



# The Ramble 555 - 05/01/26

Monday 12th January	[556]
Monday 19th January	[557]
Wednesday 28th January	[558]
Monday 2nd February	[559]
Monday 9th February	[560]
Monday 16th February	Krokusvakantie Holiday
Monday 23rd February	Krokusvakantie Holiday
Monday 2nd March	[561]
Monday 9th March	[562]
Monday 16th March	[563]
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Monday 6th April	Easter Monday - No Ramble
Monday 13th April	[566]
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## **Train à Vapeur d'Auvergne**

This has been sent to me

A historical railway group in Clermont-Ferrand is running two charter trains giving an outing for one of the famous SNCF BB67400:

[www.trainvapeur-auvergne.com/produit/train-de-chenonceau](http://www.trainvapeur-auvergne.com/produit/train-de-chenonceau) on Saturday 2-5-2026;

[www.trainvapeur-auvergne.com/produit/train-pour-la-fete-des-lumieres](http://www.trainvapeur-auvergne.com/produit/train-pour-la-fete-des-lumieres) on 5-12-2026.

## **A Couple of Interesting Films on You Tube**

What I Wear at -64°C in the Coldest City on Earth - Yakutsk, Siberia

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uPGIPnYkXIY>

That cold!

American Reacts | UK vs USA Education

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0bP0-WgwBRE>

Many of us wonder about the sheer stupidity of people from the United States. This film goes into the level of education in US schools. It does go a long way to explaining things.

[03:50] The lady narrating this was a Teacher's Aid in her last year at High School. She was assisting in a World War Two History Class. A question was asked, "What caused World War 2 to start?" The answer was an essay on "The House Fell on the Wicked Witch of the West" and it was marked right because she tried.

## For The Diary

**If you know of an event, let me know and I will put it here.**

### 2026

**Shrove Tuesday** is on Tuesday 17th February and there are Ski Trains on Friday 13th & 20th returning on Sunday 15th and 22nd.

**Good Friday** is on Friday 2nd April

**Easter Monday** is on Monday 6th April

**May Day** is on Monday 4th May

### **Severn Valley Diesel Gala - Thursday 14th May to Sunday 17th May**

If you have not been to a UK Diesel Gala this is usually one of the best to go to. I have started to make a week's holiday of it.

**Spring Bank Holiday** is on Monday 25th May

### **Stoomtrein Dendermonde-Puurs - July 4th & 5th**

On Saturday 4th & Sunday 5th July the SDP usually kicks off their tourist season with Scheldeland in Steam.

### **Tomorrowland**

First Weekend Wednesday 15th & Thursday 16th inbound  
Sunday 19th and Monday 20th outbound

Second Weekend Wednesday 22nd & Thursday 23rd inbound  
Sunday 26th and Monday 27th outbound

### **Chemin de fer à vapeur des 3 vallées [CFV3V] - July 18th**

On this weekend the CFV3V usually have some form of event.

### **Chemin du fer du Bocq - August [14th], 15th & 16th [17th]**

The 2025 Festival is usually on this weekend. At the time of writing it will depend if the monumental works on the track have been finished.

### **Pukkelpop - Thursday 20th to Sunday 23rd August**

Sometimes there are extra trains and it is always busy in the Hasselt area.

### **Innotrans 2026 - Tuesday 22nd to Friday 25th September**

One of the biggest train events is Innotrans at Berlin Messe. [Trade Only]

## In The Snow

Railway Lines in Northern Scotland have 4ft drifts in places. West Coast Railways Class 37s are currently on Inverness to Aberdeen, the Far North Line and Dundee-Aberdeen lines.

West Coast Railways 37685 LOCH ARKAIG at Wick Station working an Inverness to Inverness via Wick proving run on Saturday morning 3rd January 2026.

Photograph by Matt Towe in Wick, Caithnes





# Belgische Nachrichten Nouvelles belges Belgisch Nieuws

## Trainfo Tracker

The old Haltelink Tracker for Belgium is due to start to be wound down from 1st January.

A new tracker for Belgium has started up called **Trainfo Tracker** which has been done by Sibren Wieme as a private project. Trainfo has more functionality than Haltelink and has benefited from wise words from Simon who ran Haltelink.

