

# This week's big news



## The lights go off for Earth Hour 2020

On 28 March, millions of people around the world switched off their lights to mark Earth Hour. Earth Hour is an annual event run by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) – an organisation that protects wildlife and the environment. At 8.30pm people were encouraged to turn off any non-essential lights for one hour, as a way to combat climate change (the long-term change in world weather patterns caused by human activities). This is because the production of electricity often leads to the gas carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) being released into the Earth's atmosphere. CO<sub>2</sub> is one of the main causes of climate change.

Sydney Opera House was one of many famous landmarks to turn off its lights this year. Others included Tower Bridge and The Shard in London, and the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, Germany. The first Earth Hour was held in Sydney, Australia, in 2007, but it is now marked in 190 countries.



The Sydney Opera House before and during Earth Hour.



Weighton had fruit cake to celebrate.



**DID YOU KNOW?**

The oldest person ever who could prove their age, was a woman called Jeanne Clement, from France. She died at the age of 122.

## The oldest man in the world celebrates his 112th birthday

The world's oldest man has celebrated his 112th birthday. Bob Weighton was born on 29 March 1908 – meaning he has lived through 22 UK Prime Ministers and five ruling monarchs.

Weighton lives in Hampshire, England, and has three children, 10 grandchildren and 25 great-grandchildren. He met his wife in Taiwan, where he was teaching English classes, before working as a codebreaker during the Second World War (1939–1945). Once the conflict was over, he returned to teaching in England before retiring in 1973.

Weighton's birthday party this year had to be cancelled because of the coronavirus outbreak, but he says he's used to things not going to plan. He grew up during the First World War (1914–1918), and years later was stopped from travelling back to the UK from the US because the Second World War had begun. Weighton explained, "Having your plans

interrupted and being confronted by new situations that you could do nothing about is not really new to me. There is nothing we can do about it, so you might as well do what you can. Never mind about the things that you can't."

He also said that he was surprised to have reached such an old age. "I just accept it as a fact. It's not something I ever intended, wanted or worked for but it's just one of those facts of life," he said. "You might find it amazing but it's just one of those things."

To celebrate his birthday this year – his first as the world's oldest man – he ate some Genoa cake (a type of fruit sponge). The care home where Weighton lives arranged for *Happy Birthday* to be sung to him on his balcony. Coincidentally, Weighton was born on the exact same day as Joan Hocquard, who is the oldest woman in the UK. She celebrated her 112th birthday at her home in Dorset, England.



## IT'S AN AMAZING WEEK FOR...

### ONLINE BIRDWATCHERS

More than 90,000 people watched the first peregrine falcon egg of 2020 being laid on top of Salisbury Cathedral, in England, via a webcam. It happened on 22 March, with further eggs laid on 25 and 27 March. The birds of prey typically nest on cliff ledges, so the tall cathedral is perfect for them.



One of the nesting falcons.



### A FISH AND CHIP MYSTERY

A mystery person has bought fish and chips for everyone in their village, to bring a bit of cheer during the lockdown. Stephen Davidson, owner of The Fox Inn at Denchworth, Oxfordshire, England, said an anonymous person had recruited him to deliver fish and chips to 171 residents every Friday for at least 12 weeks.

### A SPECIAL BIRTHDAY PARTY

Around 20 neighbours sang *Happy Birthday* to eight-year-old Theo last week on his street in Streatham, London. Theo's mum, Ali, organised the event because her son was disappointed that his party would have to be cancelled this year because of the coronavirus. The neighbours included trumpet and saxophone players.



Theo with his family.

# The oldest man in the world celebrates his 112th birthday

Once you have read the article, try any of the following activities...



## Investigate

List the last ten prime ministers Mr Weighton has lived under, giving their political parties and dates of office. Challenge: can you also list the first five he lived under?

## Writing challenge!

Choose one of the following writing warm-ups.

**1** Write a pretend letter to Bob Weighton when he was a schoolboy. Describe some of the ways in which you think school is very different compared with his experiences and see if you can think of things that probably have not changed much.

or

**2** Mr Weighton explains how he has had to deal with a lot of changes of plan during his long life. Write your own recipe for dealing with unexpected problems or disappointments in a cheerful and positive way. Remember to use numbered instructions and imperative verbs.

## Hold a debate with your family

During Mr Weighton's school days, the world suffered wars, disasters and a major outbreak of a dangerous virus. These days, those things are still happening. Does that mean that mankind has not learnt anything over the last 112 years? Or has life, in fact, improved a great deal over that time? Have we made great progress despite all the setbacks and, if so, how has life got better? What do you think?