



THE MAGPIE

BRADFORD'S PHANTASMAGORICAL NEWS SHEET

Issue 11

Autumn 2024

The Magpie is also printed using soy-based ink on proper recycled paper.

SATURDAY 21 SEPT 2024
CITY LIBRARY 11AM-4PM

BRADFORD ZINE FAIR

Martlet Song

by Tom Branfoot

As engines plough the city's field you say most birds fly away from fire except the martlet singing toward the nuclear sun modelled after swifts and forever on the wing they are birthed in flight signifying hardship and strife until squat legless bodies fall from the heraldic sky. I come to you with a parliament of quandaries levitating through leaded fog set in the windows of my housebody where do I fit in this restless thrash of feather and beaks. We were speaking to the museum guide about apparitions at Bolling Hall watching a wax replica of Cromwell's death mask wondering how it ended up here in manorial waste its yellow translucency mingled with an odour of wattle and daub invoking interregnum and the battle of Adwalton Moor you say I need a haircut I look like a roundhead. Martlets snowing from elm tree branches *Pity poor Bradford* the white ghost whispered to the Earl of Newcastle in the witching hour close to dawn the charge of martlets saw it all and centuries later us too desperate to see something unreal because the reality of England is brutal and the brutality of the world is too real when I was young they used to paint a wax-sealed stamp of blood on the impact site where a woman died after being pushed over the balcony where do we go after disaster after life when the wings are closed to visitors? Below us a system of underground tunnels for when birds hail out of the sky and war feels closer than breath

Stacking books like a human being (would)

We're all haunted. All the things we wish we had done, not done, words we wish we had said, not said, unsaid.

Haunted by the ghosts of the everyday - that half eaten sandwich rotting in the depths of your bag in a busy commute, something stuck in your teeth that you just can't get out, hiding a newly found stain on your shirt, undoing a book crease that won't go away, not giving to the homeless. In some shape or form, we're all haunted.

By leaving things as they are, we've unintentionally let the dread in, free to roam, wreaking havoc and guilt on our psyche. How long till they outstay their welcome and become *UNEXPECTED ITEM IN THE BAGGAGE AREA*.



shi
Stay spooky ~

The Badly Drawn Ghost of Bolling Hall

by Mike Barrett



In 1643, the Earl of Newcastle, a Royalist commander, slept in what is now called the Ghost Room at Bolling Hall. He woke up in the middle of the night when his 'bedsheets were being pulled' by the spirit of a woman pleading him to "*Pity poor Bradford*". Still shaken in the morning, the commander decided to change his original plan to kill all residents of Bradford for their Parliamentary sympathies. He ordered his troops to only kill those who offered resistance. Only 10 people were killed that day. Result!

A Ghostly Gathering on the International Day of Peace

by Sue Easterbrook

Every September 21st, as the world pauses to acknowledge the International Day of Peace, a celestial congress convenes in a realm unseen. It's a gathering of *extraordinary* spirits, the architects of harmony, the alchemists of tranquility - the pacifists and peacemakers.

Imagine a realm where the air is thick with compassion and understanding. Here, Gandhi spins his wheel of nonviolence with renewed vigor, his spirit undimmed by the passage of time. Martin Luther King Jr.'s resonant voice echoes through the halls, a constant reminder of the power of hope and unity. Rigoberta Menchú Tum, her spirit a testament to indigenous wisdom and resilience, shares stories of struggle and triumph.

These luminaries of peace are joined by countless others, known and unknown, who dedicated their lives to bridging divides and fostering goodwill. They share stories, strategies, and dreams, their spirits intertwined in a collective pursuit of a world free from conflict. There are lively debates, of course, about the most effective paths to peace, but always underpinned by a mutual respect for diverse perspectives.

In this celestial assembly, there's a sense of optimism that is infectious. These are souls who have witnessed the darkest corners of humanity and yet emerged with a resolute belief in the power of nonviolence. Their unwavering commitment to peace is a testament to the enduring spirit of hope that resides within us all.

While their work continues unseen by most, their influence ripples through the world. They inspire activists, guide diplomats, and soften hearts. Their message is simple yet profound: peace is not an abstract ideal but a tangible reality that can be cultivated with determination and compassion.

So, on this International Day of Peace, let's remember these extraordinary individuals. Let us honor their legacy by carrying forward their torch, by choosing kindness over conflict, and by working together to create a more harmonious world. For in the realm of the spirits, the peacemakers are always at work, their influence as enduring as the human spirit itself.

