



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

April 2023

2 April	Informal worship service.....	9.30am
7 April	Good Friday Combined Service at San Antonio.....	3.00pm
9 April	Easter Sunday, Reg Weeks.....	9.30am
9 April	'Son-Rise' service (on beach, by RSA).....	6.30am
16 April	Informal worship service.....	9.30am
23 April	Ross Scott.....	9.30am
30 April	BYO Fellowship Lunch with Doug Rogers.....	12 noon

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Power Hour – Sundays 9.30am
Breakfast Prayer – Tuesdays 7.45am
Mainly Music – Thursdays 9.15-11.15am

For pastoral care needs, please contact one of the Local Ministry Team
Rev Reg Weeks 027 491 5947, Simon Shaw 562 8772, Colin Dalziel 562 7238 or
Sandy Lang 562 8753

What about Easter Saturday...?

The Easter holiday break is just around the corner and hot-cross buns have been with us for weeks. For many in the community that's about all they care to know about this long-standing work break bequeathed to them by Christianity, a statutory holiday season in New Zealand since 1873. For early Anglicans and Catholics, it was a long-held major religious festival. Not so much for Scottish Presbyterian settlers – they found no scriptural warrant for this observance (though I suspect they were quite happy to take the holiday when it became official).



While Presbyterians have long since adopted the observance of Good Friday and Easter Day, the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday seems little known among us. Most join with their secular neighbours in treating this day between Good Friday and Easter Sunday just like any other Saturday.

But what of the disciples? Having hurriedly deposited Jesus' body in a borrowed tomb they had to wait through the intervening Sabbath before they were able to complete even the customary rites of burial. It's not difficult to imagine what a hard day of waiting that would have been. When they had entered Jerusalem the previous Monday, hailing him as the coming Messiah, nothing could have been further from their minds and expectations than his sudden trial and execution the day before. Two long nights and a whole day wrapped in their grief, their anguish and bewilderment. And the added fear of reprisals.

When someone dies a natural death, there is little surprise; the feelings quite different and the stages of grief – denial, anger, bargaining, depression and then acceptance – are somewhat muted. But sudden death or cataclysmic destruction are quite another story.

Perhaps it may put you in mind of those in Mississippi who lost not only loved ones but also all that they had, waking to the howling wind of a massive tornado and, with the coming of daylight, discovering that their whole community had been destroyed. Or, closer to home, the long wait of the families of the Pyke River miners; or maybe of those in Northland, or the Esk valley, or the East Coast, now living with the devastation wreaked by cyclone Gabrielle. Grief also encompasses lost things, lost places, lost hope, despair.

My father and I worked in business together. After lunch one Sunday, a stranger appeared at the door with the news that my father had collapsed on the bowling green. I went with him to find my dad lying dead on the grass, with my mother in tears and the doctor standing awkwardly alongside. The shock, the numbness, the disbelief – he was only 49. And so, I began to work through the well-worn stages of grief.

Maybe you have experienced the sudden loss of a loved one, have felt that sickening devastation? How could it have been otherwise for the disciples?

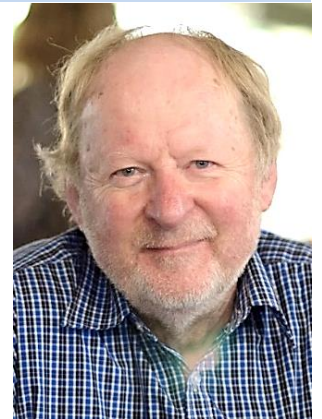
So, this coming Easter as you set about enjoying the freedom of Easter Saturday, why not take a moment to get in touch with your own experience of grief and join for a moment the pain of those who waited through that first Easter Saturday and, thereby, be in a much better place to share their joy at the outcome of Easter day.

Reg Weeks

Clerk's corner...

Combined Good Friday Service: On Friday 7 April at 3pm, we will share with the people of San Antonio and St Alban's in a Combined Good Friday Service at San Antonio church. Members of all three churches will participate.

