

# THE THUNDERER

**a.k.a The Inmates Gazette**

**October 2007**

**Number 13**

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From our NEWEST correspondent- SAMANTHA KING.

A juggler was driving to a show when he was stopped by a Traffic Policeman. The Policeman peered into the car, looked at the back seat and demanded to know “What are matches and lighter fuel doing in your car?”

“I am a juggler” replied the driver... “Oh Yeah” said the Policeman suspiciously, “Let’s see you prove it.”

So the driver collected his props and began juggling three blazing torches at the roadside.

Just then an elderly couple drove by and the husband turned to his wife and said, “ I’m glad that I gave up drinking; Look at the Test they’re demanding now.”

Samantha 5C

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Scrabble, originally called IT, was invented in 1931 by a New York Architect, Alfred Mosher Butts, who lost his job during the Depression and spent his unemployment counting letter usage in the New York Times to work out letter distribution and values. Butts called his invention by various names-Lekiko, Crisscrosswords and IT- but never registered a Patent.

In 1948, Lawyer James Brunot bought the rights, called the game Scrabble and cleaned up. Butts did not complain: he lived comfortably, making jigsaw puzzles and inventing games, one of which is still marketed as “Alfreds’s Other Game”.

Scrabble has sold more than 100 million sets world wide. The most commonly played word in competitive Scrabble is QI, the Chinese word for Life Force. The 2007 World Scrabble Championships, will be held in November in Bombay (Mumbai), India.

Doreen Skalo 9C

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From our childrens children.

Teacher: George Washington not only chopped down his father's tree but admitted it. Now, do you know why his father didn't punish him?

Louie: Because George still had the axe in his hand?

Teacher: Clyde, your composition on "My Dog" is exactly the same as your brother's. Did you copy his?

Clyde: No Teacher, it's the same dog.

Teacher: Harold, What do you call a person who keeps on talking when people are no longer interested?

Harold: A Teacher!

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### FILMING "THE LEOPARD"

"The Leopard", the 1958 novel by Giuseppe di Lampedusa, is set in the context of Garibaldi's 1860 campaign to unify Italy, but it is timeless, a wonderful read for us today.

I hiked in Sicily in 1962, inspired by the English translation of Lampedusa's book. Arriving in the village of Sta Margerita, which has one café, one square with a fountain, and one broken-down old Lampedusa palace, I was surprised to see soldiers in 1860 uniforms playing bowls in the square. I entered the café to blow my last lira on strong coffee.

It felt like the Last Chance Saloon when a Wild West figure walked in, actually Burt Lancaster. I said "Mr Lancaster, is this a film, have you a job, I'm broke." Wild West replied: "I'm Prince Fabrizio. Visconti [the Director] is away, researching in Palermo, we can't pay but be a soldier, eat with us in the café and sleep in the attic. Whose side are you on? We need Bourbons."

The garibaldis wore red scarves, the Bourbons very decrepit uniforms stolen, so rumour had it, by the local mafia from the Naples Museum. All were villagers. Firing rusty muskets which discharged an acrid white smoke to much noise, it was like a snowstorm in the bright summer days as we charged around the square or splashed through the fountain. I'm somewhere. Slowly the blizzard cleared. Bowls was resumed. The rival parties retreated to the café for a few Marsalas, if not a few biscuits (Sainsbury's not Sta Margeritas).

The evenings were an odd mix of book, film, garbled languages, some of the cast, a few villagers, plain good café food washed down with rough Marsala and not a TV chef or corporate caterer in sight. I sat next to Alain Delon as Tancredi, rebel, ironist (“If we want things to stay the same, everything must change”) and dashing lover, now grinning at my awful French. Opposite was the most beautiful woman in the world in 1962, Claudia Cardinale as Angelica, daughter of the comically rough diamond Mafia Mayor, Don Calogero, also present. In the café her Italian engaged everyone. When I brashly quoted to her the words in “Casablanca”, “Here’s looking at you kid” she knew it of course. Burt presided with wry geniality, sometimes interpreting. He once laid his copy of the novel on the table to explain that he was watching the film, and his own role in particular, to ensure closeness to the text-an ideal a bit lost that week, I felt, boozily climbing the ladder to the attic.

“Tha Leopard” is both a historical novel and a human drama expressed in manners, talk, superb landscapes, buildings, vision and values then and today: a classic of wit, form, feeling and sensuous description. The erotic fugue at Donnafugata is balanced in the end by the great Ball scene where the generations fade away to be, ironically, renewed. And they did pay my Bus Fare to Rome!

Fred Grubb 9B

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“Should we slow down because we are getting older, or hurry up, because we will not get any younger?”

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An Important date to put in your diary!

On Wednesday October 31<sup>st</sup> between 2.00pm and  
4.30pm.

At the Charlie Ratchford Centre.

**“A FRIEND IN NEED”**

\*Learn more about befriending.

- \*Find out what's available
- \*What do people need in the area?
- \*Would you like to help others?
- \*Tell us your ideas.

## **STALLS—DISCUSSION—REFRESHMENTS**

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### **TO KICK LEAVES**

To turn and scuffle through the leaves  
That fall and dance among the eaves.  
As children we enjoyed the fun,  
Of Autumn wind and slanting sun.  
To the young, a magic Fall,  
To the Old a warning call,  
Reminding us, stiff bones may not kick leaves,  
But we have not forgot,  
The breathless pleasure and the thrill,  
To scatter leaves and race downhill.

Julia Smith 8C