To read more about the pacifists and peacemakers, the activists and the rebels, why not visit the **Commonweal Collection** at the University of Bradford. To become a member you will need to bring proof of address (*such as a utility bill or driving licence*) or your Biometric Residence Permit to the JB Priestley Library Welcome Desk (tel. 01274 233301) on any weekday during staffed hours. Email for more info. commonweal@peacemuseum.org.uk

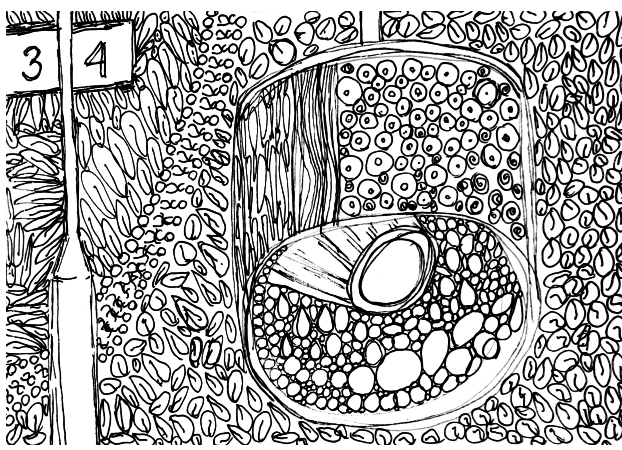


Illustration by Penny Moe

* The Magpie *

A Radical News Sheet for Bradford.
1000 copies distributed free in venues around the City Centre and across West Yorkshire.

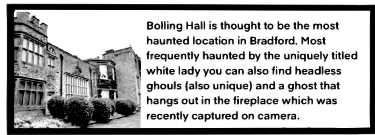
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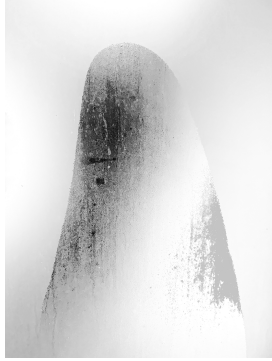
This issue of The Magpie is sponsored by The Listening Room (Barrett & Blank).



The Great Fade Out

by Ruth Parker

I have a ghost in my shower cubicle. I first noticed them in the covid lockdowns, increasingly I'd been spending more time in the shower as I realised it was the only space in the house I could get a little time alone. The bathroom itself was not safe as the children would frequently and casually barge in whilst I was on the toilet, the locks having been removed due to a spat of accidental lock-ins. Often I forget to even close the door as it seems ultimately pointless to expect any privacy. But for some reason the shower cubicle is



respected as an area only to be occupied one at a time. I find myself blissfully momentarily alone, that is until the hauntings begin. At first barely there, but as we march through time, having to do everything alone and yet barely having any time alone my outline seems to diminish and theirs grow. Did my increasing presence in the cubicle anger them, were they feeding off my disappearance or were they coming to my aid? As we stare at each other's outline I wonder how long before I entirely fade out.

BOOM

by Satrio Nindyo Istiko

Sunday evening. England is playing against another country. My brother would have loved to watch the football game in an English pub. It's been a long time that I haven't been surrounded by football fans. Before I moved to Bradford in early 2024, I lived in Toulouse, France, and before then, Brisbane, Australia. Both places are all about rugby, and now here I am, back in football country.

But football is not the only thing that returns to my life. There are also mosques and madrassahs. In Toulouse and Brisbane, I rarely saw them. It was only in Indonesia, my birthplace, that I was surrounded by mosques and madrassahs. Now I see them all the time in Bradford.

Sometimes I have a flashback when I see a madrassah. It's a memory of me and my brother. We were learning the Quran in a madrassah near our childhood home in the outskirts of Jakarta. We never liked the other boys in that place. They hated my femininity, and they made fun of my brother's fat body. I can still see it - how those scums pretended there was an earthquake as my brother walked in front of them. One step, boom, another step, boom, and boom and boom and boom until everyone in the class laughed. The teacher stayed religiously silent.

This evening, I'm planning to stay away from the football fans. As I wait for the train at Shipley station, I'm hoping that I won't bump into them. A few weeks ago, I was in a train with a friend and near us, there was a group of drunk lads, being loud and spilling beers. They didn't hurt anyone, and they were having fun. Yet I was so alert for the whole trip. And now I feel alert again as I notice, from the corner of my right eye, a white man in his 50s struggling to use the ticket machine right next to me. I can smell alcohol on him.

"It doesn't fucking work," he grumbles. I stand up, and help him by pressing the screen options a bit longer. It works. "Ah! Thank you." Then, he sits right next to me.

"You're going to watch the game?"

"No, I'm going home." I quickly avert my eyes to indicate my preference for solitude.

"I'm going to watch it with my mates. That's where I'm going."

"Great, I hope England wins." My brother would have talked to this man about the players, the opponent team, the... whatever topics football fans talk about.

"Sorry, I don't usually have white cream on my face." He has what looks like a cut from shaving and he has covered it with white cream. "Would you like some?" He takes the cream from his pocket. I say no.

