



*August 2022 Newsletter*  
*Magazine Section*

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*FRIENDSHIP, FELLOWSHIP*  
*AND FUN*

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*Cole Porter* - an American composer and songwriter. his songs became standards noted for their witty, urbane lyrics, his scores found success on Broadway and in film.

Porter was born in Peru, Indiana, the only surviving child of a wealthy family. His father, Samuel Fenwick Porter, was a druggist by trade. His mother, Kate, was the indulged daughter of James Omar "J. O." Cole, "the richest man in Indiana", a coal and timber speculator who dominated the family. J. O. Cole built the couple a house on his property, known as Westleigh Farms.

Porter's strong-willed mother doted on him and began his musical training at an early age. He learned the violin at age six, the piano at eight, and wrote his first operetta (with help from his mother) at ten. She falsified his recorded birth year, changing it from 1891 to 1893 to make him appear more precocious.

His father, a shy and unassertive man, played a lesser role in Porter's upbringing, although as an amateur poet, he may have influenced his son's gifts for rhyme and meter. Porter's father was also a talented singer and pianist, but the father-son relationship was not close.



*Porter as a Yale  
College student*

J. O. Cole wanted his grandson to become a lawyer, and with that in mind, sent him to Worcester Academy in Massachusetts in 1905. Porter brought an upright piano with him to school and found that music, and his ability to entertain, made it easy for him to make friends.

Porter did well in school but rarely came home to visit. He became class valedictorian and was rewarded by his grandfather with a tour of France, Switzerland and Germany.

Entering Yale College in 1909, Porter majored in English, minored in music, and also studied French. He contributed to campus humour magazine *The Yale Record*. He was an early member of the Whiffenpoofs a *cappella* singing group and participated in several other music clubs; in his senior year, he was elected president of the Yale Glee Club and was its principal soloist.

Porter wrote 300 songs while at Yale, including student songs such as the football fight songs "Bulldog" and "Bingo Eli Yale" (aka "Bingo, That's The Lingo!") that are still played at Yale.

During college, Porter became acquainted with New York City's vibrant nightlife, taking the train there for dinner, theatre, and nights on the town with his classmates. He also wrote musical comedy scores for the Yale Dramatic Association which helped prepare him for a career as a Broadway and Hollywood composer and lyricist.

After graduating from Yale, Porter enrolled in Harvard Law School, where he roomed with future Secretary of State Dean Acheson. He soon felt that he was not destined to be a lawyer, and, at the suggestion of the dean of the law school, switched to Harvard's music department, where he studied harmony and counterpoint with Pietro Yon. His mother did not object to this move, but it was kept secret from J. O. Cole.

In 1915, Porter's first song on Broadway, "Esmeralda", appeared in the revue *Hands Up*. The quick success was immediately followed by failure: his first Broadway production, in 1916, *See America First*, a "patriotic comic opera" modelled on Gilbert and Sullivan was a flop, closing after two weeks. Porter spent the next year in New York City before going overseas during World War I.

In 1917, when the United States entered World War I, Porter moved to Paris to work with the Duryea Relief organization. Some writers have been sceptical about Porter's claim to have served in the French Foreign Legion, but the Legion lists Porter as one of its soldiers and displays his portrait at its museum. By some accounts, he served in North Africa and was transferred to the French Officers School at Fontainebleau, teaching gunnery to American soldiers. An obituary notice in *The New York Times* stated that, while in the Legion, "he had a specially constructed portable piano made for him so that he could carry it on his back and entertain the troops in their bivouacs."

Porter maintained a luxury apartment in Paris, where he entertained lavishly. His parties were extravagant and scandalous, with "much gay and bisexual activity, Italian nobility, cross-dressing, international musicians and a large surplus of recreational drugs".

In 1918, he met Linda Lee Thomas, a rich, Louisville, Kentucky-born divorcée eight years his senior. She was beautiful and well-connected socially;

The couple shared mutual interests, including a love of travel, and she became Porter's confidante and companion. The couple married the following year. She was in no doubt about Porter's homosexuality, but it was mutually advantageous for them to marry. For Linda, it offered continued social status and a partner who was the antithesis of her abusive first husband. For Porter, it brought a respectable heterosexual front in an era when homosexuality was not publicly acknowledged. They were, moreover, genuinely devoted to each other and remained married from December 19, 1919, until her death in 1954.

