

News

Long-lost swear words revealed!

A LANGUAGE historian has revealed the best long-lost swear words from Britain - including nippy, tarse and wittol.

Dr Todd Gray MBE has spent years studying insults from history - and has published a list of some of the finest examples that have disappeared. He unearthed more than 200 colourful vanished adjectives including "bald-arse" and "hollow-mouthed" - indicating a lack of teeth.

Others include "long-nosed"; "gouty-legged"; "chamber pot" and "copper-nosed" from the practice of treating syphilis with copper. Highlights include "nippy" and "tarse", meaning man's private parts, and wittol, meaning a husband complicit in his wife's adultery.

Other old swear words include "polecat" meaning a lewd woman and "cucumber", which was another word for a cuckold.

Dr Gray, a research fellow at the University of Exeter, spent years trawling through 40,000 documents from the church and state courts in the 1500s and 1600s.

This month, he published his research in the monograph 'Strumpets and Ninnycocks: Name calling in Devon, 1540-1640', as well as in the spin-off book 'How to swear like an Elizabethan in Devon' - a dictionary of insults.

Many of the documents he found were related to slander cases, in which people would complain that they had been verbally insulted.

Some of the words and phrases still have the power to shock today, but there are also crucial differences.

"Today we are dominated by three body parts - and if you insult someone, you call people those things. Whereas, back then, swearing was built around bad behaviours," said Dr Gray.

£10k donation will provide 400 hours of hospice nursing

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TERMINALLY ill children at a local baby hospice are set to receive 400 hours of nursing care after £10,000 was donated to Zoë's Place in memory of a local businessman.

Barry Johnson from Binley Woods was a long standing supporter of the hospice in Ash Green, which cares for children with life-threatening and life-limiting conditions.

Tragically the managing director of BI Johnson Contractors Ltd passed away in July, aged 66, following a battle with cancer.

Over the years, Barry completed marathons and cycling events to raise money for the hospice.



Zoë's Place Baby Hospice

After his death, Barry's family asked for donations to be made to Zoë's Place so that his legacy of fundraising could continue.

They were overwhelmed by the support they received after 300 people attended his funeral. Over £5,000 was raised through fundraising by Barry's family and friends.

Another £5,000 was donated to the hospice by the refurb contract company that Barry ran.

In total, £10,000 has been donated to the centre, which

needs £1million each year to be able to care for six children 24/7.

Lee, Barry's son, said: "Indeed, we were so amazed with the total of fundraising from friends and family (currently at just over £5000) that we have decided to match the donations with £5000 from the Company - BI Johnson Contractors Ltd.

"Dad led life to the full and supporting others was always close to his heart. Over the years he raised funds for many good causes by running mara-

thons and cycling events particularly."

Kirk, Barry's other son, added: "Dad visited Zoë's Place Baby Hospice and was really taken by their work and wanted to help. Along with friends he took part in a sponsored 100 mile bike ride and continued to support them through his work with the Masons."

Mick McCann, fundraising manager at Zoë's Place Baby Hospice, said: "I got to know Barry quite well from his visits to the hospice.

"He was always full of laughter and showed great determination to help us right up to his passing.

"It is so kind that his friends and family have been so generous. Over 400 hours of nursing care will be devoted to the children in his memory"