Richard&Judy

BRITAIN'S BEST-LOVED HUSBAND AND WIFE TEAM REFLECT ON THE WEEK'S EVENTS EVERY SATURDAY IN YOUR DAILY EXPRESS

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R FLEETWOOD MAC'S 1977 classic album Rumours was rereleased this week as an expanded edition and went straight to Number 3 in the charts.

"It's a mutant thing with a life of its own," says Mick Fleetwood, surveying sales of the album to date of 40 million and rising. Forty million. That's the population of a decent-sized country.

I always liked Fleetwood Mac but I especially liked vocalist Stevie Nicks. So here's a picture of her.

I believe ghosts of the past talk to us

JIT'S extraordinary, the story of the woman who was the first person to be convinced the remains of King Richard III lay buried beneath a car park in Leicester and was duly dismissed as "a bit fanciful" by one of the academics who were astonished to discover that, actually, she was absolutely right.

Philippa Langley, a screenwriter and long-standing member of the Richard The Third Society, was visiting Leicester because it had long been rumoured that the King, who was killed at the Battle of Bosworth nearby, had been buried in an old abbey there.

QUEST: Philippa Langley at the grave

The site of the abbey is now a municipal car park and as Philippa walked across the tarmac she became completely convinced that Richard lay beneath her feet. The conviction was so strong, she says, that she felt cold chills running through her entire body – a dramatic and never-before experienced physical sensation. Returning to the same spot some time later she noticed the letter "R" had been painted on the ground, meaning, presumably, that that particular parking space was reserved. Her conviction grew even stronger.

When she persuaded Leicester University to excavate the car park many were sceptical. In fact the skeleton of a man who through DNA testing has now been positively identified as the hunchback king lay exactly where Philippa's intuition had told her he would be.

It's an astonishing, rather creepy story but I would never dismiss it as fanciful or some kind of remarkable coincidence because some years ago a similar thing happened to me.

My own Richard's father had died of a heart attack at the early age of 49 in 1977. I didn't meet Richard until five years later, so I never knew his dad Chris. Long after we'd married and had children, one Sunday afternoon Richard took me to the Essex graveyard in which his dad lies buried.

It was a lovely, sunny spring day. But because it had been years since Richard had visited his father's grave he was at first nonplussed. "I can't remember where it is," he admitted.

I looked around at the hundreds of gravestones and monuments. Then something made me turn to my right.

For some extraordinary reason I heard myself saying: "He's over there." I pointed to the far side of the graveyard, at a distant, seemingly anonymous headstone. "That's him."

And it was. We walked straight up to the grave, stopped, stared and there was his name on the headstone. "Christopher Holt Madeley. B. May 21 1928, D. August 8 1977."

It was an astonishing experience. I'd never seen this graveyard, or indeed this part of Essex, before. And yet, as clearly as if he had called out to me, I knew with total certainty where Chris lay.

So I don't find Philippa Langley's story in the least strange. Amazing, yes, but to paraphrase Shakespeare: "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy." Of that I am absolutely convinced.

JTHE doughty headmistress of a Middlesbrough primary school has banned her pupils from using Teesside phrases such as "nowt" and "yous". Carol Walker has sent letters to the children's parents asking them to correct their offspring if they hear them saying "gizit ere", "I dunno" and "le'ah" or "bu'ah" instead of "letter" and "butter".

Mrs Walker, herself from nearby Stockton-on-Tees, denies she's trying to force the children to drop their distinctive accents. She simply feels their future job prospects would be much improved if they speak and write standard English.

She is absolutely right. A good and exacting teacher at primary school can tell you things you never forget. My favourite teacher in the world Mr Parrot taught me when I was 10. He was a stickler for correct English, and he needed to be in the very working class part of north Manchester where I grew up.

He reserved his most stinging contempt for what he called the "wewozzie brigade". These were the unfortunate souls who insisted on saying: "We was just going home, sir," instead of: "We were... etc."

It worked. Fifty years on I still flinch whenever I hear a "wewozzie". Like Middlesbrough's Mrs Walker, Mr Parrot was not remotely interested in being politically correct. I suspect brilliant teachers never are.

STRICT: Carol Walker

R OH DEAR. As if my morning ritual to maintain life and limb wasn't already complicated enough. On rising I swallow the following. Turmeric capsule (anti-cancer). Low-dose aspirin (ditto, plus heart protection). Zinc tablet (I forget why – something to do with colds, I think). Milk Thistle capsule (liver function). All washed down with a glass of pomegranate juice (anti-cancer, again).

Now it seems I should be knocking back a steaming mug of green tea as well, followed by a glass of red wine the moment the sun is over the yardarm. Both contain chemicals that could help prevent Alzheimer's. In the tea it's an antioxidant called EGCG. The wine has something called resveratrol. According to researchers at Leeds University, both substances may stop harmful clumps of protein that cause the disease from latching on to brain cells.

I'm going to have to start getting up half an hour earlier.