

MAY 2020

wednesday
May 20, 2020





THE DAILY CHRONICLE

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20, 2020

On This Date

1873 – Levi Strauss and Jacob Davis received a patent for blue jeans with copper rivets.

1940 – Russian American inventor Igor Sikorsky demonstrated his experimental helicopter. The following year, the Army Air Corps awarded him a contract to develop an operational model. The Sikorsky Black Hawk is still in U.S. and British military service.



1980 – The people of Quebec rejected a government proposal to separate from Canada.

1990 – The Hubble Space Telescope sent its first photograph from space: an image of a double star 1,260 light-years away.

Celebrity Trivia

Henry Fonda and Jimmy Stewart were best friends. They once got into a fistfight over politics. (Stewart was very conservative; Fonda was liberal.) They agreed to never discuss politics again.

Quote of the Day

“I think one day you’ll find that you’re the hero you’ve been looking for.”

~ *Jimmy Stewart*

Happy Birthday!

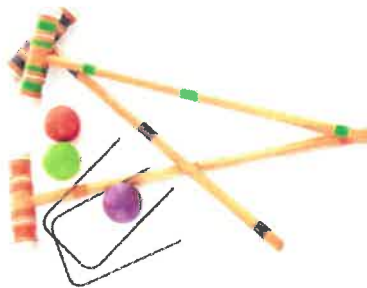
Jimmy Stewart (1908–1997) was a Hollywood film actor beloved for his down-to-earth persona. He tended to star as an average guy who faced adversity and always tried to do the right thing. He won the Academy Award for Best Actor in 1940 for his role in *The Philadelphia Story*. He also starred in the holiday favorite *It’s a Wonderful Life* in 1946. More of his standout films include the Alfred Hitchcock classics *Rear Window* and *Vertigo*. Stewart also had a distinguished military career; he is the highest-ranking actor in military history, having achieved the rank of brigadier general.



Mixed-Up Backyard Games

Unscramble the letters to reveal words that are backyard games.

1. SEESRSHOOH _____
2. EQOTCUR _____
3. BNAIODMNT _____
4. CBOCE _____
5. WALN ARDTS _____
6. LELVLYALBO _____
7. DRE VERRO _____
8. SERBEIF _____
9. MUPJ REPO _____
10. TAEHLRLEBT _____
11. ECNHOROL _____
12. EBSKBLLAAT _____
13. EIDH-DAN-ESEK _____
14. OHHCCOPTS _____
15. TCEURPA ETH GLFA _____
16. EIWFLF LLAB _____
17. IGNR SOST _____
18. EFREZE GAT _____



Mixed-Up Backyard Games

(solution)

1. horseshoes
2. croquet
3. badminton
4. bocce
5. lawn darts
6. volleyball
7. red rover
8. frisbee
9. jump rope
10. tetherball
11. cornhole
12. basketball
13. hide-and-seek
14. hopscotch
15. capture the flag
16. Wiffle ball
17. ring toss
18. freeze tag

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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Norman
Rockwell II

Boy with Baby Carriage, the very first Norman Rockwell painting on the cover of *The Saturday Evening Post*, appeared on May 20, 1916. The painting was an instant success.

This painting is also called *Salutation* and *Home Duty*.

The original oil on canvas painting, 20.75 x 18.625 inches or 53 x 47 cm, is currently housed at the [Norman Rockwell Museum of Massachusetts](#).

This painting also appears in seven Rockwell commentary books. It appears

- on page 27 of *The Norman Rockwell Album*,
- as illustration 3 of *Norman Rockwell's America* by Christopher Finch,
- as illustration 87 of *Norman Rockwell: Artist and Illustrator* by Thomas Buechner,
- on page 152 of *Norman Rockwell: Illustrator* by Arthur L. Guphill,
- on page 59 of *50 Norman Rockwell Favorites*,
- on page 14 of *Norman Rockwell: A Sixty Year Retrospective* by Thomas Buechner and
- on page 73 and plate 10 of *Norman Rockwell, A Definitive Catalogue* by Laurie Norton Moffatt.

This illustration propelled Rockwell on the road to financial success, artistic recognition and popular acclaim. Rockwell viewed the *Post* as the best place to display what his talents and hard work could accomplish.

Nervous Norman Rockwell

Rockwell had aspired to greater things than having his paintings published in and on children's magazines for some time before 1916. Yet he wondered if he had the stuff.

At the urging and constructive criticism of the cartoonist Clyde Forsythe, Rockwell painted two illustrations, *Boy with Baby Carriage* and [*Circus Barker and Strongman*](#), for presentation to the art editor of the Post.