When the train comes, I don't see any other football fans inside. I guess they're already at the pubs or staying at home to watch the game. I just sit down near the window when the same man asks me: "Is it alright if I sit next to you and we talk?"

"Yeah, sure, absolutely." It's the kind of thing my brother would have said.

"You live in Shipley?"

"My mother lives here. But I live about a 10-minute drive from her. Used to live with my wife, and now I live on my own since she died."

"I'm sorry."

"That's okay. I still see her, if you know what I mean."

"Yeah I do."

"Do you? I mean, do you... as well?"

"Yeah. Yeah, absolutely, yeah."

"Can you tell me? I'd like to hear it if that's okay. Cause for me, it's not like I see my wife in flesh, you know what I mean? It's more like I see her presence when I come across objects she loved or used to talk about."

"Well... when I was walking towards the station earlier, I saw a group of men walking together, and I think I saw my brother walking with them as well. The thing is: he's not here. Then, they turned a corner, and I didn't follow them, so I couldn't check if it was just my imagination. But today's his birthday, you know?"

"Oh." He looks pensive for a few seconds. "That's lovely. That's very, very lovely."

"It is, isn't it? I think it is."

"I agree. It helps, you know. Seeing them."

"Ghosts, you mean?"

"Uh, yeah... ghosts." He's about to say more when he notices the next stop. "This is my stop. Thank you for the chat, for sharing with me." He stands up and leaves.

I get off at Bradford Forster Square. My phone rings as I walk towards the exit. It's my brother.

"Hey, kamu bisa ngobrol nggak sekarang?" I take a deep breath as I prepare myself to listen to him. He's been struggling to get a job in Indonesia and managing his finances. There's not much I can do, and I feel useless because of it. I wish that I could be with him right now, to simply close the distance between us by walking. One step, boom, another step, boom, and boom and boom and boom until the whole world shrinks and it's just him and me.

Living with ghost

by Riza Hussaini

So it turns out I don't believe in ghosts. Once as a kid, maybe. Perhaps it's the adrenaline from being frightened when hearing or reading tales of the paranormal but I can't say that I'd seek out getting a fright from the supernatural. Experiencing sleep paralysis is horrifying enough, as is the exhilarating feeling of 'swimming' in the sea when one can't swim nor stay afloat... it's almost impossible not to be seduced by the ocean.

beings can cause you physical harm if they wanted to.

As a young person, my own fear was a simple one. What would I do if this happened? How would I get away if harm was intended? What purpose would the encounter serve? This buoyed my already overactive imagination, and with the solid foundation of said cultural beliefs, I probably did imagine I felt and experienced



Growing up in a hubbub of superstitious cultures; ghosts, ghouls and spirits were openly talked about, celebrated even and rejoiced. A lot of myths and legends have roots in the region's animist ideology so in that context, cultural beliefs are deeply intertwined with the supernatural.

Shaped by ancient religions, varying practices and rituals, these traditions provided promising and readily accepted ideas of ghosts and spirits. Many were not perceived as evil either and definitely not corporeal. As time went on, further religious beliefs influenced the thinking that ghosts or at least spirits live on the same plain as humans, evoking stories that these

some unexplained forces.

Thinking back, the fear or appeal of ghosts and ghost stories alike waned when life and adult responsibilities took over. It almost completely disappeared when someone dearest to me passed away. To believe in ghosts meant that one had to believe in good and evil, angels and demons - to me at least. And I don't really know if I did believe in evil forces.

However I've begun to see ghosts these last few years. When I awake, at times when I'm by myself, when I look at any reflective surfaces. I see ghosts of her, ghosts of my past selves and apparitions of future me. These are the only ghosts that exist.

Shades of children

by Mike Duckett

I think Bradford when I was growing up was conducive to ghosts. I was a happy, safe kid but even I knew about the serial killers and the fear; the broken buildings and the way people treat the place. I have a memory, which I will never now know if it's true or imagined. It takes place in a cellar, underneath one of the tall old buildings by Fox's corner, Shipley. Back then you could sometimes explore down stairs past tipped junk and find your way in.

It's one of my earliest memories and like every truly young memory we retain, I only have it now because I have remembered it, chewed it over, made it a sort of false memory of my remembering of it.

The room was grey, and I was attuned like the youngest children ARE attuned, more aware and alert than our tired caffeine-dependent tunnel-vision task-oriented adult minds can manage. And then I realised, something something. My memory here, vague. *Shades of children?* Something more non-human perhaps than your classic ghost.



A basement access point to the cellar.

**BRADFORD PASTEP
INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL**

SATURDAY 5 OCT 2024
TRAPEZIUM ARTS 11AM-3PM
58 Kirkgate, Bradford BD1 1QT
SUBMISSIONS WELCOME!