Easter Sunday Son-Rise: As usual, we will hold a 'Son-Rise' Service, on the beach, by the RSA, at 6.30am. Sunrise on Easter Sunday is at 6.44 am. There'll be tea/coffee and hot-cross buns afterwards in the nearby community hall kitchen.



Dawn is an unfamiliar time but, like sunset, it's always a special time of day, and especially so on Easter Day. This is because Easter is timed in relation to the moon phase. Hence, 'full-moon-set' is at about the same time as 'sun-rise'. I took this shot on Easter Sunday 2022, as we waited for sunrise. Come share it with us...!



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Sandy Lang

Consider the birds of the air...

One of the joys of living near Wellington harbour is seeing the birds and other wildlife that visit our shores. In the 30 or so years I have resided in Eastbourne, I have seen: one school of flying fish, a few sightings of dolphins and orca pods, two different young seals and one large leopard seal resting on the gravel near the sea wall. Then there are the Australian birds in the Hutt River estuary - black swans and royal spoonbills. And so many seagulls and oystercatchers they hardly rate a mention!

When our children were small, a favourite activity was to "go crabbing with Dad." Rock pools were inspected and stones turned over in order to spot and occasionally pick up small indignant crabs, which were then released unharmed back to their watery homes. Now, some decades later, it is a simple pleasure for us to sit beside the harbour with a takeaway coffee and watch the human and avian activity taking place.



On Sunday 25 March at Lowry Bay reclamation, a large flock of white-fronted terns (*tara*) were gathered on rocks and railings, all facing into the wind, as if they were weathervanes. Many more were catching small fish further out on the harbour. On their return to the quiet perching group, they flew around a few times calling out as if to say "look what I've got" before landing and again facing northwest. They seemed quite peaceful - there was no snatching of another's catch, as some gulls do.

Another favourite bird of mine is the Australasian gannet (*takapu*), which folds its wings and bomb-dives into the waves to catch a fish; it is sometimes seen in Petone and the Bays with its darker-plumed chick flying behind.

Jesus's directive to "Consider the birds of the air ..." in Matthew 6:26 or "consider the ravens ..." in Luke 12:24 was in the context of his encouraging the disciples and the gathered crowds not to worry about the provision of life's basic necessities, like food and clothing.

His rationale: God knows and provides for the needs of birds, plants and people alike. And that anxiety is not productive - it adds neither length nor quality, to life.

Watching birds is a relaxing and popular pastime, gaining more popularity worldwide. I don't think it is accidental that the symbol of Gods Holy Spirit, present with us, is a bird. A dove, a symbol of peace and purity.



And the picture of the ducks outside the Dowse gallery in Lower Hutt? I watched in fascination as the mature duck led her supersized brood of 22 younger ducks to safely cross the road to the stream behind the council buildings. What a diligent and caring mother! She chivvied them along with a few quacked instructions (especially for the stragglers) under her constantly watchful eye.

When Jesus lamented that the inhabitants of Jerusalem rejected him and his saving message, he compared himself to another protective mother bird. In Matthew 23:37. *"O Jerusalem... ..how often have I longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing."* And Psalm 61:4,5. *"I take refuge in the shelter of your wings... O, God."* I imagine a sheltering wing to be a soft, warm and safe place.

There are so many mentions of birds in the Bible - sparrows, ravens, eagles and more. But in these days, when life's issues may seem sad or weighty, may we "consider the birds" and remember God as a loving, providing, ever watchful parent - not just for us but for all His creatures and Creation.

Gill Burke

Rood screen – Decoy tanks...

War spawns some strange industries. A small company in the Czech Republic manufactures thirty different designs of decoy tanks out of synthetic silk - including the US-made HIMARS.



The practice of using decoys and military deception is not new. Sun Tzu's treatise (fifth century BC) *The Art of War*, avowed a strategy of deception *'I will force the enemy to take our strength for weakness and our weakness for strength, and thus will turn his strength into weakness.'*

The children's song '*The Grand Old Duke of York*' is apparently based on military deception. Finding the enemy had vastly more troops than his own, mere ten thousand, the commander marched his troops over the hill in full view (but out of the firing range) of the enemy. Then they marched back out of sight through the valley and reappeared marching over the hill again. All the enemy saw was wave after wave of soldiers arriving for the battle. They assumed that it was they who were vastly outnumbered, so they beat a hasty retreat. Incidentally, there was no *Grand Old Duke of York*, the song having been adapted from '*The Grand Old King of France*' – and that, in turn, was adapted from who knows where...