Marriage did not diminish Porter's taste for extravagant luxury. The Porter home on the rue Monsieur near Les Invalides was a palatial house with platinum wallpaper and chairs upholstered in zebra skin.



*Ca Rezzonico in Venice  
leased by Porter in the  
1920's*

In 1923, Porter came into an inheritance from his grandfather, and the Porters began living in rented palaces in Venice. For a party at Ca' Rezzonico (pictured), which he rented for \$4,000 a month (\$64,000 in current value), he hired 50 gondoliers to act as footmen and had a troupe of tightrope walkers to perform in a blaze of lights.

In the midst of this extravagant lifestyle, Porter continued to write songs with his wife's encouragement but he received few commissions for songs in the years immediately after his marriage. Frustrated by the public response to most of his work, Porter nearly gave up song writing as a career, although he continued to compose songs for friends and perform at private parties.

Then in the 1920's after a slow start, he began to achieve success and by the 1930s he was one of the major songwriters for the Broadway musical stage. Unlike many successful Broadway composers, Porter wrote the lyrics as well as the music for his songs.

After a serious horseback riding accident in 1937, Porter was left disabled and in constant pain, but he continued to work. His shows of the early 1940s did not contain the lasting hits of his best work of the 1920s and 1930s, but in 1948 he made a triumphant comeback with his most successful musical, *Kiss Me, Kate*. It won the first Tony Award for Best Musical.

Porter's mother died in 1952, and his wife died of emphysema in 1954. By 1958, because of his injuries Porter developed a series of ulcers on his right leg. After 34 operations, it had to be amputated and replaced with an artificial limb. His friend Noël Coward visited him in the hospital and wrote in his diary, "The lines of ceaseless pain have been wiped from his face...I am convinced that his whole life will cheer up and that his work will profit accordingly." In fact, Porter never wrote another song after the amputation and spent the remaining six years of his life in relative seclusion, seeing only intimate friends. He continued to live in the Waldorf Towers in New York in his memorabilia-filled apartment. On October 15, 1964 Porter died of kidney failure at age 73. He is interred in Mount Hope Cemetery in his native Peru, Indiana, between his wife and father.

Porter's musicals include *Fifty Million Frenchmen*, *DuBarry was a Lady*, *Anything Goes*, *Can Can* and *Silk Stockings*.

His numerous hit songs include "Night and Day", "Begin the Beguine", "I Get a Kick Out of You", "Well, Did You Evah!", "I've Got You Under My Skin", "My Heart Belongs to Daddy" and "You're the Top". He also composed scores for films from the 1930s to the 1950s, including *Born to Dance* (1936), which featured the song "You'd Be So Easy to Love"; *Rosalie* (1937), which featured "In the Still of the Night"; *High Society* (1956), which included "True Love"; and *Les Girls* (1957).

## *Forest Way*



I think this location is somewhere near where the Wakehurst Rugby Club is now located.

Not sure when Forest Way became a sealed road. I do however remember being invited way back to stay a weekend in Terrey Hills in the late 1940's. I was then about 10 years old & remembering a lot of dirt roads & chicken farms in the area.

No doubt some of our members may have some more memories as well.

## *Malcolm McLean*

Belrose Post Office opened on 4 September 1923 and closed in 1986. Belrose West Post Office opened on 1 July 1969.

The name 'Belrose' is said to be derived from the combination of two plant names – the Christmas Bell and the bush rose, which were predominant in the area.

Notable residents – Paul Hogan, INXS, David Oldfield (One Nation co-founder), Manly Warringah Sea Eagles prop Jason King, Socceroos Captain Lucas Neill, Manly Warringah Sea Eagles legend Geoff Toovey,

## *An Artist's Wanderings in the Blue Mountains*

*From The Illustrated Sydney  
News - February 1890*

And now, having visited all the principal pleasure resorts of the Blue Mountains, wearied out with travelling, we return once more to our 'point du depart', beautiful Katoomba.

