers rumours of a Blyton ban at the BBC...

It's always a big deal - who's going to be the Christmas Number One? Greg tracks back to its origins in the 1950s, specifically 1954 when the world-renowned pianist Winifred Atwell topped the chart. Her piece Let's Have Another Party became the first track by a black musician to top the British charts, and Greg discovers her influence on the likes of Elton John and Paul McCartney.

With this series of Rewinder scheduled for drivetime, Greg is determined to find out the history of traffic and travel news. He discovers the joy of taking a breather in between traffic news and finds a report about a strange AA pilot scheme to help with the busy roads of London in 1950.

As the year comes to an end, Greg gets inspiration from some old British new year traditions like burning the clavie, mummers' plays and wassailing.

And it wouldn't be Rewinder without Greg taking an inexplicable tangent: this week, talking dogs, featuring Greg's own clever boy Barney.

Series archivists: Tariq Hussain and Jonathan Charlton  
Producer: Tim Bano

**THU 16:30 BBC Inside Science (m001tqt3)**  
12 days of Christmas - science version

Marnie Chesterton & Victoria Gill embark on a science-themed version of the classic Christmas song 'The 12 Days of Christmas' in this festive edition of BBC Inside Science.

Twelve of the biggest moments of the year in science include discussion about a very special treefrog discovered in the Ecuadorian Andes. We also hear about two new promising drugs for Alzheimer's disease.

An astronomer and visualisation scientist tells us about three

new sonifications of space data.

There's more on the discovery of a 476,000 year-old wooden structure found earlier this year in Zambia and how it has changed archaeologists' understanding of ancient human life.

The year has also seen 5,000 new species discovered in a deep ocean abyssal plain. Saturn has 62 new moons and is now the planet with the most moons in our solar system.

A report was published deeming 75% of UK rivers as posing a risk to human health. We gathered together experts from Natural Resources Wales, Cardiff University, Bangor University and the Wye and Usk Foundation who discussed why the help from citizen science is essential for their work.

And a new record has been set which is really worrying scientists - the highest average global ocean surface temperature, which reached **20.98** degrees centigrade.

Other notable moments from the year include: a Japanese twelve-legged robot, eighteen video-calling parrots, proposals for the 10km long Einstein telescope and the theory behind why one player in every football team views the world slightly differently.

To help us along the journey the BBC's Radio Drama Company put all the science together into a brand-new rendition of the well-known 12 days of Christmas song.

Presenter: Marnie Chesterton & Victoria Gill  
Producer: Hannah Fisher  
Assistant Producer: Emily Bird  
Editor: Richard Collings  
Production Co-ordinator: Jana Bennett-Holesworth

BBC Inside Science is produced in collaboration with the Open University.

**THU 17:00 PM (m001tqt7)**

Afternoon news and current affairs programme, reporting on breaking stories and summing up the day's headlines

**THU 18:00 Six O'Clock News (m001tqt6)**

Egypt has confirmed it is going to put forward a new peace plan for the region.

**THU 18:15 The Wombles (m001tqth)**

Episode 4: Bungo's Great Adventure

The Wombles live under Wimbledon Common, and it is their special responsibility to 'tidy up' everything that untidy human beings leave behind.

Radio 4 and BBC Sounds celebrate these much loved classic characters, marking 50 years since The Wombles first appeared on the BBC.

This joyful festive listen is based on the original books by Elisabeth Beresford, performed by Richard E Grant, directed by Johnny Vegas and nestled in a new soundscape for Christmas 2023.

Full of fun and warmth, with an underpinning environmental message - this is novelty and nostalgia combined and a gift of Christmas comfort-listening for all to enjoy.

Episode 4: Bungo's Great Adventure

A really long hard winter makes life a difficult business for all wild creatures, and the Wombles are no exception. Orinoco's been finding things particularly tough and an impulsive incident leads to a rescue mission for his best friend Bungo.

Cast and Credits:  
Performed by..... Richard E Grant  
Written by..... Elisabeth Beresford  
Abridged by..... Sally Harrison and Susan Vale  
Script Consultant..... Kate Robertson  
With thanks to..... Marcus Robertson

Music: The Wombling Song, composed and recorded by Mike Batt

Produced by..... Sally Harrison  
Sound Engineer..... Wilfredo Acosta  
Sound Designer..... Alisdair McGregor  
Directed by..... Johnny Vegas

A Woollyback Productions and Mrs Mellor's Cellar collaboration for BBC Radio 4 and BBC Sounds

**THU 18:30 Ken Cheng: I Can School You (m001tqtq)**  
3. Not an Exact Science

Comedian Ken Cheng focuses his analytical observations on

school subjects. In the last of the series, Ken takes on Science, and grapples with the shortcomings of the subject, and tries to perfect the tweaks to make it truly interesting.