<https://tracker.treinfo.be/>

## It is very, very good.

**Train Number** - Type in the train number. There is also historical data here going back so far.

**Unit Number** - Type in the vehicle number you are interested in. Again there is historical data.

**Material Type** - Type in the Class you are interested in and up they come. So type in "HLE19" and all the trains running with a HLE 19 come up with the trains they are on.

**Station** - Type in the station you are interested in and up will come all the trains that are due at that station that day with what was on them. There is also a function to specify the date you want as well. So you type in "Brussel-Zuid" and you get a list for today. You can then scroll down to the current time and see what is coming towards you. So if you see something you want, you have time to move to right platform for your winner. When the train sets off from it's start point the information of the consist is then displayed.

What was going to be a more gloomy New Year without the Haltelink Tracker is a much Happier New Year with Trainfo Tracker!

If you do see anything wrong I would e-mail Sibren Wieme and point out the error. I have already done so and the error has been removed. You take out and put in.

What I have also said is to look at putting some information behind a pay wall. Be honest with people, the money is to pay for the server costs and provide money for occasional treats for the owner. Some people think as it is on the Internet it is free. **Well it is not.** Someone has to do the work and research which is not free. We have all nearly lost a very valuable resource and I would hate to lose it again because the owner is finding it hard to cover the costs.

The one thing I would be careful about is leaving it too long before starting to charge for some parts of the web site. If people have got used to seeing it for free they object to paying. If it has always been behind a pay wall then it has always been pay.

If the guy doing Trainfo is riding around in a Ferrari and has a private yacht moored in the harbour at Marbella, then quite obviously he is charging too much. A modest fee for some content that pays for his beer once a week, a trip on the train, some photographic equipment or even dinner once a week with his partner, is perfectly reasonable.

## **Five-day rail strike in Belgium at the end of January**

<https://www.treinreiziger.nl/eind-januari-5-daagse-spoorstaking-in-belgie/>

The Belgian railway unions have announced the first rail strike of the new year. The unions plan to strike from Monday 26th January to Friday 30th January. After 26 strike days in 2025, the strikes will continue into the New Year.

Since last year, there have been regular strikes in Belgium due to the plans of the De Wever government. It had already been announced that there would be more strikes in 2026. The last strike on the Belgian railways was in November. That was a nationwide general strike.

### **HLE 18**

It would appear that haulage of the Paris trains is now drawn from locomotives allocated to Oostende and fitted with ETCS Baseline 3. The locomotives will have a "F3" sticker in the front window. The locomotives are put on the Paris trains at Schaarbeek and they are currently drawn from:-

1805, 1810, 1815, 1817, 1828, 1832, 1834, 1836, 1837, 1849, 1856 & 1859

There is a rolling programme at Salzinnes of locomotives visiting for ETCS works. I assume that locomotives visiting for "ETCS works" are actually going in for Baseline 3 fitting. This will continue meaning more Oostende HLE 18s will be fitted and therefore the pool for Paris will get bigger. Also the HLE 18s allocated to Kinkempois will also be getting Baseline 3 and some of them may find their way to Paris.

One advantage of using Oostende locomotives is the graffiti is cleaned off thus presenting a much better image.

The fitting of Baseline 3 to the B-Transport TRAXX fleet [2802 - 2813 & 2869 - 2872] is why 2851 [186 001] and 2852 [186 002] are coming in to act as cover whilst locomotives are away at Brugge being fitted.

The work at Salzinnes on the HLE 18s takes up to four weeks to do so it looks to be both hardware and software that is being done.

For obvious reasons, I assume no HLE 19s will make it to Paris as the return could be a problem!

### **HLE 28/29/186**

186 209 and 186 235 came off lease with CTA at the end of 2025.

### **M4**

58050 will also be preserved

# Norichten aus Lëtzebuerg

## **Ex-CFL 2000 in Romania**

Andy thought this video might be of interest.

<https://youtu.be/EvljPDWucY8?si=oJIV-OEbF1rQ5QWc>

Notice how the train leaves with the door open. Interlocking?

## **CFL 2400s in Belgium**



24xx between Libramont and Luxembourg on 2nd January.  
Posted by Peter De Moudt and posted to the ICNG Group on Facebook.

## NS Vectrons

A few commentators have said that five Vectrons is not enough to cover the Nightjet Sleeper services.