We hurried away from it at the commencement of our wanderings in eagerness to see the oft-described beauties of other places frequented by the tourist; we return to it with a restful feeling that, after all, its immediate neighbourhood contains scenes which are typical of the whole district and that one regains the advantage of being able to stretch one's legs beneath the mahogany of the far famed "Carrington". Be you young or old the comfort of the inner man reflects itself upon the exercise of the remaining senses and a beautiful view is never so satisfying as when gazed upon during that after-dinner glow which is so inducive of the feeling of being at peace with all men.

In the year 1885, shortly after the death of Mr. Rowall, who had built what was then known as the Great Western Hotel, Mr. Goyder purchased the freehold and during the past five years he has been constantly employed in improving and adding to the establishment now known as "The Carrington".

In this and in many other ways he has proved himself an important factor in the prosperity which Katoomba has reached today, identifying himself with every public movement, and striving by all means in his power not only to improve but to attract public attention to this favoured spot.

The question of forming the township into a municipality has been under discussion for the past three years and lately application was made to have it incorporated. As the condition contained in the Municipal Act, which provides that the residential population must in such cases amount to 500 souls, was more than fulfilled, the request was granted.

The Council now consists of a mayor and five aldermen.

The revenue will be obtained by the rating of the property within the defined boundaries, which extends as far as Medlow to the north-ward and to the boundary of the Leura Estate on the east; and as these include many substantial buildings, not in the town itself but in the surrounding district, it is probable that they will have sufficient funds, with economy, to substantially improve the various roads in the neighbourhood, open up fresh beauties to the public and make Katoomba generally a very desirable place of residence.

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## *Time trivia*

### **Science of timekeeping**

The science of timekeeping is known as **horology**.

### **Nanosecond & Picosecond**

A **nanosecond** is one billionth of a second, and a **picosecond** is one trillionth or 0.000 000 000 001 of a second.

### **Planck time**

**Planck time** is the shortest known time span. It is the time it takes for light to travel a Planck length or  $1.616199 \times 10^{-35}$  meters in vacuum.

### **Easter celebration date**

Easter is normally celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon that occurs on or after the Spring Equinox.

### **Light year**

Contrary to popular belief, a **light year** is not a unit of time but a unit of distance. The International Astronomical Union defines a light year as the distance light travels in a vacuum in one Julian Year. In astronomy, a Julian Year corresponds to exactly 365.25 days.

### **A fortnight**

A **fortnight** is a unit of time that refers to 14 days. It comes from an old English word, *fēowertȳne niht*, meaning fourteen night. It is commonly used in the UK, and many commonwealth countries. People in the US and most parts of Canada use the term **biweekly** to refer to the time period of two weeks.

### **A New York minute**

The phrase *in a New York minute* refers to a very short period of time or an instant. Legend has it that the phrase originated in Texas in the late 1960s. The phrase was popularized by TV personality Johnny Carson who joked that a New York minute was the time between a traffic light turning green and the car behind one's car honking.

### **A Jiffy**

**Jiffy** is usually used to indicate a very short period of time, but it is formally defined in the fields of Physics and Chemistry as the time required for light to travel a centimeter. Also known as a **light centimeter**, a jiffy is equal to about 33.3564 picoseconds.

### **Friday 13th frequency**

Any month in the Gregorian Calendar that begins on a Sunday will have a Friday, the 13th, and there is at least one Friday the 13th in every year. A single calendar year can have up to 3 Friday the 13ths.

### **February 30**

February 30 was once a real date. Sweden added the date to its 1712 calendar following an earlier calendar error. The Soviet Union observed February 30 in 1930 and 1931 in an attempt to cut seven-day weeks into five-day weeks and to introduce 30-day months for every working month.

## China & time zones

Despite being larger than mainland United States in terms of land area, China has one single time zone. Mainland United States is divided into four time zones.

## Most frequent nouns

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, *time* is the most frequently used noun in the English language, while *year* is the third most frequently used noun. *Person* is the second most used noun.

## Sun light's arrival

The Sun's light reaches the surface of the Earth about 8 minutes after it has left the surface of the Sun. It takes 3 minutes to reach Mercury and about 4 hours to reach Neptune.