Producer: Rajiv Karia

An EcoAudio certified production.

It is a BBC Studios production for Radio 4.

#### **THU 19:00 The Archers (m001tqt3)**

Emma joins Ed in cutting up the tree that fell on her car. They'd love it if she could work alongside him and make the tree surgery a real family business, but extra costs involved would make it an even riskier enterprise. However, Ed reckons they should look into taking out a business loan because he's got a good feeling about this.

At The Bull Brian tells Justin how pleasant his Christmas was, despite it being the first without Jennifer. By way of contrast Justin's Christmas was horrendous. He's tried everything he can to win Lillian back, but nothing is working. Justin confesses that Lillian is the love of his life. Tracy chips in that Justin needs to tell Lillian that, not Brian. He should open his heart and tell her how he feels. Up at the bar Lillian suggests having a fashion show to pull in the punters. And when Tracy mentions two men arguing over who's been drinking in The Bull for longer Lillian suggests a competition to see which customer has been drinking there the longest of all. When Tracy tells Lillian that Justin said she was the love of his life, she finally goes to talk to him. Justin confesses he lied about having a good Christmas – it was miserable. He's at his wit's end, trying to think of ways to win Lillian back. She asks Justin to promise he'll never betray her again. They both declare that the other one is the love of their life, before they kiss, back together at last.

#### **THU 19:15 This Cultural Life (m00118vg)**

Sally Wainwright

Award-winning television dramatist and director Sally Wainwright talks to John Wilson about her formative cultural influences. After learning the art of screenwriting whilst working on Coronation Street, she made her name with her suburban comedy drama At Home With The Braithwaites. Her stories are usually set in the north of England including Last Tango in Halifax, and her 19th century historical series Gentleman Jack. Her most recent hit is Happy Valley, a crime drama that spanned a decade and three series, winning huge acclaim, viewing figures and multiple awards.

Sally talks about her early obsession with television, and how the 1970s musical drama Rock Follies inspired her to become a television writer at a young age. She recalls her early career writing for BBC Radio 4's The Archers and the ITV soap Coronation Street and discusses the inspirations behind some of her biggest hits.

Producer: Edwina Pitman

#### **THU 20:00 The Briefing Room (m001tqtx)**

Aliens: Are we closer to finding intelligent life beyond Earth?

Aliens are back on the radar after a US Congressional hearing in the summer that featured former intelligence officer, David Grusch. The US Air Force veteran was once part of a task force created to look into what used to be called UFOs. Mr Grusch gave evidence that caused a sensation in America, claiming that the US military had, for decades, been in possession of crashed UFOs and 'non-human biologicals'.

His shocking claims were evidence that, whatever their accuracy, both created and reflected a growing and serious debate – from astrophysicists and astrobiologists to policymakers about what if anything, is out there. Anything alive and anything civilised.

So, as 2023 turns into 2024, what is the state of our understanding about whether or not we are alone in space? David Aaronovitch explores the history of UFOs stretching back to the 1940s and discusses whether intelligent life exists beyond Earth.

David Aaronovitch talks to:

Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock, British space scientist and science educator

Garrett Graff, Journalist and historian. Author of 'UFO: The Inside Story of the U.S. Government's Search for Alien Life Here — and Out There'.

Avi Loeb, Astrophysicist and Baird Professor of Science at Harvard University  
Monica Grady, Professor of Planetary and Space Science at the Open University.

Presenter: David Aaronovitch

Producer: Sally Abrahams

Sound: James Beard and Neil Churchill

Editor: Richard Vadon

Archive Credits: Congressional Hearing on Unidentified Aerial Phenomena, 26 July 2023 courtesy of C-Span

#### **THU 20:30 Intrigue (m001tqv1)**

Million Dollar Lover – Ep 6: Unforgettable

At first glance Carolyn appears to be a lucky woman who has led a charmed life: loved by her husband and daughters – prosperous and secure. But she has endured great hardship and in this episode it becomes a bit easier to understand why she initially felt so drawn to Dave and what he has come to represent in her life.

For his part, Dave is reluctant to dwell on his childhood, but he undoubtedly had a difficult start in life. Some of that damage has since been repeated in the lives of his children and grandchildren. As the bond between Carolyn and Dave deepens, she is clear about wanting to protect his future by helping him financially.

