

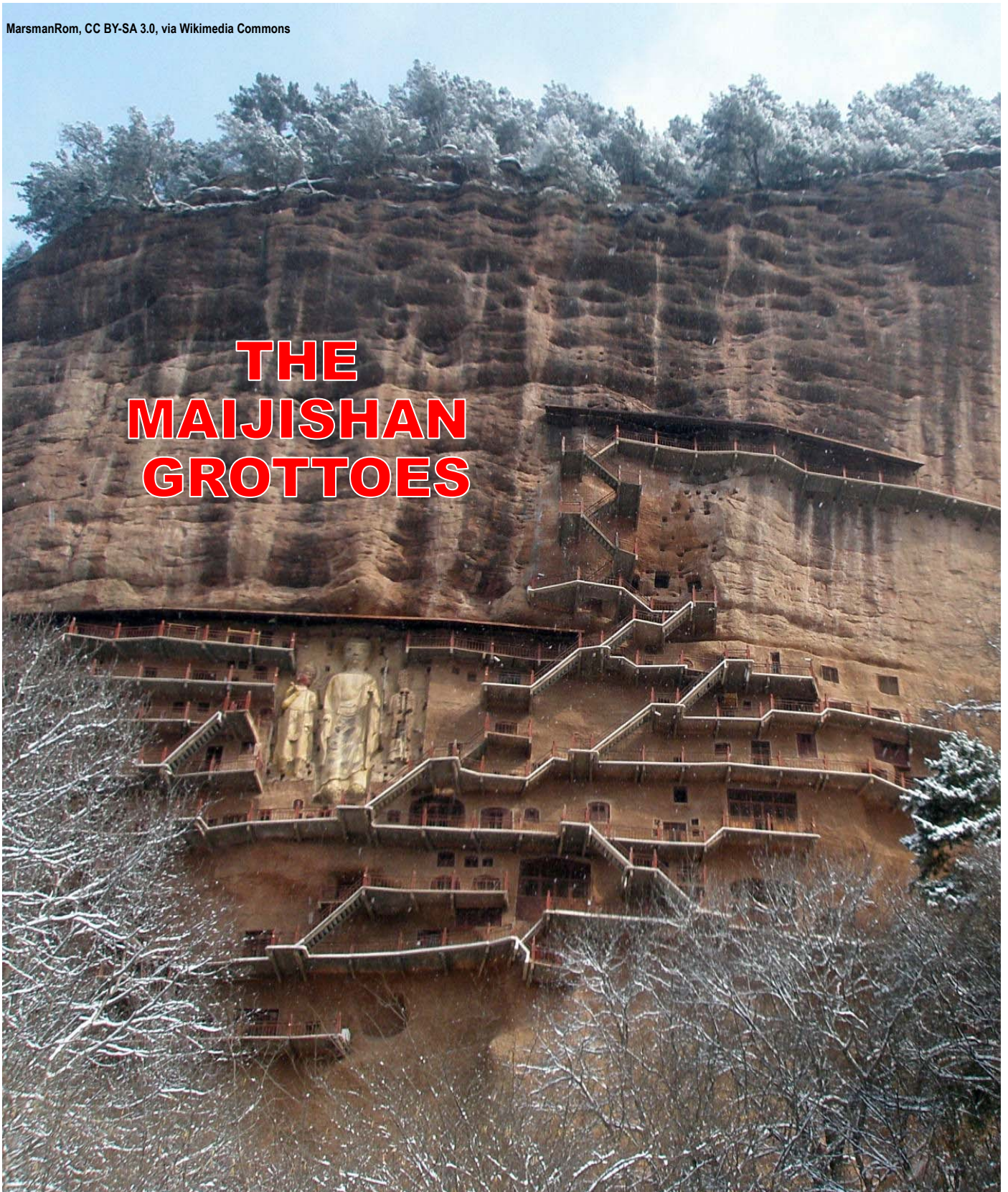
FASCINATING FACTS

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THE MAIJISHAN GROTTOES



Fascinating Facts is a free subscription monthly private circulation e-magazine of personal, historic and military interest.

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Welcome to this issue of Fascinating Facts. Now retired, with a background of journalism, literature production, international public relations, and ex editor of a leading industry publications, I now have the time to combine my abilities and share my interests in historic facts, especially in connection with military matters. While I have written most of the articles in the Scarletman I am happy to accept ideas and contributions from readers; giving them credit for their work. The Scarletman is free issue e-magazine therefore if you would like to circulate copies further then I am happy for you to create a wider readership of those with a similar interest to mine.

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TRUE OR FALSE

Napoleon Bonaparte lost the Battle of Waterloo.
True—the battle took place in 1815.