Anyone interested in military history might enjoy reading about *Operation Fortitude* and the elaborate deceptions created by the Allies prior to the D-Day landings.



My personal favourite military deception is the story of a fake airfield constructed by the Germans outside Potsdam in WW2. It had wooden aircraft and fake buildings. Apparently, one night the RAF flew over and dropped a wooden bomb on it...!

What's special about the Czech decoy tanks is that they are extremely sophisticated. They can be carried by four soldiers and inflated in just ten minutes. They look like the real thing even from relatively close, and they even have a thermal footprint that makes them look like the real thing on a radar. This may in part account for Russia's claim to have destroyed nearly twice as many HIMARS as America has supplied to Ukraine.

An equally important deception is the opposite - camouflage. The art of making the real thing NOT look like the real thing. You see, just because something looks like what we are looking for doesn't mean it is. And just because something doesn't look the way we think it ought to look, doesn't mean it isn't.

We have just celebrated Palm Sunday, when Jesus went to Jerusalem as King of the Jews. The people all knew what a king ought to look like, and sound like, and act like. But Jesus didn't look or sound or act like he was supposed to look and sound and act. He turned up riding on a donkey! Oh dear. Many people were bitterly disappointed...



Of course, we now know that Jesus was (and is) the true King. He just wasn't what people were expecting. He was different and He was much, much better than what they were expecting. Easter is a time to remind ourselves what following Jesus is really all about.

On that note, I wish you and yours a blessed Easter.

John Harris

Carol Pringle - A remarkable 'Labourer in the fields'

Most of us older members of St Ronan's congregation will remember Carol Pringle, who sadly passed away just before New Year. Carol and her husband Kevin worshipped at St Ronan's for several decades before they retired to Whitianga in 2016.

During those years, Carol was a driving force in many of St Ronan's outreaches to the wider community. The seed for what came to be called 'The Beanie Outreach' was planted early in 2007, as Carol explained in an interview published in the **Global Volunteer Network's (GVN)** April 2008 Newsletter, which is emailed to thousands worldwide.

"A group of women from St Ronan's... started knitting booties to welcome new babies at the weekly Mainly Music Programme. We went on to make beanies, which we sold to the families and raised \$275 for health initiatives at Nepal Orphanages. We felt it would be great if we could make beanies for the children at the orphanage as well. A beanie made especially for them. A gift for each child. We aimed to make 240 beanies, which initially seemed like a large target. We made them and kept on knitting!"

Little did Carol realise then, that over eight years, this outreach would grow to mobilise scores of motivated knitters, who produced thousands of woollen (and sometimes synthetic) beanies, booties, blankets, vests and slippers for needy children in more than 25 developing countries. GVN volunteers then carried these parcels to villages where they were working – initially in Nepal, Afghanistan, Kenya and Mongolia (the latter a *World Vision* connection). In July 2008, 100 of the group's beanies were even distributed to children in Bamiyan, Afghanistan, by the NZ troops stationed there.



Gradually Carol expanded her knitting army beyond St Ronan's, to the East Harbour Women's Club, the Waiwhetu Uniting Church and to dedicated knitters from the Hutt Valley, Kapiti and as far away as Karamea. The number of countries receiving the knitted goods grew and grew – Uganda, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Ethiopia; Mexico, Peru, Honduras and Costa Rica; Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand.

In the calendar year to October 2010, Carol and her team consigned over 120kg of knitted garments overseas, with postage often paid for by kindred organisations like Eastbourne Red Cross.

The Harris family have some fond memories of this outreach. John believes that his late wife, Ann, must have knitted more than 1000 beanies. Carol also distributed to the knitters a seamless vest pattern with no buttons or fasteners that could break or get lost (see photo). These vests were suitable for newborn babies in Afghanistan. Why? A widespread Afghan cultural belief was that the mother and child were vulnerable during pregnancy and too obvious

preparation of clothes for the baby could mean alerting 'evil spirits' - so little or no preparation was made until the baby was delivered - and safely home.