Relationships in your later years are never going to be plain sailing: there are usually long established patterns, and problems to contend with. Carolyn is on her own with these now that her daughters have been pushed to the side-lines of her life. She is struggling to drive at night and to do her tax returns and she is increasingly frustrated with Dave's drinking and socialising

Million Dollar Lover is produced at BBC Audio by the team behind The Boy in the Woods and is presented by Sue Mitchell.

The series is scripted by Winifred Robinson; the producers are Sue Mitchell and Joel Moors; the dramaturg is Flo Dessau and sound design is by Tom Brignell

#### **THU 21:00 BBC Inside Science (m001tqt3)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 16:30 today]

#### **THU 21:30 In Our Time (m001tqnd)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 09:00 today]

#### **THU 22:00 The World Tonight (m001tqv6)**

Israel threatens to intervene in Lebanon

Israel says it will intervene in southern Lebanon to push back Hezbollah fighters unless the government there reins them in. We get a response from Lebanon's ambassador to the UK.

Also on the programme:

After the tornado that damaged more than 100 homes in 15 seconds in Stalybridge - what's the so-called "supercell thunderstorm" that caused it?

After a decade, the government's wellbeing centre bites the dust. We debate whether generating happiness is a job for government or not.

And neglected Bach - Julian Lloyd-Webber on why he's taking some of the composer's almost-forgotten cello works on the road.

#### **THU 22:45 The Other Side of Christmas (m001tqv8)**

Saki Celebrates Christmas

A selection of classic English stories continues with a couple of short pieces from Hector Hugh Munro, better known as Saki, whose skill for skewering the manners and pretensions of the upper classes is turned on the business of giving and receiving Christmas presents.

Saki Celebrates Christmas - Reginald on Presents and Down Pens by Saki / Herbert H. Munro

Abridged and produced by Jill Waters

Read by Joel MacCormack

A Waters Company production for BBC Radio 4

#### **THU 23:00 You're Dead to Me (p0gnwlmj)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 on Monday]

### **FRIDAY 29 DECEMBER 2023**

#### **FRI 00:00 Midnight News (m001tqv8)**

The latest news and weather forecast from BBC Radio 4.

#### **FRI 00:15 BBC National Short Story Award (m001tqdy8)**

BBC National Short Story Award 2023

It's Me by K Patrick

A beautiful story about 'queer instinct' and how queer memory shifts and changes as it needs to. A shy and tentative bookworm is working in a coffee shop but is desperate to get back to their Truman Capote novel whenever they can. There is a desire to have been called Bulldog at school just like Capote was. There is the joy from wearing an ex-boyfriend's bomber jacket. The wish to be strong like the delivery driver they mirror. The coffee shop manager and the customers are all woven into the story as the morning rush begins but then a crowd of office workers arrive and there is something familiar about one of them called Elle and the connection between barista and customer unravels.

Reader: Ell Potter is an actor, writer and award-winning narrator. Ell's most recent work has been The Last Show Before We Die at this year's Edinburgh Festival.

Writer: K Patrick's poetry has appeared in PoetryReview, Granta and Five Dials, and was shortlisted for The White Review Poet's Prize in 2021, the same year that K was shortlisted for The White Review's Short Story Prize. In 2020 they were runner-up in the Ivan JuritzPrize and the Laura Kinsella Fellowship.

Their debut novel, Mrs S was selected as an Observer Best Debut of the Year, and K was named a Granta Best of Young British Novelists for 2023. Their debut poetry collection, Three Births, will be published by Granta Poetry in 2024, and they live in Scotland.

Producer: Tracey Neale

#### **FRI 00:48 Shipping Forecast (m001tqv8)**

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping

#### **FRI 01:00 Selection of BBC World Service Programmes (m001tqv8)**

World Service

BBC Radio 4 joins the BBC World Service.

#### **FRI 05:20 Shipping Forecast (m001tqv8)**

The latest weather reports and forecasts for UK shipping

#### **FRI 05:30 News Briefing (m001tqv8)**

National and international news from BBC Radio 4

#### **FRI 05:43 Prayer for the Day (m001tqv8)**

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

Murder in the Cathedral

Good Morning.

Another weekend lies ahead. Not your average weekend, but one that ushers in the New Year. So a weekend for more celebrations! But what does today bring?

One answer is that it brings 'murder in the cathedral'. For this is the feast day of St Thomas Becket, murdered in Canterbury Cathedral on this day in 1170. His death was brought about by a sort of clash of the Titans: the King, Henry, wanting to assert his authority, and Thomas, the Archbishop, wanting to protect space for the Church. The knights who carried out the killing may well have misunderstood the King's intentions for he immediately repented and Thomas was quickly declared a hero of the faith.