Erik the Red was the uncle of explorer Leif Erikson.
False—Eric the Red was Leif Erikson’s dad.

Facebook was the first social media website .
False—Six Degrees launched in 1996 is considered the first social media site.

Henry VIII had eight wives.
False—he had six wives.

US Declaration of Independence On July 4, 1776, all of the signatories signed the document.
False—only two men signed that day, and the others signed during the next month.

Coca-Cola was the first soft drink in the USA.
False—it was Dr Pepper.

President Thomas Jefferson brought the recipe for macaroni and cheese to the U.S. from England.
False—he brought the recipe from France.

The first football helmets were made of moleskin.
True—football players started wearing them in 1943.

The three Axis powers in World War II were Germany, Greece and Japan.
False—the Axis powers were Germany, Italy and Japan.

There were 12 original U.S. colonies.
False—there were 13.

Napoleon was incredibly short.
False—Napoleon was about 5 ft, 6in tall, average height for a human at that time,

The United Nations was formed after World War I.
False—the U.N. was formed after the WW II.

Augustus was Rome’s first emperor
True—he took power in 27 BCE.

The Mongol Empire was the largest in history.
False—the British Empire was the biggest.

Queen Elizabeth II was the longest-reigning monarch in British history.
True—she was monarch for over 70 years.

The Berlin Wall fell in 1980.
False—it was brought down in 1989.

Thurgood Marshall was the first African-American justice to serve on the Supreme Court.
True—nominated by President Lyndon Johnson in 1967.

Nicholas II was the last tsar of Russia.
True—he was removed from power in 1917.

The United States purchased Alaska from Denmark
False—Alaska was bought from Russia in mid-1800s.

Cleopatra was Egyptian by birth.
False—she was actually Greek and part of the Ptolemaic dynasty.

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HAND GESTURES

Hand gestures are a form of nonverbal communication to communicate non verbal messages. Many gestures are culture-specific and may convey very different meanings in varying social or cultural settings. A single gesture may have very different significance in different cultural contexts, ranging from complimentary to highly offensive.

THE V SIGN

While the V sign was introduced in January 1941 by Victor De Lavelle as part of a campaign by the Allies of World War II, it was made universally famous by Winston Churchill.



The "V sign" with palm outward was widely adopted as a symbol of peace and still used today worldwide as the "peace sign".

But when displayed with the palm inward it is seen as an insulting gesture in Great Britain, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, akin to giving the finger.

THE OK SIGN

A-OK or Okay, made by connecting the thumb and forefinger in a circle and holding the other fingers straight, usually signal the word okay. It is considered obscene in Brazil and Turkey, being similar to the Western extended middle finger with the back of the hand towards the recipient. It is also an insult in parts of Europe,



implying rudeness or arrogance of the recipient. In more recent history, it is sometimes associated with the racist theory of white power, which started as a prank meme on 4chan. In Japanese culture a way of requesting money or payment uses a similar hand sign, with the palm facing upwards and the three extended fingers level.

THE ILY SIGN

The ILY sign is based on American Sign Language which, has moved into the mainstream. Seen primarily in the United States and other Americanised countries, it originated among deaf schoolchildren to create a sign from a combination of the signs for the letters I, L, and Y (I Love You).



THE FINGER GUN

The finger gun is a hand gesture when a person will use their hand to mimic a handgun, raising their thumb above their fist to act as a hammer, and one or two fingers extended acting as a barrel. The middle finger can also be used to represent the trigger finger or



the barrel itself. The finger can be swung upward to emulate muzzle rise. An optional clicking of the fingers or making firing sounds can be included when forming the "gun" to emphasise the gesture. The gesture can be intended to be a friendly gesture or a threat, depending on context.

I WILL CALL YOU / CALL ME

Thumb and little finger outstretched, with fingers curled against palm and thumb to ear and little finger to mouth as though making a telephone call Intimating "I'll call you", or call me

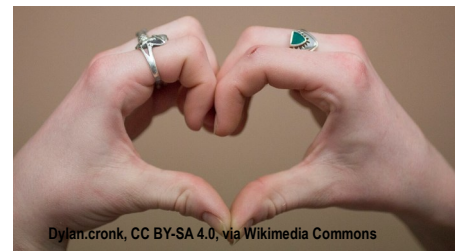


Before one-piece receivers became widespread in the 1940s, the telephone gesture was to use two hands to indicate a separate receiver and a mouthpiece



THE HAND HEART

[The hand heart is formed by holding both thumbs to form the bottom of the heart, and bending the remaining fingers to connect at the fingernails order to form a heart shape. However, in recent years, the practice has evolved to include people using the index and middle fingers to form the heart, as opposed to using the entire hand. Often, two people will each form half of a heart, conjoining the two as a sign of affection.