Rockwell was very nervous about presenting his paintings to the editor of The Saturday Evening Post, George Horace Lorimer. Mr. Lorimer had a reputation of being very no-nonsense. Rockwell actually worried about being tossed out of Lorimer's office.

Well, he needn't have worried. Mr. Lorimer loved the two paintings Rockwell presented and bought them on the spot for \$75.00 each. That would be over \$1000.00 each in today's money. Quite a sum for a virtually unknown artist!

Indeed, that meeting was the start of a relationship that lasted 47 years and over 300 paintings!

Boy with Baby Carriage or Salutation

The picture shows three young boys on a Sunday afternoon.

Two boys are off to play baseball. They are dressed in baseball uniforms with baseball caps and baseball gloves. Both are making goofy faces and gestures to the third boy.

These boys are off to enjoy a day of what boys like best. They are off to play baseball for a while.

After baseball is played out for the day, they will find some other way to pass the time.

They may go to the creek and fish or catch frogs. They may build a fort. They may play pirates. They may even play soldier.

But they will not be baby sitting!

The third boy, dressed in his Sunday best clothes, has his baby sister in a baby carriage taking a stroll. He also has a baby bottle in his

breast pocket. He looks livid about the other boys' demeaning gestures.

Judging by the way his hat strap is flying backwards, the third boy is pushing the stroller past his tormentors as fast as he can!

I'm sure there are many emotions going through his head. Anger, frustration, jealousy... You can probably think of even more.

When he was painting the three boys in this illustration, Rockwell only used one model, Billy Paine. Billy was Rockwell's favorite model for many years. He appeared in many of Rockwell's works.

In an interview published in the November 1930 American magazine, Rockwell remembered Billy Paine.

"There was Billy Paine," he began.

"He was twelve years old," he said shaking his head. "There was my best friend. He died - fell from an apartment house when he was doing some kid stunt, climbing. They don't make many kids like Billy."

"Billy liked to pose - for the first few minutes. Then he wanted to throw things, or go out and play. Finally, I found a way to hold him. I had learned that if I paid him with a check, he would never come back to work for many days. A check didn't mean anything to him. So I paid him cash at the end of the day. Still he would become restless."

"I got a lot of quarters and piled them up. 'Billy,' I said, 'you'll get one of these every half hour, as long as you work.'"

"That was something he could understand. Every half hour, I would give him a quarter and point to the others that would be his if he kept on the job. The plan was a success, and I've used it for children ever since."

To Work Out Like a Samurai, Swing a Stick, Take a Hike—or Push Some Pencils

**Japan's feudal fighters were plenty tough.
But they didn't ditch their day jobs.**

BY [ISAAC SCHULTZ](#) MAY 15, 2020

**To Work Out Like a Samurai, Swing a Stick, Take a Hike—or Push
Some Pencils**



Samurai were fierceness in the front, but all business in the back. TOBES STUDIO FOR ATLAS OBSCURA

With gyms, pools, and spin studios around the world temporarily shuttered, it can be hard to find ways to exercise the way we used to. Atlas Obscura is taking this time to look back at different groups from history, to see what lessons they might have for working out in ways that help us maintain social distance.

IN FEUDAL JAPAN THERE WERE few folks you'd want to cross less than a samurai. The military nobility of the country's Tokugawa period were equal parts martial artists and state representatives, serving as the loyal officers of local *daimyo* (domain) lords.

But though they were born into the warrior caste, samurai didn't emerge from the womb as the fit foot soldiers you might imagine. That required training, and lots of it. Starting in childhood, samurai went to special schools or to private tutors to learn the various martial arts that would come to define who they were.

But what would working out like a samurai look like in the 21st century? And how could such a regimen be adapted for life at home today?

"A lot of calisthenics in the afternoon," says Michael Wert, an expert in samurai history at Marquette University who has taught Japanese archery in the Milwaukee area for about two decades. "[You] could swing a broom."

Swordsmanship was a diverse enterprise: By some estimates, about 700 different styles were practiced across the archipelago. (Archery, another important samurai martial art, had only three main styles). In practicing with a sword, samurai would iterate and reiterate key motions, sometimes using a wooden practice blade for the exercises.

Swimming was also an important skill for the warriors, and a version of samurai swimming is still practiced today. "It was good for your health," Wert says. "But it was also useful for, like, 'How do you cross a river when you have your weapons?' 'How do you shoot a bow and arrow while you're treading water?' That kind of thing."