From birth in a stable to murder in a cathedral: this is a tale worth telling. Over the centuries countless people have died for the good news of this Gospel and its central proclamation that God is a God of mercy and compassion, born Emmanuel, God-with-us. To him alone do we bend our knee and profess him to be our saviour and most precious gift. He alone can cure our ills and refresh our spirit. To him be glory and thanksgiving.

As the new year unfolds, we sincerely wish each other happiness and prosperity, not forgetting the greatest gift of all: that God is with us, year in and year out, ready to guide our steps into the way of peace.

Father in heaven, help us to choose peace over violence, harmony over discord, both now and in the year to come.

Amen.

#### **FRI 05:45 Farming Today (m001tqv8)**

Deer specialist John Fletcher and his wife Nichola reflect on a life spent trying to educate the public on the merits of venison. Now working with a breeding herd of rare white-coloured red deer, they discuss the joys and challenges facing the sector.

Produced and presented by Ruth Sanderson

**FRI 05:58 Tweet of the Day (b03k5br7)**

Brent Geese

Tweet of the Day is a series of fascinating stories about our British birds inspired by their calls and songs.

Chris Packham presents the brent goose. Brent Geese are our smallest wild geese and are unmistakable with their rather funereal colours, blackish heads and grey backs with a wisp of white on the neck. Strangford Lough in Northern Ireland is a very important wintering site for Brent Geese.

**FRI 06:00 Today (m001tqw5)**

Andrew Malkinson guest edits Today

Andrew Malkinson was the victim of a major miscarriage of justice, serving 17 years in prison for a crime he did not commit.

**FRI 09:00 Desert Island Discs (m001tq0c)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 11.15 on Sunday]

**FRI 09:45 Ian Fleming: The Complete Man by Nicholas Shakespeare (m001trtr)**

Episode 5. Filming Bond: Fleming's final years

Today's episode looks at Ian Fleming's final years and the transformation of the novels into films. From casting of Connery to filming Dr. No in Jamaica, (Fleming turns up with friends, and is shouted at by the director for nearly ruining an iconic shot of unknown Swedish actress Ursula Andress on the beach with Connery). And where, as Broccoli had learnt, 'the success and failure of a film often hangs on a question of timing.' World events at the time conspired almost to imitate Bond.

Alex Jennings reads.

Abridger - Rowan Routh  
Producer - Pauline Harris

Ian Fleming's greatest creation, James Bond, has had an enormous and ongoing impact on our culture, but Fleming was only a thriller writer in his last twelve years. Fleming's personal life and impressive career in Naval Intelligence put him at the heart of critical movements in world history, whilst providing rich inspiration for his fiction. Exceptionally well connected, and widely travelled, from the US and Soviet Russia to his beloved Jamaica, Ian had access to the most powerful political figures at a time of profound change. Nicholas Shakespeare's fascinating biography, with unprecedented access to the Fleming family papers, uncovers new material and throws new light on an extraordinary man. Ian Fleming would strive all his life to throw off the shadows of his gifted older brother, and be a complete man, but ultimately was then overshadowed by his own famous creation.

**FRI 10:00 Woman's Hour (m001tqx3)**

Dame Siân Phillips, Abuse of vulnerable elderly, Clemency Burton-Hill

Actor Dame Siân Phillips' life and career are explored in a new documentary, Siân Phillips at 90. She joins Krupa Padhy to talk about some of her acting roles, including playing Emmeline Pankhurst in a BBC drama in the 1970s, what it was like being married to Peter O'Toole, and what she's doing now.

Clemency Burton-Hill MBE, is an award-winning broadcaster, podcaster, author, journalist and musician. She joins Krupa to discuss Journal of Wonder - the newest book in her bestselling Year of Wonder series - which takes you from January to December with classical music suggestions for every day.

The power of attorney system can sometimes be abused to take advantage of older people. Krupa is joined by Carolyn Stephens, who shares her story of becoming estranged from her elderly father after he met a woman on a singles holiday. He later agreed to grant power of attorney to the woman, which resulted in him being placed in a care home without his family knowing. Journalist Sue Mitchell, who shares the details of the whole affair in an upcoming radio documentary, also joins Krupa to talk about why she wanted to tell Carolyn's story.

Co-founder of The Onion Collective, Jess Prendergast, tells Krupa how she and her friends created the social enterprise East Quay Watchet in Somerset after they were frustrated by the lack of opportunities in their local town. Plus local 'craftivist' Lyn Barlow tells us about exhibiting her textile art in the new gallery and what the new enterprise means to her.