ORIGINS OF COMMON PHRASES

We tend to use common phrases daily without thinking where they come from. Most have a link with the past and it is interesting to know where they came from. Was it something someone said ?

A NEST EGG

Farmers collecting eggs often left one egg to encourage the chickens to continue laying eggs in the same nest. I remember my father had a china one which he often put in the chicken's nest box. But historically by the fourteenth century the phrase "nest egg" was used in its original context but by the sophisticated seventeenth century its meaning changed to setting aside a sum of money for the future or a rainy day.

A PINCH OF SALT

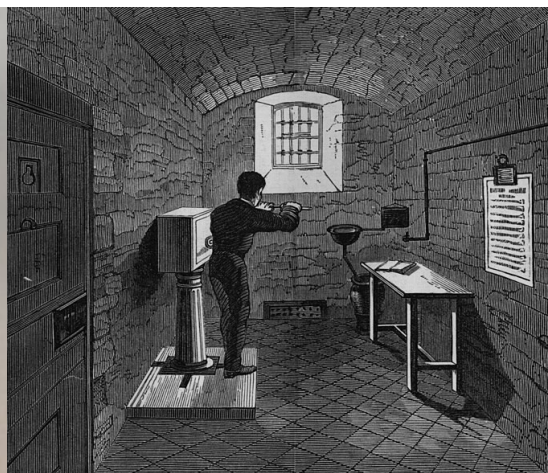
Research indicates that "Addito salis grano" was first used by Pliny the Elder around AD 77 when referring to King Mithridates VI of Pontus, who it is claimed developed immunity to poisoning by ingesting small, regular doses of poison with a grain of salt to make them more tolerable. But when Mithridates was defeated by the Romans he drank poison to kill himself, only to discover that his pinch of salt made the poison was no longer effective. So he stabbed himself to death! The English started using a similar expression—"cum grano salis"—in the Middle Ages when referring to the addition of salt enhancing flavour, taking which came to also mean taking a dubious story with a pinch of salt makes it more digestible.

BY HOOK OR BY CROOK

Records of this phrase date back to the 14th century and while its origins are unclear one theory attributes it to a Medieval law regarding collecting firewood. This allowed peasants to only take what they could cut from dead trees by using their reaper's bill-hook or a shepherd's crook.

A RED-LETTER DAY

This one has its origins in Medieval ecclesiastical calendars, which marked feast days and saints' days in red, while other days were in black.



CELL, WITH PRISONER AT "CRANK-LABOUR," IN THE SURREY HOUSE OF CORRECTION.

TURNING THE SCREW

The crank machine was an English penal labour device in the 19th century and was the basis of the phrase of Turning The Screw with the word screw referring to as prisoner. It consisted of a hand-turned crank which forced four large cups or ladles through sand inside a drum, doing nothing useful. The prisoner would typically be forced to do 6,000–14,400 revolutions over the period of six hours per day (1.5–3.6 seconds per revolution). The prison warden could make the task harder by tightening an adjusting screw. In 1895, there were 29 crank machines in use, but by 1901 there were only 5.

BAKER'S DOZEN

The medieval legislation of Assize of Bread and Ale of 1262 was brought in to stop bakers selling underweight loaves. Therefore to stay on the right side of the law, bakers gave an extra piece of bread away with every individual loaf, and an extra loaf making it thirteenth loaves when a dozen (12) were purchased.

SINK OR SWIM

Historically judging a person did not rely on scientific methods but water! In medieval times judging a person's innocence by throwing them into a lake. But the outcome of this practice was self defeating because if the victim sunk they were regarded as being innocent. But if they floated they were guilty. The peculiar logic was that water wouldn't accept anyone who had rejected the water of baptism through their actions. Therefore which is better—to float and be killed by an angry mob, or to drown? A total no winner!!

HUE AND CRY

Hue comes from Old French, where 'huer' means crier. In the Middle Ages, if you saw a crime being committed, you were obliged to raise 'hue' and 'cry', or shout out loud to warn the community of some impending danger.

GIBBERISH

The ninth century scholar unpronounceable Abū Mūsā Jābir ibn Ḥayyān wrote about sciences, magic, alchemy, and philosophy. When his Arabic works made their way to Europe, his name was simplified to the rather plainer Geber. However, even if they could now pronounce his name, his writing would be too complex for most readers, leading to a description of his work as 'gibberish'-a new idiom was born.

