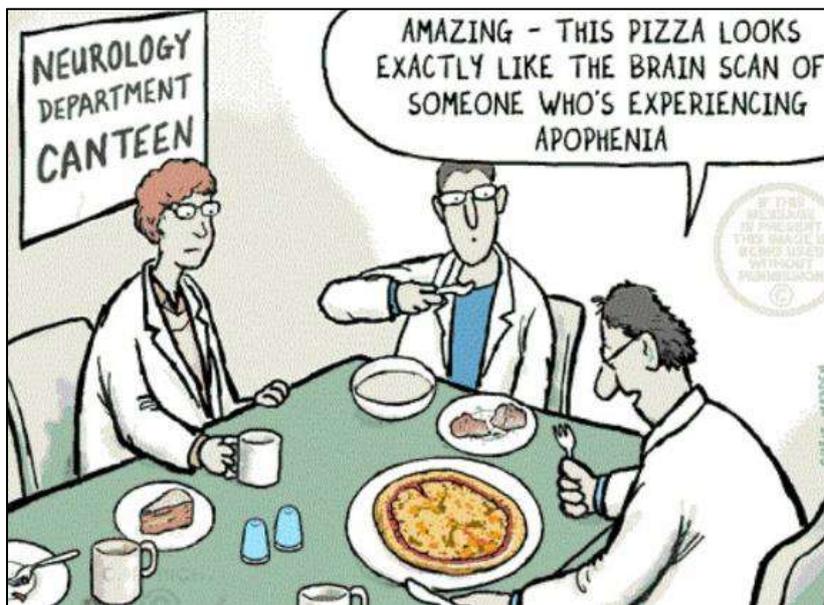


Tales from *Apophenia Island* (ATH2020)

A few tales from some of those who put a huge amount of effort into helping us find Captain Trumpscrubbe's long lost pirate treasure.

The Psychologicals

"Fellow sufferers:"



Famous Five+

A romantic notion:

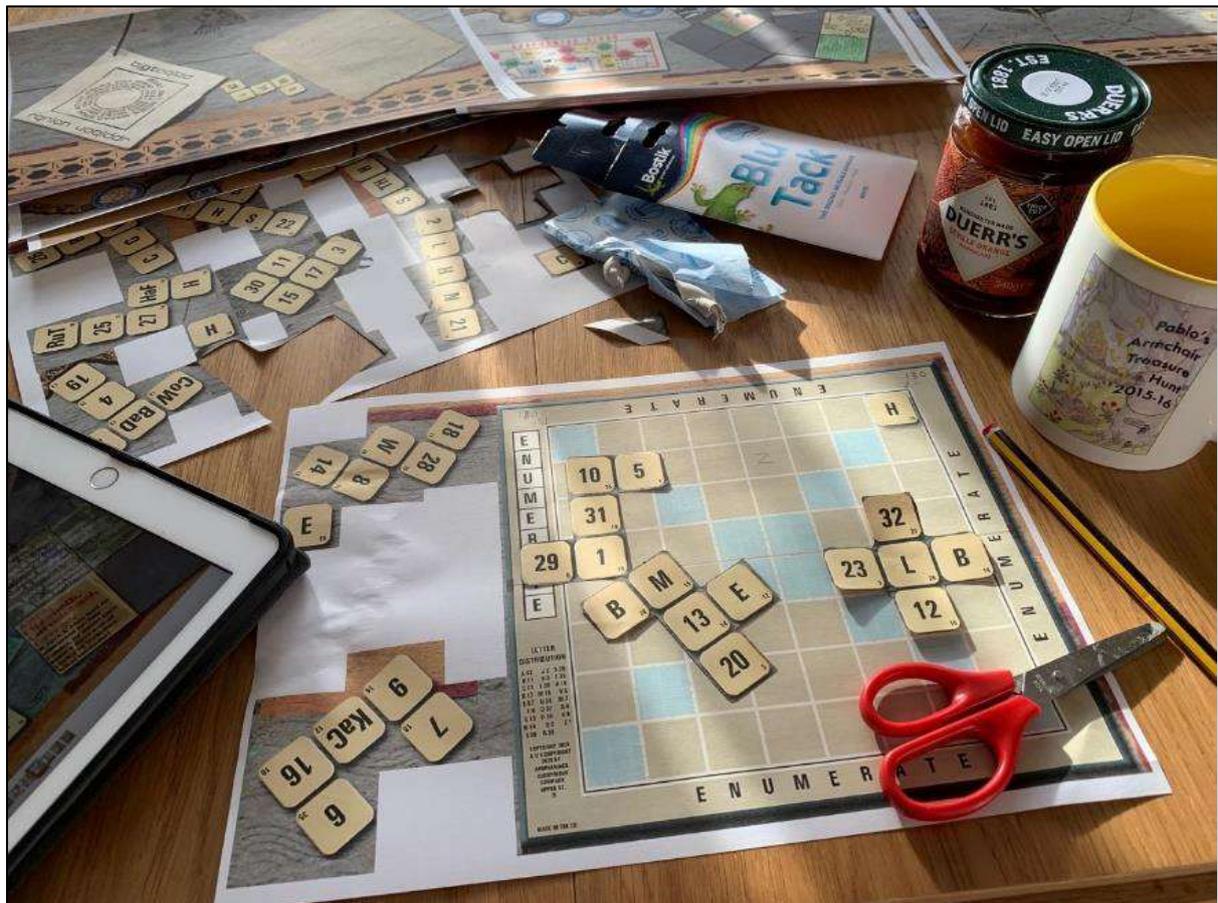
"We think the treasure is located in Valentine's Park, Redbridge, North East London. But for lock down we would have made a visit"