Presenter: Krupa Padhy  
Producer: Lottie Barton

**FRI 11:00 The Briefing Room (m001tqtx)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 on Thursday]

**FRI 11:30 Disordered (p0gtz45s)**

Series 1

Episode 4- Say It Out Loud

A comedy drama, written by Magnus Mackintosh, and starring Jamie Sives as Hector, an optimistic but struggling 42-year-old single father, with long-term mental health issues, who lives in Edinburgh with his unusually bright 10-year-old son William. He is aided by kindly friend and neighbour Susan and hindered by acerbic ex-partner Amanda.

In episode four, Say It Out Loud, Hector makes big steps as he is encouraged by his therapist to face his demons. He also has to face Susan and Amanda, who are both dealing with unexpected and unwanted revelations in their love lives. Thankfully neighbour Mrs Harrington is around to spread some unexpected merriment and William, his usual calm and wisdom.

The writer, Magnus Mackintosh, has personally struggled with mental health issues over 27 years. He openly discusses his own mental health issues on social media in the hope he can help others and raise awareness.

Cast  
Hector- Jamie Sives  
Susan- Rosalind Sydney  
Amanda- Gail Watson  
William- Raffi Phillips  
Mrs Harrington- Barbara Rafferty  
Receptionist- David Kay  
Therapist- Stuart McQuarrie

Studio Engineer and Editor- Lee McPhail  
Production Manager- Taylor Norris  
Title Music- Just Breathe by Police Dog Hogan  
Produced and Directed by Moray Hunter and Gordon Kennedy

Recorded at Castlesound Studios, Pencaitland, East Lothian

An Absolutely production for BBC Radio 4

**FRI 12:00 News Summary (m001trtw)**

The latest national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

**FRI 12:04 Archive on 4 (b06f4xm2)**

John Lennon: Verbatim

John Lennon: Verbatim marks the iconic Beatle's 75th birthday on October 9th with a sound scape incorporating rarely heard archive interviews, poetry readings, studio outtakes and alternative recordings of some of his most acclaimed compositions. It's a personal insight into the creative genius of one of the 20th centuries most diverse artistes.

Long before public figures mastered the art of the sanitised sound bite to protect their privacy, Lennon always spoke openly and honestly about his art and his personal life, whether talking about his earliest childhood memories, the highs and lows of The Beatles or his solo career. Lennon loved radio because he found it more relaxing than coping with the confrontation of a television film crew, so his radio sessions were often very revealing and entertaining.

Collated from conversations recorded between 1962 and 1980, it's an opportunity to hear, in John's own words, the honesty and passion that fuelled his genius.

Produced by Des Shaw  
A Ten Alps production for BBC Radio 4

**FRI 12:57 Weather (m001tqyv)**

The latest weather forecast

**FRI 13:00 World at One (m001tqzd)**

Forty-five minutes of news, analysis and comment.

**FRI 13:45 Mythical Creatures (m001tqzz)**

10. Wulver

Fantasy writer Rhianna Pratchett takes us across an enchanted British Isles to discover mythical creatures that lurk in all corners of the land. She uncovers what they can tell us about our history, our world and our lives today.

In the final episode of the series, Rhianna explores the tale of a mysterious wolf-like creature in Shetland. This mythical beast is not all it might, at first, seem to be. Rhianna digs into the story and finds out what it could reveal about folklore – and ourselves - in the 21st century and what the future might hold for mythical creatures.

Storyteller: Graeme Johncock  
Other Contributors: Catriona Macdonald, Dr Mary Bateman, Mark Norman

Presenter: Rhianna Pratchett  
Producers: Lorna Skingley and Sarah Harrison  
Executive Producer: Mel Harris  
Production Manager: Nikki Cannon  
Original Music by Ben MacDougall  
Sound Design and Mixing: John Scott

A 7digital production for BBC Radio 4

**FRI 14:00 The Archers (m001tqts)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Thursday]

**FRI 14:15 Limelight (m001tr0h)**

English Rose - Series 2

English Rose - 5: Fire and Ice

By Helen Cross.

Rose is getting closer to the truth and learning about her own heritage is helping her grow in strength. The vampires are arriving from Europe by Maya's invitation and Austin and Jack are plotting. Can she keep Gully safe and whose side is Maya on?

Stylish and surprising fantasy horror with a comic twist, starring Alexandra Mardell (Coronation Street) and Demetri Goritsas (Ten Percent). With music by Dana Margolin and Sam Yardley of Mercury-nominated band, Porridge Radio.

Helen Cross wrote 'My Summer of Love' which won a Betty Trask award and was made into a Bafta-winning film with Emily Blunt (recently rated her best film in The Guardian top ten Emily Blunt films). Mary Ward-Lowery won Best Director in 2020 Audio Drama Awards.