PEEPING TOM

This was first used in the 18th century but refers to the 13 century legend of Lady Godiva, who rode naked through the streets of Coventry to protest against the oppressive taxation imposed by her husband, Leofric, Earl of Mercia. He said if she did he'd reduce the levy.. The townsfolk respected her privacy by staying indoors with closed doors and shutters. But Tom the Tailor peered and was blinded, either through divine punishment or from angry neighbours.

RED HERRING

Dried, salted, and smoked herring is reddish and has a pungent odour. It was used in medieval times for training hounds in stag-hunting, as bait. The phrase first appears in a 15th-century manuscript that includes it as a comedic line in a mock sermon.

WACKY IDEAS THAT MADE AND SOLD MILLIONS

Evan-Amos, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



KOOSH BALL

In a variety of colours and made from 2000 natural rubber filaments radiating from a steel-bound core, the Koosh ball was patented in 1987 by Scott Stillinger who created the ball because his children couldn't master playing catch. In 1986 he showed a prototype of the ball to his brother-in-law, Mark Button, who'd worked in marketing at Mattel. The men—and their wives—were so confident in the product they quit their jobs and start a toy company called OddzOn Products. When they showed the ball to a store owner, she told them, "You're going to be millionaires." So he built a machine to make the balls and operated it out of a barn near his house.

50 MILLION SOLD IN 7 YEARS

In 1994 when OddzOn was sold to Russ Berrie and Co., they had sold 50 million Koosh balls and were making an estimated \$30 million a year. The Koosh line consisted of 50 products, including key chains, finned footballs, and lawn darts. Hasbro purchased the company and licensed Koosh balls to Basic Fun.

EXCELLENT SENSORY

Perfect size for little hands, they are fun, calming and an interactive sensory tool that encourages movement, play, and relaxation by stimulating and promoting grip strength and coordination as children catch, throw, and manipulate them. The gentle, bouncy texture provides a calming effect, making it excellent for children who need extra sensory input to relax and focus. Being easy to catch, and throw, they don't hurt as much as traditional balls when hit by one.



Usien, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

HULA HOOP

Twirled around the waist or limbs a hoop has been used by children and adults since at least 500 BC. The modern hula hoop was inspired by Australian bamboo hoops when Joan Anderson witnessed Australian children playing with bamboo hoops naming it "hula hoop" after the Hawaiian hula dance. She introduced it to the Wham-O toy company, who popularised the plastic version in 1958 helping it to become a fad.

14TH CENTURY CRAZE

Using multiple hoops as story telling props a native American hoop dancer creates both static and dynamic shapes to represent animals, symbols, and storytelling elements using traditional "hula hoops" made of dried willow, rattan, grapevines, or stiff grasses. Author Charles Panati records a "craze" with the usage of wooden and metal hoops in 14th-century England reporting that doctors treated patients who suffered pain, dislocated backs, and even heart failure from hooping. Hamleys, the world's oldest toy store, sold hula hoops when it opened its original shop in London in 1760.

25 MILLION IN MONTHS

At the peak of the hula hoop craze in 1958, the company Wham-O sold about 25 million hoops in a few months. Due to the number of small manufacturers it is difficult to establish global market value estimated to be £310 million to £320 million at typical 2025/26. It is expected to reach about £460 million by 2035. Some going for a simple hoop!!



Shawyer, CC BY 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

SLINKY

Developed by American naval engineer Richard James who in 1943 observed a spring "stepping" downward after being knocked off a shelf, then coming to rest in a vertical position. Called the Slinky it was successfully demonstrated at Gimbel's store on November 27, 1945.

Able to 'travel' down steps end-over-end by gravity it stretches and reforms itself by its own momentum; levitating for a period of time after it has been dropped.

His wife Betty recalled, "He said, I think if I get the right steel and tension, I could make it walk." Following experiments with different types of steel wire he finally created a walking spring. They formed James Industries and manufactured Slinkys for \$1 each. Initially they had difficulty selling, but in 1945, they were set up an inclined plane in Gimbel's Store in Philadelphia. It was an instant hit selling 400 units in 90 minutes. In 1946, it was introduced at the American Toy Fair, and inducted into the National Toy Hall of Fame in 2000. In 2003, it was included in the Toy Industry Association's Century of Toys List. Around 300 million Slinky toys have been sold worldwide since they first went on sale in 1945.

They divorced in 1960 Richard becoming a Bolivian missionary and Betty President of James Industries' In 1998, after 40 years she sold the company to Poof Products for an undisclosed amount. She died in November 2008, aged 90. In July 2012, Poof-Slinky, Inc. was acquired by the private equity firm Propel Equity Partners for an undisclosed amount.

SO WHO IS



Designed by Freepik

SMILEY?

