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ON THIS DAY 1858

Felix Mendelssohn's *Wedding March* was played at the wedding of Queen Victoria's eldest daughter Victoria, The Princess Royal, to Crown Prince Frederick of Prussia at the Chapel Royal of St James's Palace in London.

Mendelssohn's *Wedding March* in C major, was written in 1842 for his suite of incidental music to Shakespeare's play *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In an irony, the composer was commissioned to write the music by King Frederick William IV of Prussia to accompany a production of the play in Potsdam.

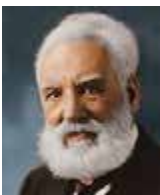
The first known instance of the *Wedding March* being used at a wedding was when Dorothy Carew wed Tom Daniel at St Peter's Church in Tiverton, England, on June 2, 1847, but it was The Princess Royal's decision that popularised the piece in the English world ever since.

Queen Victoria herself was a fan of Mendelssohn, who often played for the royal family on his visits to Britain.

Princess Victoria was 17 when she married. She was the mother of German emperor Wilhelm II who took Germany into World War I against Great Britain.

ON THIS DAY 1915

Alexander Graham Bell, right, made the first transcontinental telephone call on this day.



The inventor of the telephone, inaugurated the US service as part of a demonstration that included dignitaries in New York, Boston, Washington DC and San Francisco. Bell, in New York, made the first call to Thomas Watson, his former assistant, who was in San Francisco.

Bell repeated the words of his first-ever telephone call in March 1876, when he said to Watson, standing in another room, "Mr Watson, come here, I want you." This time Watson replied, "It would take me a week to get to you this time."

The call was an important milestone in the development of telecommunications. The device was revolutionary, transforming sound into electrical signals, transmitting them through a wire, and changing them back to sound again. It allowed business, industry, and government to communicate instantaneously by voice across long distances.

ON THIS DAY 1924

The first Winter Olympic Games opened on this day in Chamonix, France. Titled "International Winter Sports Week", it featured 14 events involving six sports. Such was its success that in 1928 the International Olympic Committee officially designated the Winter Games, staged in St Moritz, Switzerland, as the second Winter Olympics.

Five years after the birth of the modern Olympics in 1896, the first international competition involving winter sports was held in Sweden, but only Scandinavian countries competed.

Soon after the 1920 Olympics in Antwerp, Belgium, an agreement was reached with the Scandinavians to stage the IOC-sanctioned International Winter Sports Week.

In Chamonix, Scandinavians dominated the speed rinks and slopes, and Norway won the team competition with 17 medals. Canada won a hockey gold, scoring 110 goals in five games.

ON THIS DAY 1971

Major-General Idi Amin executed a coup in Uganda against the government of President Milton Obote. The seizure took place while Obote was attending the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Singapore. Amin had learned Obote was planning to arrest him for misappropriating army funds.



Known as the "Butcher of Uganda", he is considered one of the cruellest despots in African history. International observers and human rights groups estimate that between 100 000 and 500 000 people were killed under his regime.

He was ousted after he tried to annex Tanzania's Kagera Region in 1978. Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere's troops invaded Uganda, captured Kampala on April 11, 1979, and ousted Amin. Amin went into exile in Libya, then in Saudi Arabia, where he died on August 16, 2003.

History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again.

MAYA ANGELOU, Poet



THE rhyme about what little girls and boys are made of, on stained glass. The author is thought to be Robert Southey who lived from 1774 to 1843.



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RUTH FIRST REPAIRS

Repairs to the M4 Ruth First Highway resumed last week and are expected to be completed in April, with engineers 'working day and night to bring back normality', the Department of Transport said. See <http://bit.ly/M4Repairs>

THEN & NOW

Echoes in the corridors of healing



JESUS blessing children gathered with posies and bunches of fruit – and a growing fig tree.

Author and photographer takes rare opportunity to capture children's hospital

DUNCAN GUY

SAD sights they may be, but photographer and author Hugh Bland recognises the artistic beauty in the fraying elegance of decayed buildings.

Lack of maintenance, abandonment, vandalism and pillaging leave a trail of sadness that he captures in his lens.