By 2014, St Ronan's had begun a new outreach to assist children at low-decile *Randwick School* in Moera, initially in reading assistance. Carol's team swung into action too, recognising that the families of many of the children could not afford slippers (to be worn in the classroom). So, in addition to beanies, around 140 knitted slippers were gifted to the pupils over the next year. This 'close-to-home' change in direction was also reflected in the donation of knitwear for newborn babies at *Hutt Hospital*, as well as closer co-operation with *Eastbourne Plunket* who distributed the knitwear to *Women's Refuge* and needy families throughout Hutt City.



Carol's outstanding organisational skills are still fondly remembered by all involved with *Mainly Music* - St Ronan's weekly outreach to Eastbourne toddlers. Cath Loudon-Sim recalls "Carol ensured the morning tea supplies were topped up, organised the baking and volunteer helper roster, then rang

and reminded the volunteers a few days before their duty. Everything she did, she put in 110% effort.". Louise Day "...loved Carol's enthusiasm at *Mainly Music*, especially her jumping. It was joyous and made everyone happy. She put together "*Eastbourne Mainly Music Munchies 2007*". This was far more than an ordinary recipe book. The recipes were from *Mainly Music* volunteers, including a section on kids treats."

As a St Ronan's congregation, we salute a remarkable Christian woman and echo Cath's farewell in the words of the last song of every single St Ronan's *Mainly Music* session: "We have sung and danced with you, laughed with you, loved with you, we have really cherished you, and now we say goodbye'. Arohanui".

Les Molloy

Power Hour – Sensing Easter

Easter is a time of celebration. Jesus has risen and is alive again! To explore and explain how that all came to be, Power Hour children have used their senses of taste, touch, smell, sight, and hearing.

After a fun introductory game of *Hunt for the Cape Gooseberry*, with the beautiful symbolism of a sweet offering in the hollow casing, we gathered around a spread of this and that for a *Sensation*.

But first, we refreshed our understanding of the days of Easter Holy Week. Friday (Good Friday) was the day Jesus was crucified and died and Sunday (Easter Sunday) was the celebration day that Jesus had arisen - and sweet chocolate egg hunts! We then figured out that Saturday, the Sabbath, was a day of rest with no work done. Now to begin the *Sensation*.



Telling the story “He has risen” using our five senses to explore different components

Taste - Reflecting on how our own tears trickle down our cheeks and taste salty when licked, we dipped our fingers into a bowl of salty water to taste. After many dips, we talked about tears of sadness of the three women who had gone at dawn on Sunday to Jesus’ tomb with a mission to finish the task of adding perfumes and spices, as was the custom.

Touch - A large round stone was passed around to feel the stony roughness. The children also found it interesting to bring out the textures by wetting it with the salted water. While the women were expecting to have to do something about the large stone that covered the tomb entrance, they didn’t quite have an answer about moving it. Their worry turned to surprise and relief to find the tomb was open.

Smell - Using a pestle and mortar, the children ground up rosemary, cinnamon and bay leaf to

make a potpourri. Breathing in the sweet scent was a pleasure when rubbing the potpourri between their fingers. Some then rubbed it on the backs of their hands to smell. A discussion followed on why there was the custom of putting perfumes and spices on the entombed body. They were also inspired to make a potpourri at home.

Sight – The children read John 20:1-8 about Simon Peter and John who (on hearing about the empty tomb from Mary Magdalene) went into the tomb and saw the body-linen wrappings and the folded head wrapping. The children then used table puppets to enact the discovery of the linen wrappings, folded them up separately and placed them inside the tomb.

Hearing - The children took turns to read Luke 24:5-7 and imagined - *Two men (in bright shining clothes stood by) and said to them, "Why are you looking among the dead for one who is alive? He is not here; he has been raised"*.

Ah, now the penny dropped as to where the phrase, '*Jesus has risen on Easter Day*' fits into the Easter story and the understanding that, '*Jesus is alive...!*'



Lastly, we reinforced the joy of sweet life with Jesus through crafting a hollow tomb with a 'sweet' wrapped and decorated with '*He has risen, indeed.*'

Susan Connell

PS Power Hour starts at 9:30am. Term 1 ends on 2 April, Term 2 starts 30 April and ends 25 June.