Since the 1950's the graphic of a smiling face, commonly depicted as a black circle with two black eyes and a curved mouth, on a yellow background has become part of popular worldwide culture to visually communicate a range of emotions. While Smiley emerged as two dots and a line representing eyes and a mouth more elaborate designs appeared featuring noses, eyebrows, and outlines there are now countless variations.

OLDEST HITTITE POT

The oldest known smiling face was found by archaeologists from the University of Bologna. Piecing together fragments of a 1700 BC Hittite pot, they found a large smiling face engraved on it; becoming the earliest artifact with a happy face design



HH58, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Just a circle, two dots, and a curved line, has become one of the simplest yet most powerful symbols in modern human communication conveying a wide range of emotions across cultures and languages. Despite its minimalist design, the smiley face carries a surprisingly rich history and continues to evolve in meaning as technology and communication styles change.

Today's smiley face became popular in 1963, when Harvey Ball a graphic artist who created the iconic yellow smiley face for State Mutual Life Assurance Company. He completed the happy face in ten minutes and was paid \$45 equivalent to £352 in 2025 for his "little smile" He did not trademark or copyright it, therefore did not receive royalties from its massive commercial success. Instead in 1999, he founded the World Smile Foundation, a non-profit charitable trust that supports children's causes. He also founded World Smile Day—the first Friday of October to encourage acts of kindness

HAVE A NICE DAY

By the 1970s, the smiley face became associated with positivity, peace, and happiness, especially during a time when people were seeking simple ways to express optimism, appearing many forms of merchandise. The slogan "Have a nice day" often accompanied the image, reinforcing its role as a symbol of goodwill.

With the growth of digital communication the smiley face took on a new form: the emoticon.—an emotional icon. Early internet users began using keyboard characters like :-) to represent a smiling face which lacked the opportunity to show facial expression. When a smiley is used in text-based communication it clearly allows expression of humour, sarcasm, or friendliness.

UNICODE CONSORTIUM.

Then with the rise of smartphones and social media, the smiley image further evolved into emojis—small digital images that represent emotions, objects, and ideas with every emoji, including smiley faces, assigned a unique code by the Unicode Consortium.



Image by Christian Dorn from Pixabay

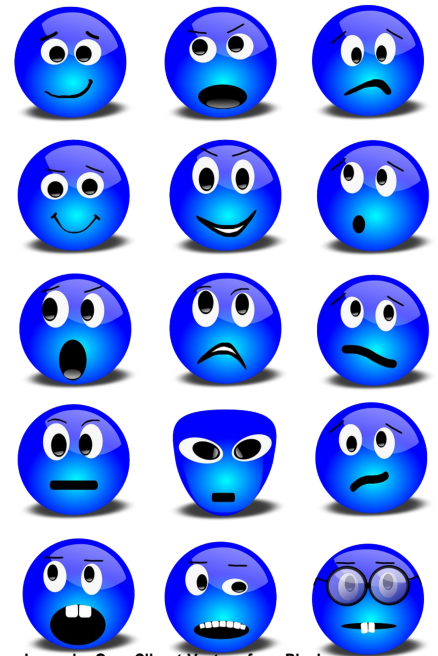


Image by OpenClipart-Vectors from Pixabay

A wide range of emotions

The smiley face became one of the most widely used emojis, as above, with countless variations expressing different shades of emotion. From a simple smile to laughter, winks, and even tears of joy, these digital faces expanded the emotional vocabulary of written communication.

POSITIVE RESPONSE

Today, emojis are used by billions of people worldwide, making the smiley face even more relevant.

The smiley face has taken on cultural and artistic significance in music, fashion, and visual arts.

Studies suggest that a smiling face can trigger positive emotional responses resulting in people feeling more relaxed, improve their mood, and even influence behaviour which is why they are often used in advertising, education, and customer service.

BRIDGING THE GAPS

They can also bridge the gap between written and spoken language enabling people to communicate more effectively..

Today, London based Smiley Company founded by Franklin Loufrani in 1972 is ranked one of the world's top 100 licensing businesses, with 458 licensees in 158 countries. It boasts thousands of products across 14 categories, from health and beauty to homeware. A highly successful licensing business it generated over \$538 million in revenue in 2020, of which the fashion division generated €200 million in sales annually