Rose ... Alexandra Mardell  
Maya ... Miranda Braum  
Austin ... Demetri Goritsas  
Siobhan ... Deirdre Mullins  
Delphine ... Yasemin Özdemir  
Mam ... Jane Thornton  
Jack ... Tyler Cameron  
Gym owner ... Don Gilet  
Dakota ... Rhiannon Needs  
Alina ... Kitty O'Sullivan  
Englishman ... Martin Bonger  
Angry Man ... Douglas Hodgson  
Gully ... Bruce Casswell

Original music written and performed by Dana Margolin and Sam Yardley of Porridge Radio.

Sound design by Ilse Lademann and Mary Ward-Lowery  
Assistant Producer ... Alison Crawford  
Director ... Mary Ward-Lowery

**FRI 14:45 The Haunting (m001cxfm)**

Series 4

The Mezzo Ten

Travel through the bad gateway in this modern ghost story as writer and performer Tom Neenan discovers what horrors lurk in our apps and gadgets. In this episode – what if an NFT was not only a massively ridiculous way to spend your money but terrifying as well?

Modern technology is frightening. The average smartphone carries out three-point-three-six billion instructions per second. The average person can only carry out one instruction in that time. Stop and think about that for a second. Sorry, that's two instructions - you won't be able to do that.

But what if modern technology was... literally terrifying? What if there really was a ghost in the machine?

Starring:  
Tom - Tom Neenan  
Heidi - Jenny Bede  
Dennis - Dan Tetsell  
Lance - Joseph May

Written by Tom Neenan

Produced and directed by David Tyler

A Pozzitive production for BBC Radio 4

**FRI 15:00 Gardeners' Question Time (m001tr11)**

Sarratt

When should I prune raspberry canes? How do I prep the lawn for winter? Why have my leeks turned pink inside?

Kathy Clugston and her panel of gardening experts are in Sarratt, Hertfordshire for this week's episode. Joining Kathy on the panel are plantsman Matt Biggs, grow your own guru Bob Flowerdew, and pest and disease expert Pippa Greenwood.

And GQT regular Anne Swithinbank chats to Charles Dowding to find out his best tips and tricks for composting.

Assistant Producer: Dulcie Whadcock  
Senior Producer: Dan Cocker  
Executive Producer: Hannah Newton

A Somethin' Else production for BBC Radio 4

**FRI 15:45 Short Works (m001tr1m)**

A Man Who Used to Have Friends by João Morais

A Man Who Used To Have Friends by João Morais

An original short story commissioned for BBC Radio 4

Chris would like to be a better man, but the words in his head never come out right.

Reader - Dean Rehman  
Director - John Norton

A BBC Audio Wales Production

**FRI 16:00 Last Word (m001tr28)**

Jacques Delors, Nancy Pearce, Elinor Otto, Tony Allen

Kirsty Lang on

Jacques Delors, the politician and architect of the modern EU.

Nancy Pearce, the founder of a charity to help people with eating disorders.

Elinor Otto, the American factory worker who was one of the original 'Rosie the Riveters.'

Tony Allen, one of the pioneers of the alternative comedy scene.

Producer: Ed Prendeville

**FRI 16:30 Why War? The Einstein-Freud Letters (m001tr2s)**

In 1932 the world-famous physicist Albert Einstein wrote a public letter to the founder of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud. Einstein, a keen advocate of the League of Nations and peace campaigner, asked Freud if he thought war and aggression was forever tied to human psychology and the course of international relations: could we ever secure a lasting world peace?

Einstein's letter is deeply prescient, as is Freud's extraordinary response. The exchange was titled 'Why War?'. The two thinkers explore the nature of war and peace in politics and in all human life; they think about human nature, the history of warfare and human aggression and the hope represented by the foundation of the League of Nations (precursor to the UN) and its promise of global security and a new architecture of international law.

At the time of their exchange, Freud is in the last great phase of his career and has already introduced psychoanalysis into the field of politics and society. Einstein, the younger of the two, is using his huge international profile as a physicist for political and pacifist intervention.

For Einstein, future world security means a shared moral understanding across the global order - that humankind rise above the 'state of nature' never to devolve into total war again. He wrote to Freud, as 'a citizen of the world... immune to nationalist bias... I greatly admire your passion to ascertain the truth. You have shown how the aggressive and destructive instincts are bound up in the human psyche with those of love and the lust for life. At the same time, you make manifest your devotion to the goal of liberation from the evils of war...' Is it possible, Einstein asks Freud, to make us 'proof against the psychoses of hate and destructiveness?'. Freud's answer is fascinating and quite unexpected.