PPS *In the Spirit* - Following the inspiring story by Rev Nunns about Joseph West (the 11-year-old Auckland, who was running a marathon to raise funds for the flood-stricken children of Muriwai) our *Power Hour* children shared in church their own similar story of being 'in the Spirit'. At their initiation the children had made a handsome donation to the *Cyclone Gabrielle Appeal* through the St Andrew's Church of Hastings, as mentioned in February's Record.

Treaty and Reconciliation...



Ute lent by a local vehicle dealer to genLend

Presbytery Central's latest gathering was held on 18 March at St Alban's Palmerston North. It was a good opportunity for representatives from Central's 78 parishes to connect and share stories. Some of the stories, of course, were about the effects Cyclone Gabrielle on people in Hawkes Bay and Tairāwhiti. It was heartening to hear of the excellent work parishes were doing to support those in great need. At St Andrews in Hastings, Rev Jill McDonald rapidly organised *genLend*, a scheme run like a *Toy*

Library where owners of useful equipment - like generators, water blasters, pumps, small diggers etc - can lend them to those in greatest need. The level of financial and physical support for this initiative has been very impressive.

The keynote speaker was Dr Alistair Reese who gave a stimulating talk titled *Treaty and Reconciliation* leaving us with much to think about. The role of English missionaries in helping Māori understand the Treaty was critical. Māori trusted the missionaries' good intentions and without this trust the Treaty may not have happened.

Dr Reese also reminded us of the words of Judge Sir Eddie Durie *"We must not forget that the Treaty is not just a Bill of Rights for Māori. It is a Bill of Rights for Pākehā too. It is the Treaty that gives Pākehā the right to be here. Without the Treaty there would be no lawful authority for the Pākehā presence in this part of the South Pacific. We must remember that if we are the tangata whenua, the original people, then the Pākehā are the tangata tiriti, those who belong to the land by right of the Treaty. To honour our forebears, then, we as Māori must never challenge, threaten, compromise, or prejudice the rights of Pākehā to be here. We cannot claim our own rights if we do not first respect those of others."*

Simon Shaw

Phil's Photo - The sea's all ours to share...

Arguably, our little village's greatest asset is the nearby sea (but don't forget the nearby bush too). The sea's all ours to share – no fences, no barriers. We look at it and we enjoy watching its many moods. We also walk alongside it, we ride on it, and we swim and fish in it.





Recently, Eastbourne hosted to two great community events involving the sea. On 5 March the annual *Wharf to Wharf* swim (over 90 entries - local and visiting) and on 25/26 March the *2023 Wellington Centreboard Champs*, hosted by the Muritai Yacht Club (over 100 entries - local and visiting).

For both events planning and participation were excellent. In a large part their success relied on teams of enthusiastic volunteers. To see such teamwork in action is a joy. Many working together can achieve so much more than one working alone.