THE MAIJISHAN GROTTOES

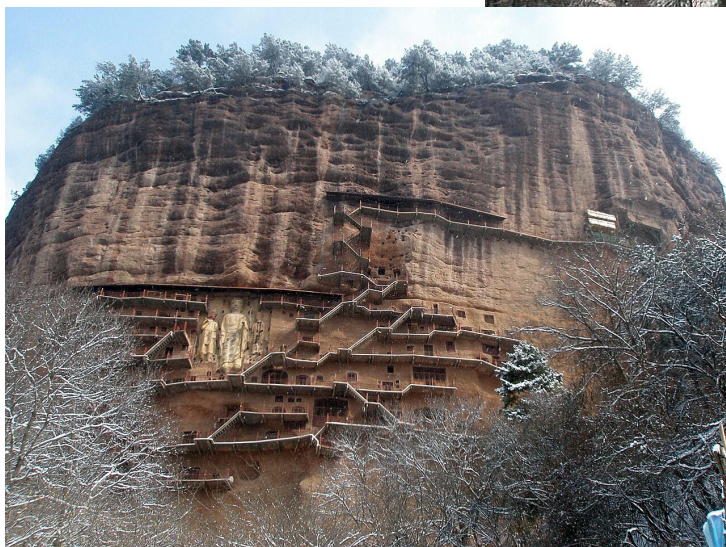
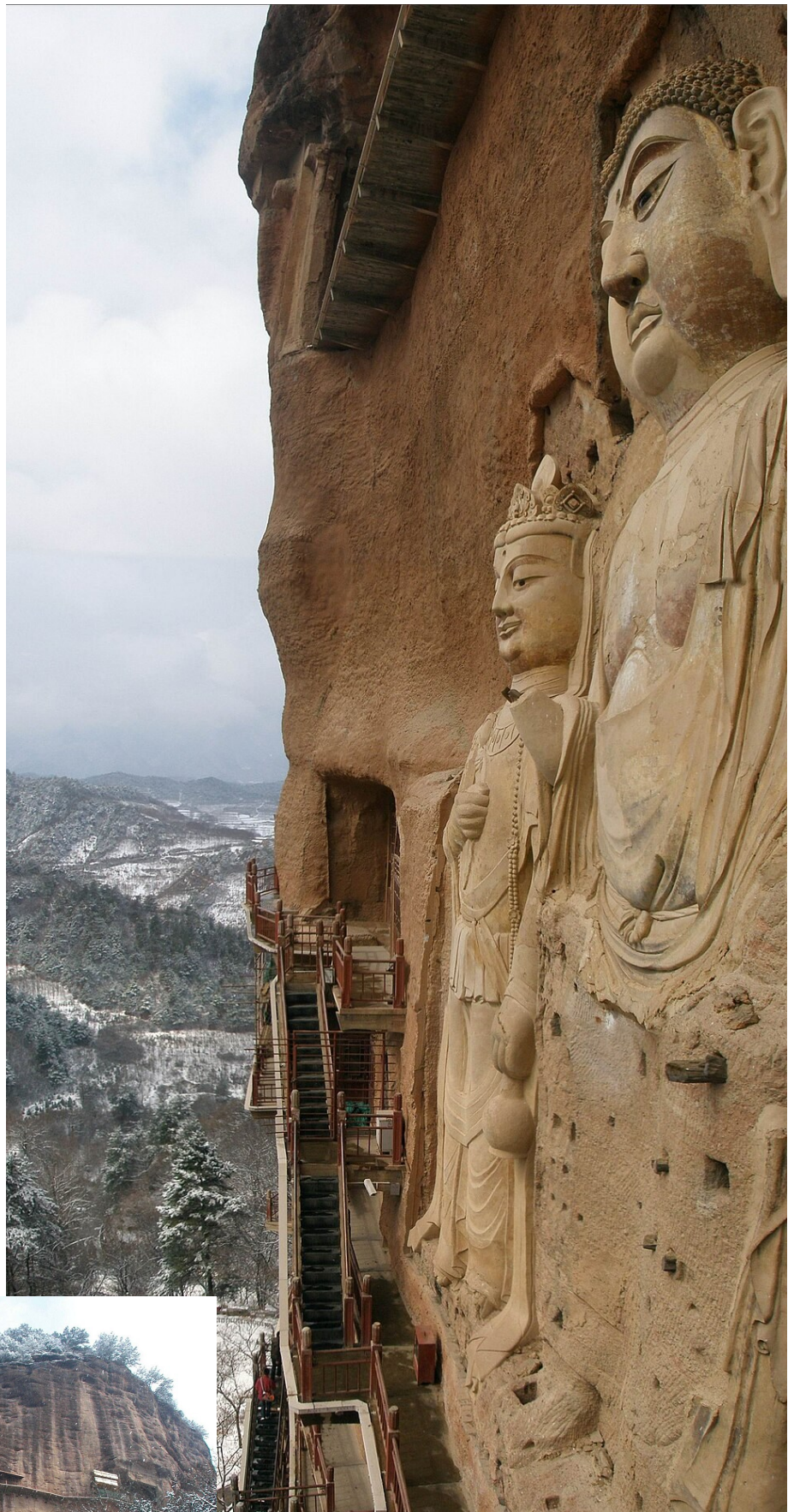
A series of 194 rock-cut caves The Maijishan Grottoes in north-west China contain over 7,200 Buddhist sculptures and over 1,000 square meters of murals.