The exchange of letters was sponsored by the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation, an organisation promoting global security by using prominent thinkers, drawing on multiple fields of knowledge (from science to psychology, politics and law) to achieve a new language for international peace, following the lessons learned from the Great War of

1914-18.

But even as Einstein wrote to Freud in the summer of 1932, the Nazi party became the largest political party in the German Reichstag. Both men felt a sense of apprehension about what was coming; both were pacifist, both Jewish, both would be driven into exile (both Einsteinian physics and Freudian psychoanalysis were denounced by the new regime). The letters were finally published in 1933 when Hitler came to power, suppressed in Germany, and as a result never achieved the circulation intended for them.

Featuring readings from the Einstein-Freud letters and contributions from historians of warfare and psychoanalysis, war journalism and global security, this feature showcases the little-known exchange between two of the 20th century's greatest thinkers, 'Why War?' - a question just as relevant in today's world.

Contributors include historian of war and peace Margaret MacMillan, BBC chief international correspondent Lyse Doucet, defence and security expert Mark Galeotti, historian of international relations Patrick O Cohrs, author Lisa Appignanesi, who has written on Freud and the history of psychoanalysis, and Faisal Devji, historian of conflict and political violence in India and the Middle East.

Readings are by Elliot Levey (Einstein) and Henry Goodman (Freud)

Produced by Simon Hollis  
A Brook Lapping production for BBC Radio 4

**FRI 17:00 PM (m001tr39)**

Afternoon news and current affairs programme, reporting on breaking stories and summing up the day's headlines

**FRI 18:00 Six O'Clock News (m001tr47)**

The early evening national and international news from BBC Radio 4.

**FRI 18:15 The Wombles (m001tr4v)**

Episode 5: Yellowstone Womble

The Wombles live under Wimbledon Common, and it is their special responsibility to 'tidy up' everything that untidy human beings leave behind.

Radio 4 and BBC Sounds celebrate these much loved classic characters, marking 50 years since The Wombles first appeared on the BBC.

This joyful festive listen is based on the original books by Elisabeth Beresford, performed by Richard E Grant, directed by Johnny Vegas and nestled in a new soundscape for Christmas 2023.

Full of fun and warmth, with an underpinning environmental message - this is novelty and nostalgia combined and a gift of Christmas comfort-listening for all to enjoy.

Episode 5: Yellowstone Womble  
A helpful stranger turns out to be quite the welcome visitor. Great Uncle Bulgaria is delighted to see his long lost Cousin Yellowstone from America but Tobermory's not so sure.

Cast and Credits:  
Performed by..... Richard E Grant  
Written by..... Elisabeth Beresford  
Abridged by..... Sally Harrison and Susan Vale  
Script Consultant..... Kate Robertson  
With thanks to..... Marcus Robertson

Music: The Wombling Song, composed and recorded by Mike Batt

Produced by..... Sally Harrison  
Sound Engineer..... Wilfredo Acosta  
Sound Designer..... Alisdair McGregor  
Directed by..... Johnny Vegas

A Woolyback Productions and Mrs Mellor's Cella collaboration for BBC Radio 4 and BBC Sounds

**FRI 18:30 Dead Ringers (m001v25d)**

Christmas Specials 2023

Episode 3

Jon Culshaw and Jan Ravens join Bill Dare, the long time producer and creator of Dead Ringers to look back at the last ten years of the programme on Radio 4. Their focus is Party Leaders - the ones they most want to remember.

We'll hear a selection of the funniest party leader sketches

going back to 2014 when Dead Ringers returned to radio and David Cameron vs Ed Miliband was the main show in town. Jon, Jan and Bill will whizz through the next decade giving us a behind the scenes glimpse of how party leaders across the spectrum were portrayed on the show.

Produced and created by Bill Dare

A BBC Studios Production for Radio 4

**FRI 19:00 The Archers (m001tr5y)**

Writer: Katie Hims  
Director: Dave Payne

Brian Aldridge.... Charles Collingwood  
Jolene Archer .... Buffy Davis  
Kenton Archer .... Richard Attlee  
Ruth Archer .... Felicity Finch  
Lilian Bellamy .... Sunny Ormonde  
Alice Carter.... Hollie Chapman  
Chris Carter .... Wilf Scolding  
Harry Chilcott ... Jack Ashton  
Justin Elliot .... Simon Williams  
Ed Grundy .... Barry Farrimond  
Emma Grundy.... Emerald O'Hanrahan  
Jakob Hakansson .... Paul Venables  
Tracy Horrobin .... Susie Ridell  
Alistair Lloyd .... Michael Lumden  
Paul Mack .... Joshua Riley  
Kate Madikane .... Perdita Avery  
Jazzer McCreary .... Ryan Kelly  
Denise Metcalfe .... Clare Perkins  
Lily Pargetter .... Katie Redford

**FRI 19:15 Screenshot (m001tr6g)**

Stop-Motion Animation

As Bristol claymation legends Aardman's new film hits screens, Ellen E Jones and Mark Kermod look at the enduring appeal of the most painstaking and time-consuming art form conceivable - stop motion animation.

