

1500 Trivia

Trivia from the 1500s

- Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May and still smelled pretty good by June. However, they were starting to smell, so brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odor.
- Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women and finally the children — last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it hence the saying, “Don’t throw the baby out with the bath water.”
- Houses had thatched roofs — thick straw, piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the dogs, cats and other small animals (mice rats, and bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery, and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof; hence the saying, “It’s raining cats and dogs.”
- There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could really mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That’s how canopy beds came into existence.
- The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt, hence the saying “dirt poor.” The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh, the straw left over after threshing grain— on the floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they kept adding more and more thresh until when you opened the door it would all start slipping outside. To prevent this, a

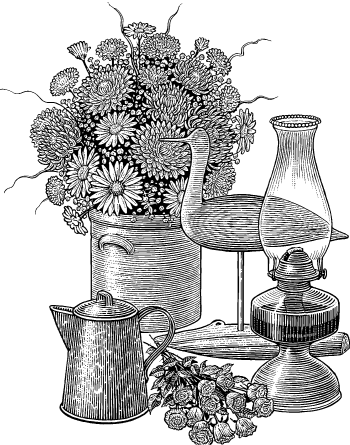
piece of wood was placed in the entranceway hence, a “thresh hold.”

- They cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes the stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while, — hence the rhyme, “peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old.”
- Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man “could bring home the bacon.” They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and “chew the fat.”
- Those with money had plates made of pewter. Food with a high acid content caused some of the lead to leach onto the food, causing lead poisoning and death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, tomatoes were considered poisonous.
- Most people did not have pewter plates, but had trenchers, a piece of wood with the middle scooped out like a bowl. Often trenchers were made from stale bread which was so old and hard that they could use them for quite some time. Trenchers were never washed and a lot of times worms and mold got into the wood and old bread. After eating off wormy, moldy trenchers, one would get “trench mouth.”
- Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom

of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests got the top, the “upper crust.”

- Lead cups were used to drink ale or whiskey. The combination would sometimes knock them out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up — hence, the custom of holding a “wake.”
- England is old and small and they started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a, “bone-house” and reuse the grave. When re-opening these coffins, one out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive. So they thought they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the “graveyard shift”) to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be “saved by the bell” or was considered a “dead ringer.” And that’s the truth.

Who said that History was boring?



Plain Sense

High Plains Mental Health Agree to Disagree

Contributed by Karen D. Beery, LCPC, Consultation and Education Department

Learning to “agree to disagree” is an important skill for both children and adults. Brothers and sisters are going to squabble with each other, no matter what their age and personality differences, and in spite of the best parenting efforts. Disagreeing and arguing is normal, and such conflicts can be a learning opportunity, particularly for children. Learning how to deal effectively with conflict, to discuss differences and problem-solve are skills that need to be learned and carried on into adulthood.

It’s okay for parents to acknowledge a child’s feelings of anger, but the misbehavior or name-calling that accompanies that anger should not be acceptable. When those involved have been allowed time to cool off and calm down, parents need to work with the children in talking over the problem together. Apologies as needed should be expected, and an agreement as to the resulting conse-

quences if this type of behavior occurs again. It also helps to have the children go back through the conflict and behaviors again, and “practice” more appropriate responses.

Many times, one of the parties involved will feel they have been treated unfairly, or will have a difficult time understanding the other’s point of view, resulting in a verbal continuation of the conflict. This is when “agreeing to disagree” is necessary. Nobody is right, and nobody is wrong; each just has a different point of view. With time, maturity and experience, that view may change. But for the current time frame, this type of compromise may be the best solution.

As stated above, “agreeing to disagree” is also an important skill for adults. Relationships are 50-50, with the ability to compromise, reason, see the other’s point of view, and act appropriately as key components of a successful relationship. And learning those at a young age helps insure better communication when dealing with conflict as adults.

Did you Know —

Q. What separates “60 Minutes,” on CBS from every other television show?

A. No theme song

Q. Half of all Americans live within 50 miles of what?

A. Their birthplace.

Q. Most boat owners name their boats. What is the most popular boat name requested?

A. Obsession

Q. If you were to spell out numbers, how far would you have to go until you would find the letter “A”?

A. One thousand

Q. What do bulletproof vests, fire escapes, windshield wipers, and laserprinters all have in common?

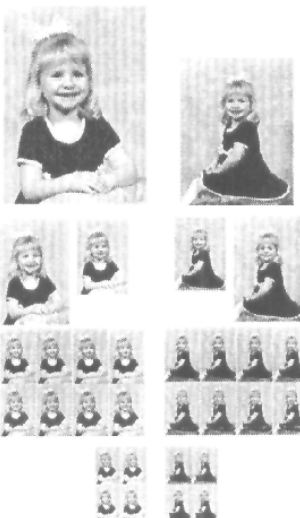
A. All invented by women.

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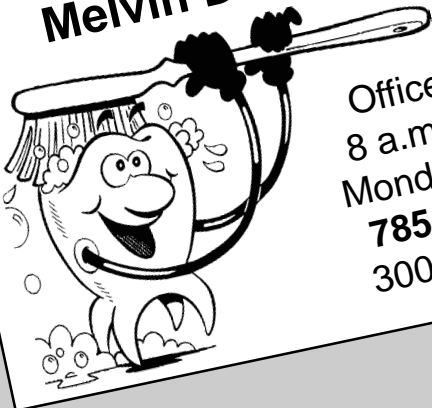
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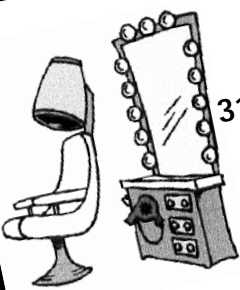


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