

Friday 15 December 2023

Dear Everyone

The end of term is nigh, and for those of you of a certain age, you may remember Stanley Green, the man on Oxford Street whose sandwich board announced, not that the end was nigh, but that protein was bad for you. Protein, he declared, ignited the passions!

Our Friday night treat is steak and salad. Hardly fusion food. Yet fusion is all the rage this week, as a pepper corn sized gathering of hydrogen enjoyed elaborate laser treatment of the kind not available at the beauty salon, to create more energy out than went in. This is great news: protein, protons – let's get excited.



At this time of the year the news media and other sales organizations like to publish lists of end of year things. Christmas presents you never wanted, holiday destinations you do want and, most enjoyably, books to read over the holiday. As an occasional buyer of obscure books, I get the email notices from Abe Books, the online aggregator of book dealers from around the world.

Its missive this week was a listing of most expensive sales of 2022. Book collecting, like wine and art, is part of some people's wealth portfolios. I met a man once who collected boutique luxury hotels, but that is a whole other story. In the list of Abe Books mega sales of 2022, ranking number three at a sale price of £32,975, is the 1940 First Edition of Jesse Livermore's *How to Trade in Stocks*. Well I never.

At a discrete Ed Tech event earlier in the week, two bits of news were causing a flutter. Microsoft's 4% purchase of the London Stock Exchange Group to provide data analytics and Cloud services, a snip at £1.5 Billion, and the test release by Open AI of ChatGPT. Heralded as the most impressive natural language artificial chat bot yet, tech analysts and social media comment on its ability to write code on demand, draft business letters and contracts, and pass exams. Some are suggesting it is a disruptor to Google. Might this spell doom for exams as we know it? I've been playing with it. It's impressive. Have a go here:

<https://chat.openai.com/auth/login>

A fellow Head at another choir school sent me this delightful goat sampled version of Holy Night. A serious message from Action Aid Sweden, made with great humour. A sure-fire hit, and one the children will love. I'd put money on them mimicking this one, so be warned!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ih2jmNU_6UI

I look forward to seeing you at the School's carol service on Tuesday.

This will be my last letter before the New Year, so come the time, have a proper break, enjoy family and relax in good company and good food.

Best wishes

Simon