“Due to a shortage of Vectron Locomotives, Railexperts 9902 is acting as a heating locomotive to supply energy to NJ 403. Amsterdam Westhaven | 29.12.2025”

Photo: © Peter van Rosmalen

## NS TRAXX

There are at least three TRAXX still in yellow and blue. 186 015 is one of the three but the identities of the other two were not made in the photograph on Facebook.

## ICRm Coaches

The ICRm information from Geoff has been put in the spreadsheet. Until there is any further updates this will be the last information.

I would like to thank Geoff for doing this ICRm information over the years.

## ICNG

Someone sent me some information over Christmas about the ICNG and the plans going into 2027/8. I was away at the time and I remember reading it, but cannot find it at the moment. Could you please resend?



3107 arrived on 1st January 2026 and was photographed here by Mark Broekhans at Zwolle on 2nd January. Posted to ICNG Group on Facebook.

In Service are 65 examples. As with all things ICNG, "Service" is open to interpretation.

ICNG-5 3101, 3102, 3103, 3105 [4]  
3111, 3115, 3117, 3120 [4]  
3121, 3123, 3124, 3126, 3127, 3128, 3129, 3130 [8]  
3131, 3132, 3133, 3134, 3135, 3136, 3137, 3138, 3139, 3140 [10]  
3141, 3142, 3143, 3144, 3145, 3146, 3147, 3148, 3149 [9]  
ICNG-8 3205, 3206, 3209 [3]  
3211, 3212, 3219, 3220 [4]  
3221, 3222, 3223, 3224, 3225, 3226, 3227 [7]  
ICNG-B 3304, 3305, 3306, 3307 [4]  
3311, 3312, 3313, 3314, 3315, 3316, 3317, 3318, 3319, 3320 [10]  
3321 [1]

In Commissioning/Acceptance/Testing are 3107, 3114, 3118, 3351 & 3352.

3107 arrived on Thursday 1st January and should be out on test on Tuesday 6th.  
3114 is on Acceptance Testing.  
3118 is on Acceptance Testing.  
3143 is at Alstom Brugge for retrofit work.

## NVBS Charter 3rd January 2026

There is not a massive amount of news this week so I have been able to do a bit more of this tour than I would normally do.

Unless stated otherwise all the photographs are by Bas Bonhoff.

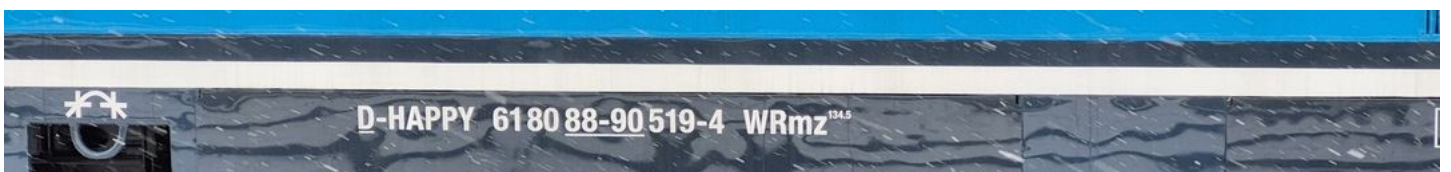
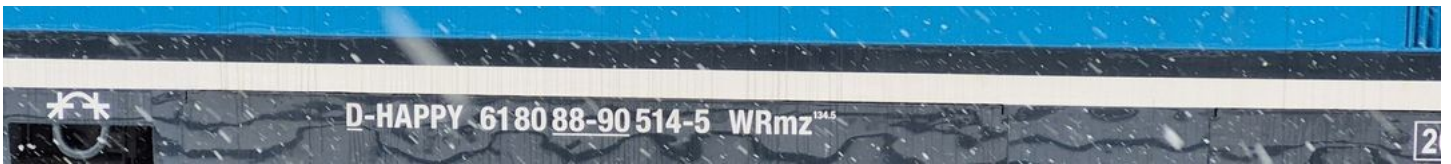
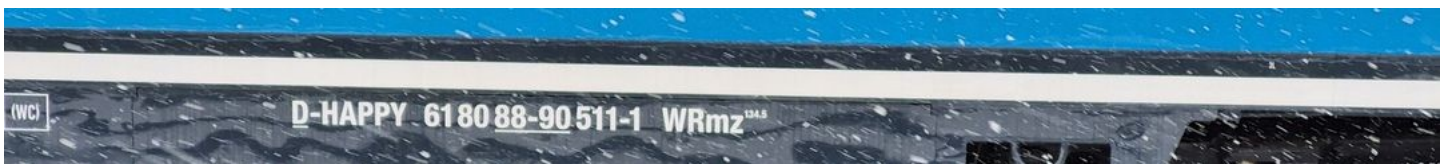
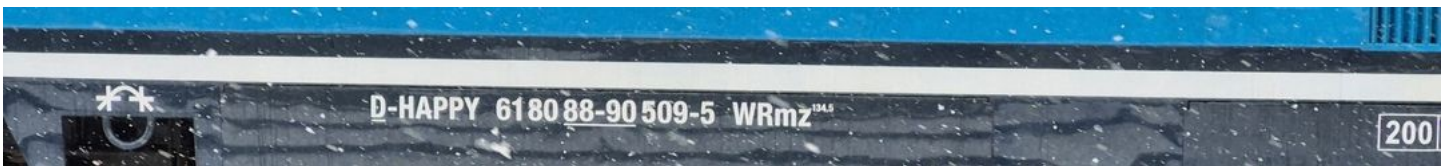
101002 [1772] brought the stock into Amersfoort and then worked the train to Zwolle. At Zwolle 101002 worked back light engine to Amersfoort.