Samurai came in all shapes and sizes. [METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART / PUBLIC DOMAIN](#)

After their training, which spanned childhood to early adulthood, many samurai took an extended break from fitness, focusing instead on the various administrative duties for the empire—accounting, for instance—with which they were tasked. After a war in the 1630s, the Tokugawa period ushered in centuries of peace. The samurai tradition continued unabated, but generations of these famed warriors never saw battle. In this way, says Wert, samurai were really “sword-wearing bureaucrats.”

“A lot of samurai just did the basic minimum they were required to do, and then the[ir] swords just kind of sat around,” he says. “Sometimes they would forget to carry them, and they [got] in trouble. They weren’t as gung-ho as we all imagine.”

That’s not to say that samurai weren’t fit. Many were in great shape, especially in their early years—a period in a young warrior’s life that was crowded with lessons in Confucianism and a mix of personal training sessions and classes with local teachers, who instructed them in the varied disciplines of swordsmanship, archery, and horseback riding. But when they got older, things changed.



Samurai armor was impressive-looking, but sometimes more ornamental than practical. Especially when clerical work was the order of the day. [METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART / PUBLIC DOMAIN](#)

“Some of them were busy with their jobs; others were busy pursuing their own hobbies, or just partying or whatever, and martial arts was not really something they were into,” Wert says.

For the trained warriors who stayed consistent with their regimens, workouts took place alongside other samurai—an untenable situation during any stay-at-home order. Instead, try grabbing the nearest broom and start practicing your sword motions (though that may not be such a good thing for your knick-knacks or light fixtures).



By the mid-19th century, the ancient and august samurai tradition was coming to an end. [METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART / PUBLIC DOMAIN](#)

Toward the twilight of the samurai period—the late 18th and early 19th centuries—styles changed. Those hundreds of swordsmanship styles began to be supplanted—not with firepower, but with bamboo. Weapons and armor alike were made out of the plant shoots, and used in a fast-paced combat style that laid the foundations for modern-day kendo.

But personal training never went away. For samurai, the mountainous archipelago of Japan was perfect for some challenging cardio work. If you have a trail nearby, take note.

“Samurai would [always] go somewhere to train,” Wert says. “So if [you can’t] go and train anywhere because all the gyms are closed, then go hiking or jogging or running.”

Even if you don’t have a katana lying around, or bamboo armor on hand, you can still work out like a samurai during the pandemic. All you really need are a half-decent pair of sneaks—or a filing cabinet that needs some attention.

How the 1896 Bombay Plague Changed Mumbai Forever

How the 1896 Bombay Plague Changed Mumbai Forever



Workers clean a house in a neighborhood affected by the 1896 bubonic plague. CAPT. C. MOSS / WELLCOME LIBRARY / PUBLIC DOMAIN

In This Story

DESTINATION GUIDE

Mumbai

ALONG THE WINDING LANES OF Bandra, a coastal suburb of Mumbai with a history of Catholicism, lime-washed crosses can be found near busy intersections. They are markers of a plague that ravaged the city more than a century ago, when this metropolis was still known as Bombay. Mumbai was shaped by a catastrophe it has largely forgotten.

At the turn of the 20th century, the bubonic plague killed 10 million people in India. It was carried on ships from Hong Kong and spread easily in the cramped and damp conditions of Bombay. Soon the port city became an epicenter of a pandemic. When the British colonial government tried to contain the disease,

using ruthless tactics such as forced evictions and detention camps, some residents fled; the plague ultimately spread across the country. History was made when a Jewish doctor from Odessa, Dr. Waldemar Haffkine, arrived in Bombay and invented the world's first vaccine against the plague.

The past seems to be repeating itself during the current pandemic. eerily similar images have come out of Mumbai, showing an exodus of migrant workers at the start of a citywide lockdown. In response to COVID-19, the current government has invoked the 123-year-old law, which gave the British colonial government absolute control over Indians during the bubonic plague. To Alisha Sadikot, a public historian who specializes in Mumbai's urban histories and culture, the parallels between 1896 and the present-day are striking. *Atlas Obscura* asked her about this forgotten past, and how it resonates with the history we are currently living through.

What was Bombay like in the 1890s?

The British wanted Bombay to become the first city of India, and the second-largest city of the British Empire, after London. In the mid-19th century, a period of early modernity and industrialization, Bombay was moving from trading port to world city, defined by its Gothic architecture and impressive monuments. A small, elite group of Englishmen and rich Indians were suddenly living in a place that was grand and awe-inspiring. But this was a facade. It was a showcase city, built on a tiny sliver of land facing the sea, to impress visitors. The vast majority of people who were migrating to Bombay, in response to industrialization, were the poor working class. They moved to the city to work in the mills and the docks, and their standard of living actually declined in those years. The city was not theirs.