Construction of the red sandstone grottoes began in 384–417 CE). A team of Chinese archaeologists conducted the first modern exploration in 1952–53 devising the numbering system still in use today. The Maijishan Grottoes are just one of the string of Buddhist grottoes in northwest China, more or less on the main routes connecting China and Central Asia. These sites, along with other archaeological sites along the eastern Silk Road, are on the UNESCO World Heritage List as part of the "Silk Roads: the Routes Network of Chang'an-Tianshan Corridor"

CLAY WITH BINDING AGENT

Most of the statuary at Maijishan is made of clay with the addition a binding agent to help preserve the sculpture. When stone sculptures appear (for example, in caves 117, 127, 133 and 135), they are generally made of sandstone, and many are exquisite. The sandstone is statues are not made from indigenous material but instead of unknown origin. It is also unknown where the statues were made, or how they were hauled up into the caves.

Although the region has fallen victim to many earthquakes and other natural and man-made disasters, 194



caves remain, encompassing 7200 pieces of sculpture, and 1000 square meters of frescoes, all excavated on a cliff face 30 to 80 meters above ground. The earliest artistic influence came, however, from the northwest, through Central Asia along the Silk Road. Later, during the Song and Ming Dynasties, as the caves were renovated and repaired, the influences came from central and eastern China and the sculpture is more distinctly Chinese.

JACOBS LADDER

Jacob's Ladder is a Grade I listed stair case leading from Jamestown, Saint Helena, up the side of Ladder Hill to Ladder Hill Fort. The name is a reference to the biblical Jacob's Ladder, a ladder extending to heaven.

It is all that remains of a cable railway that was built in the early 1800s. But its tracks and cars were later removed, leaving the stairs in place. These have become a tourist attraction connecting Jamestown with Half Tree Hollow at the top of the hill.

700 STEPS

Originally designed by the local engineer J. W. Hoar, for the Saint Helena Railway Company he built a two-car inclined plane, 924 feet (281.6 m)-long, in 1829. It was built to carry cargo between Jamestown and the fort. With the cars riding on a pair of iron-plated fir rails, laid on wooden sleepers and anchored into the rock of the valley wall which was separated by a staircase of 700 steps for pedestrians with an angle of ascent which varied between 39 and 41 degrees. Motive power for the cable railway was provided by a team of three donkeys at the top tethered to a rotating capstan connected to the cars by an iron chain and pulleys.

Termite damage to the sleepers caused

the Royal Engineers to remove the cars, rails and associated machinery in 1871. Subsequent roadwork has covered one step so that only 699 remain. Lights were installed along the sides of the stairs in 2000 and the steps were refurbished in 2006.

FESTIVAL OF RUNNING",
During the island's annual "Festival of Running", a timed run takes place up Jacob's Ladder, with people coming from around the world to compete. The record for the climb is 4 minutes and 40.75 seconds, set by James Apple from extreme sports tour operator Rat Race Adventures, on November 21, 2024. He shattered the previous record of 5 minutes and 4 seconds set by Sam Collins in January 2024.



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Kevstan, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons



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DRAGONS BLOOD TREE

Native to the Socotra archipelago, part of Yemen, located in the Arabian Sea the Dragons Blood tree is so called due to the blood-like colour of the red sap it produces. It is also the national tree of Yemen.

The trees have an upturned, densely packed crown and its leaves, which are shed every three or four years when new leaves mature, are found only at the ends of its youngest branches. They grow to about 30 ft in height and can be 39 ft across the crown. The trunk is about 5 ft tall.

EXUDE A DEEP RED RESIN

The fruits are small fleshy berries with one to four seeds which turn green then black, and orange when ripe. They exude a deep red resin colloquially known as dragon's blood. Like palm trees the dragon's blood tree grows from the tip of the stem, with the long, stiff leaves in dense rosettes at the end. At maturity it has an umbrella-shaped crown, with 24 in long and 1.2 in wide leaves. It produces clusters of fragrant, white, or green flowers on the end of the branches in March. In ancient times harvested for their highly prized crimson red resin, they are still used today as a dye and as a medicine. Local Socotrans use it ornamentally as well as dyeing wool, gluing pottery, a breath freshener, and lipstick.