PATHfinders

Who knows, the Logica L, seemingly screwed so carefully to an old (ship's?) log, may be found in the undergrowth in one of the photos above, taken during Phil's hour of exercise on January 2nd.

Despite our inability to solve this hunt, it has been a very entertaining one, with lots of original puzzles, and a fascinating exploration of London history

and old maps. And, yes, we did get the scissors out! Thank you for the incredible amounts of time you must have put into creating this work of ATH art. We only hope that you have finally solved the secret of the map, and that we are not doomed to spend the rest of our days combing that accursed island, listening to the surf booming about its coasts, and waking start upright in bed with the sharp voice of Captain Trumpscrubbe still ringing in our ears: "The Great Emerald! The Great Emerald!"



Made in the EU is nearly an anagram of 'Enumerate Hid'. We're just missing an R - or as a pirate would say 'Arrrrrr'.

Pub Quiz: Brillig [found from Pablo's answer sheet - not our original answer of Baroque, the period began in 1600]

VOE: Uses Ogham Alphabet (as found in a team member's Xmas present)

Almost Last Again

“The locations are in approximately the right place for this to be a map of London but the shape of the island is that from Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe”

Chiltern Fellowship

“We thank the setters for an initially entertaining but ultimately frustrating hunt. Once again we haven't found the treasure and suspect there were further depths to the hunt that we did not excavate.”

Beef Leamington

A very neat idea from Beef Leamington, albeit not the most practical of burial locations:

“A guess at treasure location: it is where lines joining the two ‘X’ locations and two ‘Treasure’ locations cross, which is near King’s Cross station.”

The Psychologicals

“The Capital Ring goes through 'Queens Wood' where a rare jewel beetle is widespread.”

“There's an American steam punk band called Abney Park, named after the cemetery in London, who had a song named "Derelict" - a version of "Dead Man's Chest", the fictional song from "Treasure Island". The song was expanded into a poem by Young E. Allison. They also had a song called "Abney Park", which includes the lines:

*An island lost alone he forged for them
Away from the city where they did fend.
This island was the treasure that they fought for
Welcome to the park. Step inside my home.
It's crowded it's dark, yet here I stand alone
An island of my own, like old Prospero built
For my life I atone I'm armed to the hilt
WELCOME TO THE PARK!*

“The setters’ Youtube account has uploaded some concert footage from Union Chapel on Upper Street (10 years ago), and is subscribing to a channel about Abney Park.”

“One gravesite along the Capital Ring is called Shipwreck. The epitaph reads *'The sea shall give up its dead', ' Sacred to the memory of Henry Orfeur, lost with all the crew, by the wreck of the schooner Invoice, in the Bristol Channel, Nov. 23, 1856, aged 23 years. Also John his brother, of the barque Geraldine, last heard of April 14, 1862, near the equator, aged 17 years'.*”

Arthur & His Three Agathas

An entry from Germany:

We hoisted up all sails, raised the jolly roger with an extra crossbone, put on our eyepatches, buckled on our wooden legs and left the harbour cheerfully with the mild evening breeze, late one foggy winter evening - setting course for new horizons, beaches and islands in the faraway lands of the unknown. On board an amazing crew of grizzled old pirates - Captain Arthur (Jürgen) and his three Agathas. Three elderly ladies - Bernie, Cora and me, second mate Andie. Additionally we chartered Colonel Christian, the man with the connections to all music halls around the globe and a soft spot for German wheat beer, not for Gin. He never sailed before and was our rookie on board.

We ran into heavy seas, threatened by fierce winds but we kept on struggling, hardly any sleep at night, forgetting about Christmas and New Year’s Eve during our fight against the holy but cruel waters. During those stormy days we counted fibonaccis and dinosaurs, met vampires and other strange creatures, strolled through the London of nowadays and London of the past. We learned a lot about this wonderful city and its places, prisons, churches, graveyards, execution docks, about glorious days and happy days in pubs.

And I’m afraid we didn’t even get all your fantastic details and cross connections and clues and hints. Err... I’m sure we didn’t get them. Although of course we see all the efforts and hearts and souls you’ve put in there. Thank you very much. Unfortunately we haven’t been clever enough to solve everything. Not nearly. To be honest we have millions of gaps and uncertainties, we don’t have any idea how to solve the message in a bottle, are almost completely lost to find anagrams in a foreign language and struggling

and extending ourselves while searching for sense in English expressions with ambiguous and equivocal, trivocal and quadrivocal meanings.