Ellen talks to director Guillermo del Toro about his 2022 Oscar winner Pinocchio, as well as some of his favourite stop motion films, from Jason And The Argonauts to The Nightmare Before Christmas.

And Mark speaks to animation professor Maureen Furniss and up-and-coming animator Joseph Wallace about why stop motion is so subversive - and so cool.

Producer: Jane Long  
A Prospect Street production for BBC Radio 4

**FRI 20:00 Correspondents' Look Ahead (m001tr6z)**

Looking Ahead to 2024

Jonny Dymond asks some of the BBC's top correspondents to gaze into their crystal balls and predict what 2024 might have in store.

2023 has been dominated by the conflicts in Ukraine and Israel and Gaza and a global cost of living crisis. Next year will see nearly half of the world's population going to the polls.

Around forty general elections are scheduled to take place next year, in countries including the UK, USA, India, Russia and Pakistan. How might those elections shift the geopolitical tectonic plates - and will we see any resolution to ongoing conflicts.

Contributors:

Alex Forsyth, Political Correspondent  
Lyse Doucet, Chief International Correspondent  
Simon Jack, Business Editor  
Steve Rosenberg, Russia Editor

Producer: Ben Carter  
Production Co-ordinator: Ibtisam Zein  
Editor: Richard Fenton-Smith

**FRI 20:50 A Point of View (m001tr1p)**

A Lump of Coal and a Black Bun

Alex Massie delves into Hogmanays past and present.

'The traditional 'first footing' gifts of the New Year - a lump of coal and a black bun - linger on,' Alex writes, 'though with diminished take-up and not just because few houses are coal-heated now and few people truly appreciate the black bun.'

Producer: Adele Armstrong  
Sound: Peter Boshier  
Production coordinator: Janet Staples

Editor: Richard Fenton-Smith

**FRI 21:00 Mythical Creatures (m001tr7j)**

Omnibus: Parts 6-10

Fantasy writer Rhianna Pratchett takes us across an enchanted British Isles to discover mythical creatures that lurk in all corners of the land. She uncovers what they can tell us about our history, our world and our lives today.

In this omnibus edition, Rhianna meets Hobs, Giants, Selkies, Banshees and The Wulver.

Rhianna hears tales of helpful hobs in the North York Moors – small hairy creatures that do your chores while you're asleep. She explores what stories of hobs and other household spirits can tell us about our lives past and present. In the Welsh mountains Rhianna looks for giants and discovers why they have been important to humans for centuries.

Next she heads to the coast to meet shape-shifting selkies. Selkies are seals in the water but they can remove their seal skins and become humans on the land. She explores how one well-known selkie story can be used to empower and help people today. Rhianna also explores an Irish death omen, The Banshee, and the importance of this creature's cry.

Finally Rhianna hears the tale of a mysterious wolf-like creature in Shetland. Rhianna digs into the story and finds out what it could reveal about folklore – and ourselves – in the 21st century and what the future might hold for mythical creatures.

Storytellers: Rosie Barrett, Peter Stevenson, Shona Cowie, Liz Weir, Graeme Johncock

Other Contributors: Bob Fischer, Mark Norman, Natalie Lawrence, Erin Kavanagh, Dr Mary Bateman, Sharon Blackie, Lari Don, Dr. Kelly Fitzgerald, Catriona Macdonald

Presenter: Rhianna Pratchett

Producers: Lorna Skingley and Sarah Harrison

Executive Producer: Mel Harris

Production Manager: Nikki Cannon

Original Music by Ben MacDougall

Sound Design and Mixing: John Scott

A 7digital production for BBC Radio 4

**FRI 22:00 The World Tonight (m001tr81)**

In depth reporting, intelligent analysis and breaking news from a global perspective

**FRI 22:45 The Other Side of Christmas (m001tr8g)**

The Lion's Tooth

A selection of classic English stories concludes with another wintry mystery. The Lion's Tooth by Edmund Crispin finds the author's amateur detective, Fen, assisting a convent in finding a young victim of kidnap.

The Lion's Tooth by Edmund Crispin

Read by Stephen Mangan

Abridged and produced by Jill Waters

A Waters Company production for BBC Radio 4

**FRI 23:00 The Reunion (m001tq7l)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 09:00 on Monday]