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TODAY IN HISTORY

- 1559: Queen Elizabeth I was crowned.
- 1759: The British Museum opened in London.
- 1912: The first sickness benefit (ten shillings per week), unemployment benefit (seven shillings) and maternity benefit (30 shillings) were introduced in Britain.
- 1963: A ban on mentioning politics, royalty, religion and sex in comedy shows ended at the BBC.
- 1992: Croatia and Slovenia's independence was recognised by the European Union, signalling the end of Yugoslavia as one nation.
- 2009: All 155 people had a miracle escape on a US Airways flight when it ditched on the Hudson river in New York after it struck a flock of birds.

BIRTHDAYS



- Margaret Beckett, politician, 81;
- Princess Michael of Kent, 79;
- Gareth Hale, comedian, 71;
- Mario Van Peebles, actor, 67;
- James Nesbitt (left), actor, 59;
- Mary Pierce, tennis player, 49;
- Scott Murray, rugby player, 48;
- Jermaine Pennant, footballer, 41.



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TOURIST RATES

Australia (A\$)	1.81	Poland (zloty)	4.45
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Euro (€)	1.11	South Africa (rand)	22.33
New Zealand (N\$)	1.90	US (\$)	1.22

IN BRIEF

Premier League ace Joelinton's home targeted by gang of thieves

NEWCASTLE United star Joelinton has become the latest Premier League star to be burgled.
The injured Brazilian footballer, 27, was watching his side's home match against Manchester City on Saturday when an alert on his phone notified him three men had entered his house in Ponteland.
Northumbria Police

deployed officers and a helicopter to the scene but the raiders had fled before they arrived.
Last month, Manchester City player Jack Grealish was targeted by burglars while playing at Everton.
The thieves are thought to have stolen £1million of jewellery.
Grealish, 28, said he was devastated.



Alert at game: Joelinton

GRAN, 90, ROCKS ON A STOOL, NOT IN A CHAIR!



A GREAT-gran aged 90 is thought to be Britain's oldest female drummer after lessons with Simply Red's Chris Joyce, 66. Barbara McInnis booked sessions with him six months ago and is now in three bands. The retired headteacher from Morecambe, Lancashire, said drumming brought genuine joy back into her life and 'removed a few wrinkles'. *SWNS*

Housing market sees green shoots as prices rise £4,500

THE average asking price for a home is up by £4,571 month-on-month to £359,748, according to Rightmove. The 1.3 per cent increase comes despite higher interest rates and the wider cost-of-living squeeze curbing spending power, said the property website. Prices are still down 0.7 per cent on 12 months ago but 2024 should be 'a smoother year for movers', the firm said.

8,500 on virtual wards in run-up to Christmas

A TOTAL of 8,586 NHS England patients were treated on virtual wards last month, easing pressures on hospitals. Virtual beds let patients get care at home while being monitored remotely. NHS medical director Prof Sir Stephen Powis called them an NHS success story but nursing leader Wendy Preston warned they were 'not a silver bullet'.

Scientists scent victory over US invader with 'eau de mink'

AN INVASIVE species of mink that has devastated native animals could be eradicated in Britain in five years using scent from their own anal glands, scientists say.
The American mink has spread wild in Britain and Ireland after being brought in for fur farming and escaping or being set free by

activists. It preys on local breeds, birds and fish and has cut water vole numbers by 96 per cent.
But a Waterlife Recovery Trust trial, where the mink are trapped, quickly detected and shot, has freed East Anglia of the species. 'We use an anal gland lure - eau de mink,' said Prof Tony Martin.



It's McDonald's, but the kind of McDonald's that has your taste buds thinking it's their birthday, and you thinking "Wow, I didn't know my taste buds could think."

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