The British filled a small part of Bombay with Gothic architecture and impressive monuments, seen here around 1910. But other parts of the city were crowded and damp.

How did the plague come to Bombay and why was it particularly devastating there?

The plague had been spreading across China for decades, and announced in Hong Kong in 1894. The bacteria, present in the fleas carried by rodents, travelled from the ports of Hong Kong to Bombay. The city was damp, there were heavy monsoons during those years, and an ineffective drainage system meant that there was a lot of stagnant water, a great breeding ground for rodents. We also had an inadequate sewage system, so there was unsanitary human and animal waste. And during those three decades of rapid industrialization, there was very little thought put into infrastructure. “Chawls,” or tenement housing, was built next to mills, and unskilled laborers set up tents or slums nearby, on unpaved ground. With no building regulations in place, landlords would build without thought to light or ventilation. The way Bombay was structured made its inhabitants particularly susceptible to it, and the plague crisis continued in Bombay for almost 20 years.

How did the British colonial government respond to the outbreak?

The government looked at the outbreak as a problem of the working class and the overcrowded areas they lived in. They went into these areas, found and isolated people who had symptoms or were in contact with patients, disinfected the area, and razed houses to the ground. Their plan was to quarantine, segregate, and disinfect, and they went at it with the full might of the Crown. Effectively, they were displacing people to hospitals and “plague camps,” often

forcefully. There was a huge social backlash against this, and migrant workers began fleeing Bombay.

It must have looked similar to the images from Mumbai last month, when crowds of migrants gathered at train stations, attempting to flee. What it meant then was that the plague would spread across India, along the railway lines. It was disastrous for the economy, halting all trade with Bombay. And after 30 years of ignoring what was happening in the city beyond its rich, southern tip, the government finally had to ensure better living conditions for other classes. However, their brutal response to the plague effectively became an attack on the poor and working class.



Migrants wait to board a train on May 12, several weeks into the coronavirus lockdown, outside a railway station in Mumbai. HIMANSHU BHATT / NURPHOTO VIA GETTY IMAGES

In the meantime, bacteriologists were trying to find a cure. What was happening in Room 000 of Grant Medical College?

At the time, researchers didn't really know what they were dealing with. Doctors here were trying to isolate and verify that the bacteria found in Bombay was similar to the one being studied in Hong Kong. Meanwhile, Dr. Waldemar Mordecai Haffkine, a bacteriologist from Odessa, was in Calcutta administering the vaccine he had developed against cholera. After news of the outbreak, he was called to Bombay where he started research in a makeshift laboratory in Room 000 of a government medical school.

Haffkine was successful in growing plague cultures in a high-fat broth made using ghee, or clarified butter, and created a vaccine out of the weakened bacteria. He injected himself with his own vaccine after tests on rabbits were successful. For the next 30 years, this was known as the most effective vaccine in the world. It took time to convince the government officials of the science behind it, but when they were persuaded, they gave Haffkine the Governor's mansion in central Bombay, where he converted the ballroom into a laboratory and started to scale production of the vaccine.

How did the crisis change the city?

People started coming back to Bombay by the 1910s, when they realized that the plague was everywhere. The question of how the city would change was an important one for the government. It's a question we're asking even now—how will cities adapt after COVID-19?

In 1898, the British set up the Bombay City Improvement Trust, a government city planning body. They began barreling through old neighborhoods and creating public spaces—especially streets under which they were able to lay drainage pipes and sewage lines. They were breaking down homes and displacing people, and they never found a way to rehouse those communities.

Their next approach, which took them almost a decade, was to create planned suburbs, catering to the middle classes. They took areas that were previously “plague camps” and put in the skeleton of sewage lines, roads, public transport, amenities—whatever people might need if they were to live there. This period saw more banks, jobs, colleges, parks, religious spaces and railway lines crop up, all within the neighborhoods. Today, more people are thinking about going back to this idea of self-sufficient neighborhoods, and that was the legacy of the Bombay City Improvement Trust.



The bubonic plague killed around 10 million people in India. This photo shows a temporary hospital in 1896 or 1897. WELLCOME LIBRARY / PUBLIC DOMAIN

Since you give walking tours of the city, what strikes you as portentous about the history of the Bombay plague? And why is it forgotten?

The plague history is a part of every walk I conduct, because you can't understand the city without the plague. In Bandra, plague crosses with marble plaques say something like, "For protection from the pestilence." But most people don't notice them. To me that's the strangest thing about the plague history—no one remembers it. It changed the way we were building and living. Bombay suffered for 20 years. Why have we not learned from the past?