STIMULANT & ASTRINGENT

The root yields a gum-resin, used in gargle water as a stimulant, astringent and in toothpaste. The root is used in rheumatism, the leaves are a carminative. In 1883, the Scottish botanist Isaac Bayley Balfour identified three grades of resin: the most valuable were tear-like in appearance, then a mixture of small chips and fragments, with a mixture

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of fragments and debris being the cheapest. The resin is thought to have been the original source of dragon's blood until during the medieval and renaissance periods when other plants were used instead. Because of the belief that it is the blood of the dragon it is also used in ritual magic and alchemy.

MANY USES

The local inhabitants of the city in the Socotra Island used the dragon's blood resin as a cure-all. It was also listed in a 16th-century text, by Stahel und Eysen, as an ingredient in a quenching bath for tempering steel. Greeks, Romans, and Arabs used it in general wound healing, as a coagulant, cure for diarrhoea, for dysentery diseases, for lowering fevers. It was also taken for ulcers in the mouth, throat, intestines and stomach. In the 18th century it was used as toothpaste and also used as a source of varnish by Italian violin-makers, and is still used as varnish for violins and for photoengraving. The shape of the tree is an adaptation for survival in arid conditions

with low amounts of soil, such as in mountaintops. The large, packed crown provides shade and reduces evaporation. This shade also aids in the survival of seedlings growing beneath the adult tree, explaining why the trees tend to grow closer together. Its umbrella shape is made possible by its unusual growth pattern. Unlike most similar genus of tree it undergoes secondary growth—a rare ability that allows its trunk to thicken over time.

UNUSUAL GROWTH RINGS

While its stem develops growth ring-like zones, these do not reliably indicate age since they form from irregular vascular bundle patterns rather than seasonal growth cycles. Its evolutionary adaptation demonstrates how it developed its tree-like form, combining water conservation through its dense crown with structural stability from its specialised stem growth. Such features enable it to thrive in challenging high-altitude, arid conditions where few other trees can survive.

Below Dragon trees at the edge of the gorge in Socotra—right the fruit



Rod Waddington from Kergunyah, Australia, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons



Nadiatalent, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

THE CENTENIAL LIGHT BULB

First illuminated in 1901 the Centennial Light is an incandescent light bulb recognised as the oldest known operating light bulb. It has only been turned off and on a few times since it was installed at 4550 East Avenue, Livermore, California. Noted by The Guinness Book of World Records, Ripley's Believe It or Not!, and General Electric it has been relocated several times. Its longevity has been attributed to the high quality of manufacture and rarely turned off. Originally a 60-watt bulb its output is similar to a 4-watt nightlight bulb.

HANDMADE BULB

Handmade by the Shelby Electric Company towards the end of the 1890s it was donated to the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department in 1901 where it illuminated the hose cart house. It was then moved to a garage where it provided light to the fire and police departments. It was saved during the fire station's 1937 renovation and in 1976, the fire department move to Fire Station No 6. In the move the cable was cut in case removing the bulb from the socket damaged it and they took, what was now the oldest bulb, in a specially designed box and with full fire engine escort.

After this 22 minutes transfer an electrician installed the bulb into the new fire station's emergency generator area. Since that move, the bulb has never been turned off.

BULB'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

In 2001, the bulb's 100th birthday was celebrated with a community barbecue and live music. On the evening of May 20, 2013, it was reported that the bulb had apparently burned out. An electrician was called who determined that the bulb had not burned out. An extension had bypassed the bulbs dedicated power supply and the power supply was found to have been faulty. So after 9 hours and 45 minutes the light was reestablished.

The bulb is maintained by the Centennial Light Bulb Committee, The Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department plans to house and maintain the



Gazebo, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

bulb for the rest of its life, regardless of length. There are no plans for its replacement but Ripley's Believe it or Not! has requested it for their collection of objects.

HAND-BLOWN, CARBON-FILAMENT

The hand-blown, carbon-filament common light bulb was invented by Adolphe Chaillet, a French engineer who filed a patent for this socket technology. It was manufactured by the Shelby Electric Company in the late 1890s.

The bulb has been featured by many US major news channels. It has received letters acknowledging and celebrating its longevity from the city of Shelby, Ohio, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, the California State Assembly, the California State Senate, Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher, Senator Barbara Boxer, and President George W. Bush. The bulb was featured on an episode of Myth Busters, in a PBS documentary and an episode of California's Gold with Huell Howser, in an episode of 99% Invisible.

Its unusual longevity was noticed in 1972 by reporter Mike Dunstan who, wrote "Light Bulb May Be World's Oldest", in the Tri-Valley Herald. He then contacted the Guinness Book of World Records, Ripley's Believe It or Not, and General Electric, who all confirmed it as the longest-lasting bulb known in existence.



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