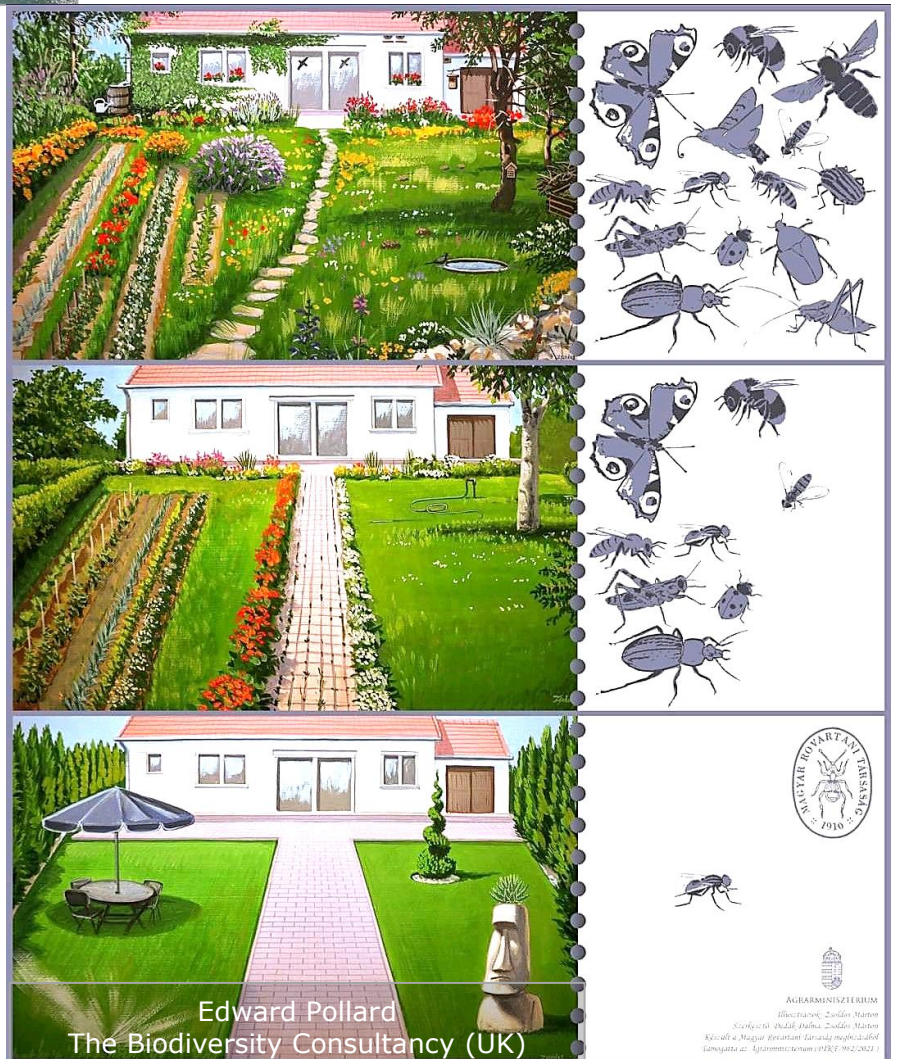
Also joyful, were the participants showing true Kiwi spirit.

Here's our Dazzle and Wal looking very pleased with themselves, having won the *Sunburst* races (Dazzle claims he always beats Wal – by sitting up the bow. Wal sits at the helm so comes second!).



Phil Bengé

(contributed by Sandy Lang)



**Edward Pollard
The Biodiversity Consultancy (UK)**

*O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—*

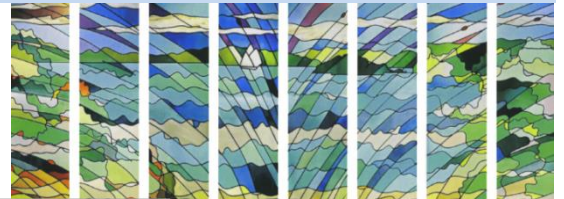
*To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
Old men and babes;
And loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!*

*He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.*

From *The Rime of The Ancient Mariner* -
Samuel Taylor Coleridge
(contributed by Geoff Mann)

'Duncan Haynes Trio' - Sunday Afternoon Jazz...

On Sunday 14 May, at 4pm, at St Ronan's
The 'Duncan Haynes Trio' will present
***Directions in Jazz - The Music of Herbie
Hancock & Wayne Shorter***



Duncan Haynes *piano*
Blair Latham *saxophone*
Seth Boy *double bass*

Their aim is to broaden the horizons for their audience in an intimate acoustic setting and to share their passion for creating genuine musical moments.

Their repertoire is chosen to represent the most significant aspects of these two master composers and performers and to communicate their joy of improvisation.

The trio wants their audience to feel involved in the energy, drama, humour and spirit of their play - to feel almost part of the band.

Sandy Lang



Our God calls us to worship and grow together and to show the love of Christ through serving our community.

Directory

St Ronan's Presbyterian Church,
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Local Ministry Team

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Contributions for the 'Record' are most welcome
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The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors
They do not necessarily represent those of St Ronan's Church

**And the closing date for our next *Record* for May 2023
is Sunday 30 April 2023**