Then the star of the show backed on which is 1831 which has been renumbered 1931 in honour of the year in which the NVBS was founded.



For the cognoscente.



The tour was supposed to be operated by RXP using 9902 [1616] Tommie & Tess but at the last minute this changed to TCS. Something has happened which caused the last minute change. I would have been happy with 1772 to Zwolle as I last had haulage behind it on 12th March 1997.

Amersfoort V 11:08 4A

Zwolle A 11:57 3

Zwolle V 12:10 3

Dronten A 12:28 1

Dronten V 12:37 1

Almere Centrum A 13:07 3

Almere Center V 13:13 3

Diemen South A 13:33 111

Diemen South V 13:34 111

Amsterdam Arena A 13:38 1

Amsterdam Arena V 13:52 1

Woerden A 14:11 2

Woerden V 14:22 2

Alphen a/d Rijn A 14:38 1

Alphen a/d Rijn V 15:07 1

Leiden A 15:21 503B

Leiden V 15:22 503B (pathing stop)

Hoofddorp A 15:38 210

Hoofddorp V 15:46 210 (pathing stop)

Schiphol A 15:50 1

Schiphol V 15:52 1 (pathing stop)

Amersfoort A 16:46 4A

Amersfoort V 17:05

It was a lovely start to the tour.....



On the way from Amersfoort to Zwolle the train passed through Putten, where Iwan Bögels lives, and where he took this photograph. At this stage of the tour the train is moving away from us and 1831 is on the rear of the train with it's pantographs down.

De jaarlijkse Oliebollenrit passeerde Putten zojuist tijdens een flinke sneeuwstorm. Er stonden in totaal zo'n 20 fotografen verspreid over het perron, inclusief deze die-hards.

The annual Oliebollenrit\* just passed through Putten during a heavy snowstorm. There were about 20 photographers scattered across the platform, including these die-hards.



\* Oliebollenrit translates as Dutch Doughnut Ride. Apparently there were doughnuts on the train for participants.

These are some of the Diner Train vehicles - look nice.



# Amsterdam Arena



A very brave soul here in just a T-Shirt



## Amsterdam Arena



Alphen a/d Rijn, The day has brightened up considerably by the time the tour got to here.



Alphen a/d Rijn



Haarlem



## Haarlem



## Amsterdam Centraal



# Blast From The Past

This Ramble Edition is 555 so I thought we would celebrate with 47555. For a long time it was the locomotive that was first choice for hauling the Royal Train as it was named "The Commonwealth Spirit". 47555 is seen here getting bulled up for Royal Train duties inside the shed on Crewe Depot. 28th March 1988.

47555 was withdrawn from Immingham in January 1999 and cut at Wigan CRDC between October 1999 and January 2000



Photograph by Jamerail and uploaded to Flickr.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/95430950@N07/49665523781>



# Belgian Can Can

30 / 144



This week's can is 2106 and it is seen here at Oostkamp light engine on 8th February 2012.