Our solution is far from being complete, so the title race will be going on without us. Having probably sent in the closest entry to deadline, only one minute before midnight, right on the money, dripping with sweat, hoping that there would be no delay on crossing the Channel, using our advantage of being one hour ahead, we proudly declare: It was a lot of fun and we did it!

Failure was not an option.

Athwart, me hearties!!!

The Psychologicals Return

At around 13.00 today, 29th January, a local member of the Psychologicals team located the treasure in Abney Park close to the GW Hunt obelisk and took chip #2 from the box.



Early on in the hunt, we had deduced the box was hidden in Abney Park, based on the questions, the blue disc pictures/locations and the OE pictures and was likely to be close to a grave of one of the Music Hall singers. Three of the team live in London and had it not been for the lockdown, they would have gone together for a group search. Instead, we had to rely on one family who live

within walking distance. They'd already made two unsuccessful recces before the official closing date, so we put off a third visit hoping for more information. Sadly, all we then managed to decode was the message from the Turning Grille that confirmed our deduced route from Defoe's disc. We'd formed the theory that Hunt was an apt grave ("Hunt's End") for the location, so went there today.

Dave Kee Team

An account of a rare treasure site visit:

Beaten by the System – Again!

As the years go by, we slip further down the rankings, this year 24th. A long way from the glorious years of 1992-94 when best solution was just a formality. We have never been "*first to the treasure*", a long standing aim that seems more distant. This year we struggled, just solving apparently simple puzzles was like wading through treacle. The more effort we put in, the further we seemed to be from the solution. There were many false dawns with the Capital Ring, Three words, questions linked to roundels, Bus routes and more. It was with some despair that we put in our pitiful entry.

"Despair is the price one pays for setting oneself an impossible aim."

Graham Greene

But wait, no one had found the treasure and come Tuesday 1pm there were more clues! Our chief code breaker was still holed up in quarantine in Dubai. He was available full time until Saturday. Were we in with a chance after all?

"We always hope, and in all things it is better to hope than to despair."

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

By Wednesday afternoon we were convinced that Abney Cemetery was the place, and it was time to exhume the Alberts, Hunt and Hunter. So, Thursday at 1:01am we fired off our findings to Captain Trumpscrubbe. We knew that a site visit with this information would surely find the treasure. No response from the Captain during Thursday, another dark day. Luckily one of the team local to Abney volunteered to make his permitted exercise for the day a site visit. So, armed with the same information I had given Captain Trumpscrubbe, Bob set off late Friday morning.



Bob called to signal his departure and the team waited for news. Would it be “Snow conditions bad” or “Wind still troublesome”? We waited. At last, a call from Pauline. Bob’s phone’s battery had died and although they had found the cemetery, they had not found any of the graves! Note that although Bob was my first choice for this

expedition it was from a shortlist of one. However, Bob had chosen his companion well, not only did she know how to work a mobile phone she had local contacts who knew the cemetery, and, in a trice, they were at Hunt’s grave and “... *there is a yellow number 1*”. Celebration back at base but what ticket had we got. Pauline fell silent, had her mobile phone succumbed to the excitement? Pauline reported in that no box had been found. Was this going to be a repeat of Messing where we were at the tree concealing the treasure box and missed it? The message from base was clear, keep looking, keep looking, keep looking. Minutes later came the report we were hoping for, we had the “Great Emerald of Apophenia” and ticket number 1. Cue team celebrations.

“False Dawn.”

Rudyard Kipling

We had 1st prize at last but just like the parallel Trumpscrubbe universe, victory was stolen from us. It was not postal ballots that did for us but virtual finds. We were officially 3rd to the treasure, although we did get to keep the “Great Emerald of Apophenia”.

This was the 3rd ticket number 1 that we have found, and, like the others, we have not been designated “*first to the treasure*” – has the ATH establishment stolen our victory, again?

- The first time there were two treasures and the one we found was declared Fiction.
- The second time we used watch-makers tools to break into the treasure casket rather than use the obvious combination lock. We reassembled the casket and the break in was only detected when our entry did not disclose the combination. We were outrageously demoted to 2nd!
- This time those wretched Tech companies have done for us by allowing others to sneak ahead with Virtual Finds.

We were thinking of leading a baying mob to the Apopheniacs Cave to get some redress. There are mountains of "Stop the Steal" placards discarded by Captain Trumpscrubbe ready for reuse. But, on reflection, they were a losing hand first time around, so I think it is time to let it go...

"Reality Check."

Literally moments after Bob and Pauline's site visit I heard the sad news that James Medhurst, the setter for ATH2021, was very seriously ill with Covid-19. A sobering dose of reality and a reminder of what really matters. Our sympathies are with his family and friends.

David Kee

21st February 2021

On behalf of the eponymous team