## Sidereal time & day

**Sidereal time** measures time according to the position of stars in the sky. A **sidereal day** is the time it takes for a specific star to reach the same position in the sky. It is a few minutes shorter than a mean day, spanning 23 hours, 56 minutes, and about 4 seconds.

## Antarctica time zones

The Antarctica and the Arctic are the only areas where all standard time zones currently followed in the world, converge. Amundsen–Scott Station on the South Pole however uses New Zealand time.

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## *Your Club Newsletter*

Have you recently seen something of interest that you would like to share with your club members? Why not send it to me for inclusion in our newsletter. My email:

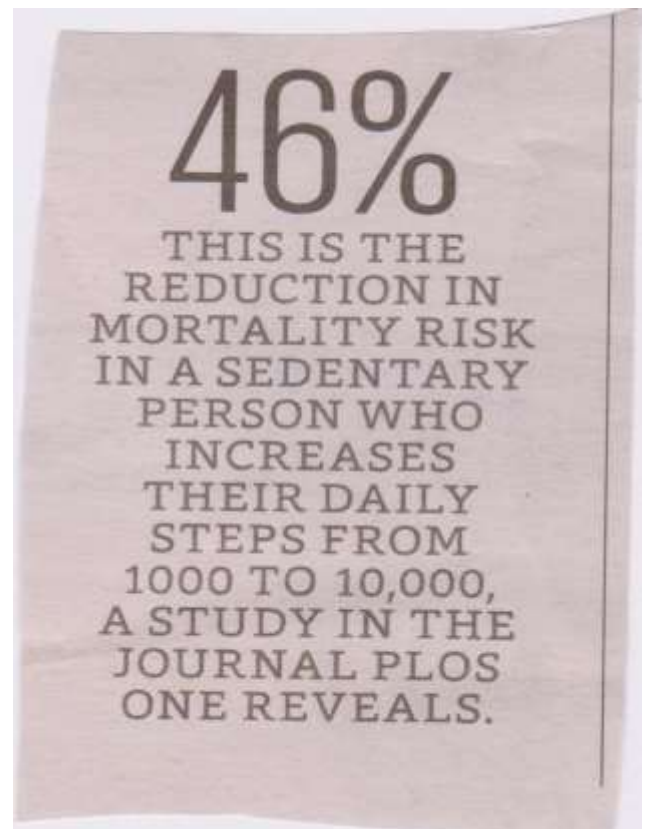
[jennifer\\_mary\\_jones@hotmail.com](mailto:jennifer_mary_jones@hotmail.com)

Or you could contact me on my mobile

0405 310 537

Remember, if it is of interest to you, it will be of interest to others.

*Jenny Jones*  
*Newsletter Editor*



*With thanks to Judee Radford*

## *Things aren't always as they appear.....*

A woman was flying from Melbourne to Brisbane. Unexpectedly, the plane was diverted to Sydney. The flight attendant explained that there would be a delay, and if the passengers wanted to get off the aircraft the plane would re-board in 50 minutes.

Everybody got off the plane except one lady who was blind. A man had noticed her as he walked by and could tell the lady was blind because her Seeing Eye Dog lay quietly underneath the seats in front of her throughout the entire flight. He could also tell she had flown this very flight before because the pilot approached her, and calling her by name, said, *'Kathy, we are in Sydney for almost an hour. Would you like to get off and stretch your legs?'* The blind lady replied, *'No thanks, but maybe Max would Like to stretch his legs.'*

### **Picture this:**

All the people in the gate area came to a complete standstill when they looked up and saw the pilot walk off the plane with a Seeing Eye dog! The pilot was even wearing sunglasses. People scattered. They not only tried to change planes, but they were trying to change airlines!

True story...

Have a great day and remember.....  
THINGS AREN'T ALWAYS AS THEY  
APPEAR.

*With thanks to Margaret Ayre*

## *The Lecture*

There's an old man walking along the street at two in the morning.

He's stumbling a bit and holding a glass. So the police stop him and ask him where he's going.

'To a lecture.'

'At two in the morning?' asks the policeman. 'What's the lecture on?'

'Smoking and drinking,' the old man says.

'Who's giving it?'

'My wife.'

*With thanks to Geoff Jones*

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## *Wattle Day 1 August*



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*With thanks to Margaret Ayre*



# Memories





