



## Respected reporter's passing a sad day for world of journalism

**A**NOTHER sadness in the world of press and broadcasting as Jim Dougal, pictured, was laid to rest on Monday. I remember him so well when he and I were young hopefuls. Handsome and impeccably dressed, steadily he gained experience and respect. He was a gentleman. A journalist with a steel fist in a velvet glove and as a political commentator his opinion was sought because he was trustworthy and his point of view unbiased. Even his years with the European Commission couldn't keep him away from journalism and as recently as this summer he was appearing on Ulster Television voicing his qualified opinion on politics. Research and a gentle manner made him a reporter worth listening to and learning from and he was able to reduce the most complex situation to language all of us could understand. As was his manner, he fought his cancer with dignity. Our sympathies and prayers are with his wife and family.



Can you print the contact for fireworks permission again.

Jack.

Tomorrow, October 21, is the deadline to apply for a licence but you can do this immediately by going to [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk). Type 'fireworks' in the search box at the top of the page and fill in the application form. Remember, without this official permission, letting off fireworks in the garden or in the street is an offence with a maximum penalty up to \$5,000. Not worth the risk. And talking of risk,

be very careful. Don't let children light these dangerous contraptions and even with sparklers, which are OK to buy for family use, remember they are red hot for some time after the sparkle goes out and just imagine the pain and disfigurement these can cause if handled. Have a big metal bucket, or some safe container filled with water, to put them into immediately after the light goes out.

Dear Anne,  
Why do people on television say con-tra-bute instead of con-tribute? It's most annoying.

Colin.

Same reason people say skedual (schedule) these days. Stadiums (stadia) is now the norm as is eleven (eleven) and the rest. Just list these pronunciations when you hear them, there are plenty to record. The spoken word evolves as does our language and occasionally a new form of communication is born - witness texting. I was surprised to read that researchers at Coventry University claim that texting is a skill that can improve the command of language. It's clever if you have the dictionary in your head. Here is are some examples: THX - thanks; XLNT - excellent; H8 - hate; NE1 - anyone; L8ER - later. Isn't that just GR8!

Anne, I want to write that I thought the rescue of the miners was the most uplifting programme on television for years. Thanks to all concerned. Tired but Happy in Newtownabbey.

I agree, compulsive viewing but so

nerve-wracking, I've no nails left. It was the ultimate reality programme filled with determination, bravery and compassion. What happens next? Already the big firms have moved in, immediately providing sunglasses at something like \$250 a pair, and that's only the start. What I fear is that with the temptation to make big bucks these brave men will fall out and acrimony will sour an event where camaraderie was king. It's a bit like the Indian cricket

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players who were tempted to take money, not for themselves but for their families living in poverty. And what about the brilliant engineers who developed the escape mechanisms? They deserve recognition and I hope they get it.

Many of you will be interested in this news from Roisin Hall and her husband Andrew McCarroll, the Belfast couple who for the last six years have done so much to ease the poverty of families in Pattaya, Thailand and to provide education for their children. They had a great day earlier this month when King

Constantine of Greece, his wife Queen Anne Marie and their daughter Princess Theodora visited Kate's Project. Roisin reports: "Sports day for the kids in Kate's Project was a great success. Over 200 children and their families turned up and the proceedings were organised by many of the staff and pupils of Regent's International School, Pattaya. "His majesty is the founder and president of Round Square

worldwide, an amazing programme that is student-led and driven and creates social awareness of the problems of the community and strives to understand and help these families.

"The king and queen expressed a desire to visit the work of Kate's Project and we were delighted to chat with them about

our work and introduce them to our families. After the sports day both the king and queen asked if they could visit our slums, much to the surprise and panic of the security people. We were delighted to oblige and found them deeply compassionate and understanding of the plight of our families."

Dear Anne, I have just discovered my Christmas cactus has little buds and looks like it will flower for Christmas. It has been sitting in the landing but I would like to bring it down to the kitchen to watch it blooming. Will

that be OK?

Rosemary.

Risky, Rosemary unless you take precautions. This plant hates a variation in temperature, so not too hot, not too cold, no draughts. No direct light, so a windowsill is bad news. If you over-water the buds might fall off before opening, so feel the soil and if it's dry give it a little water. The guideline is, less water is better than too much water. If you have a spot in the kitchen that fills

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this description, then go for it.

Rosemary wants to lose a stone before Christmas. Take it easy Rosemary, don't make yourself ill. Drink plenty of water, slow down your eating at table, give up alcohol and discipline yourself for the next seven weeks. Maybe not a stone but an improvement and then keep going to get the results you wish for.

Anne Hailes