His latest work is a soon-to-be-launched book about the Addington Children's Hospital and Nurses' Home – now under renovation after closing in 1984 – that caught his eye one day while taking photographs in the Point area.

It documents the peeling paint and the remains of child-friendly paintings themed on nursery rhymes, plaques naming community sponsors and references to the tragedies of World War I, along with statues and sculptures.

It also tells the story of the hospital's revival as the KZN Children's Hospital, which is a work in progress that still needs an estimated further R430 million.

Bland has offered R20 from the sale of every copy of his book to the KZN Children's Hospital Trust.

Addington Children's Hospital and Nurses' Home is Bland's second book, after *The Trappist Missions*. Both are strong in imagery.

He also started both projects in much the same way, stumbling across their topics.

His first was after he came across a mission station by chance.

His interest in the hospital was triggered when he noticed the gate into the closed-up ruin was open.

"I often went to the Point to photograph the buildings. I would pass the hospital all the time. It was an iconic building, so I often wondered about it," he recalled to the Independent on Saturday.

"One day I noticed the gate was open, so I snuck inside. There were doors open. It was like walking into a time warp.

"There was peeling paint, water dripping through holes in the roof. I wasn't supposed to be there but I just walked in and I just thought: 'Oh my word, look at all that art!'"

His first visit was not successful.

"I heard a security guard coming and made a hasty retreat, but I thought

– I have got to go back."

Later a building supervisor he knew reluctantly let him in.

In 2014, he had easier access when the building was opened to the public during the International Union of Architects conference.

The assignment also took him to the Mary Stainbank Memorial Gallery in Yellowwood Park, where he came across designs of statues and other relics she had made that were linked to the hospital.

Her friend, Florence Wilgeford Agnes Vann-Hall, joined her in adorning the hospital. "Wilgie's" mark was 52 stained glass windows.

Only nine remain. Among them, one tells the rhyme about what little boys and girls are made of.

Bland writes: "The artwork in the isolation wards is the *piece de resistance* in the old hospital. The artwork was done with the children in mind and to create a fantasy world.

"The children's thoughts during their waking moments must have absorbed the colour and fantasy around them, created by some very talented artists.

"The infected children had much to remind them of the tales back home.

"Parents visiting their children must have been somewhat comforted by the 'fairytales in glass' and would have enjoyed using them to distract children from their afflictions."

Driven by councillor Amelia Mary Siedle – mother of Durban's "Lady in White", Perla Siedle Gibson – much of the fundraising was done through people sponsoring costs.

Names still relevant to today's Durban are on ceramic plaques: readers of The Idler newspaper column, Durban Girls' College, and JML and Marie Baumann, who owned Baker's Biscuits.

Investigating the stories behind one such plaque took Bland to the Durban Jewish Club, hoping to find out more about a benefactor named Adolph Isidore Stiller. While making his inquiries, someone in earshot replied: "I'm Vivienne Stiller" and told Bland that Adolph Stiller had "sold merchandise in Natal, specialising in superior serge and suiting".

Addington Children's Hospital and Nurses' Home sells for R700, plus postage, from the author at email hugh-bland031@gmail.com



A PAINTING on glass in an isolation ward of a little girl praying.



HISTORY remembered in the hospital built soon after World War I.



LITTLE Boy Blue on a window in the isolation ward.



THE restored facade of the former Addington Children's Hospital and Nurses' Home, which will become the KZN Children's Hospital. An outpatients facility is already in operation. Restoration continues as money becomes available.



PEELING paint and destroyed sanitaryware presents an artistic beauty of its own.



A PLAQUE marking the donation of a cot by readers of The Idler column in The Mercury. Artwork will be preserved as the Addington Children's Hospital is a heritage building.



ADDINGTON Children's Hospital's covered courtyard with a sculpted fountain by Mary Stainbank in the background. Artwork is being preserved during renovations of the heritage building.



ZAK Fourie, a beachfront car guard in front of the Addington Children's Hospital where he was born, has watched spurts of renovation work over the years. He also had his tonsils out there, aged nine, and recalls racing the corridors in wheelchairs with fellow patients until nurses reprimanded them. Fourie is pleased about the work to bring the building back to life and hopes former patients contribute to its revival. | NQOBILE MBONAMBI