© Steven De Haeck

Photograph by Steven De Haeck and posted to Flickr.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/stevendehaek/6929444669>



# Other News



**Your new railway uniform modelled in the brochure.**



**Your new railway uniform as soon as you put it on.**



**JLarky** ✓

@JLarky

two unread emails:

- from HR: please fill out our anonymous survey
- from Boss: don't forget about the survey, HR said you are the last one from our team

Rubes By Leigh Rubin  
RubesCartoons.com

5-15  
11.

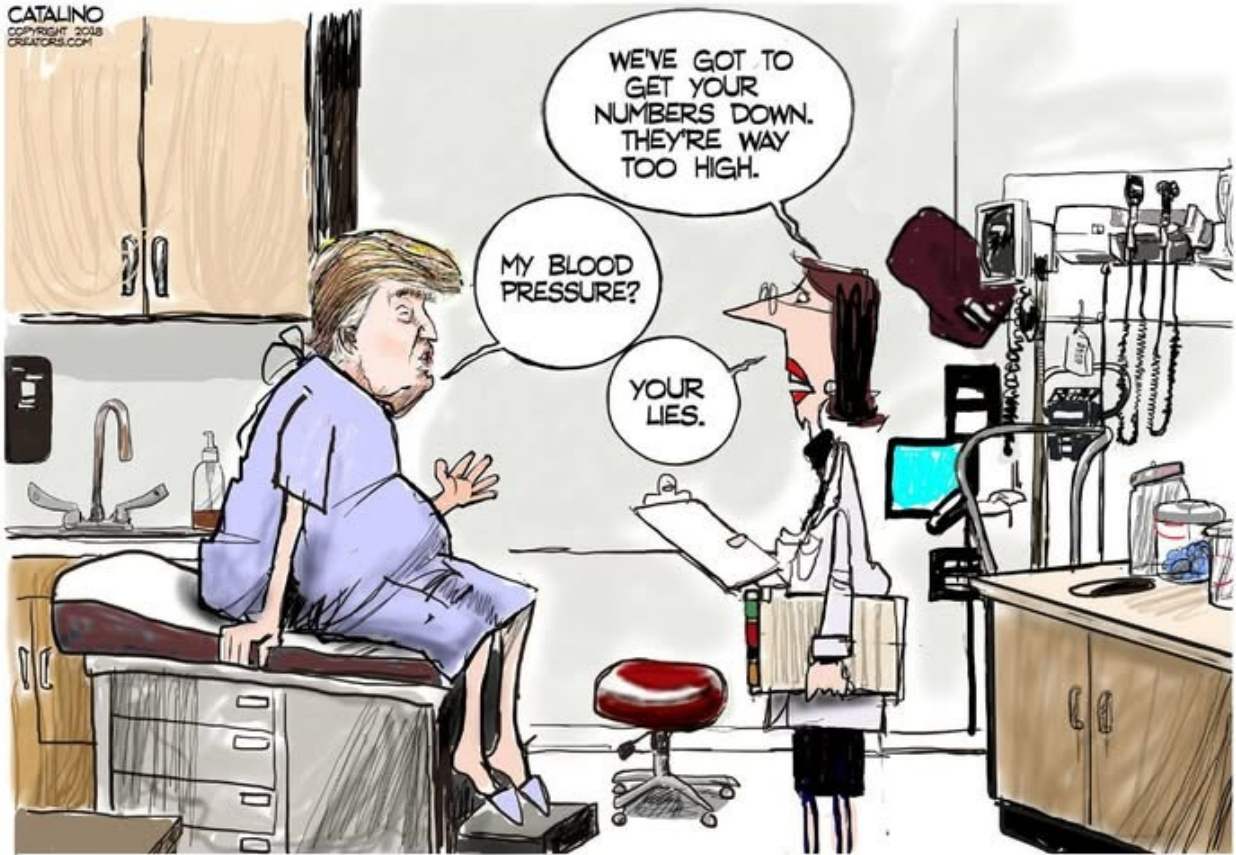
...AND WHEN DID YOU FIRST  
BECOME AWARE OF YOUR  
OBSESSIVE FINGER LICKING?

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leigh@rubescartoons.com



**Kentucky Freud Chicken**

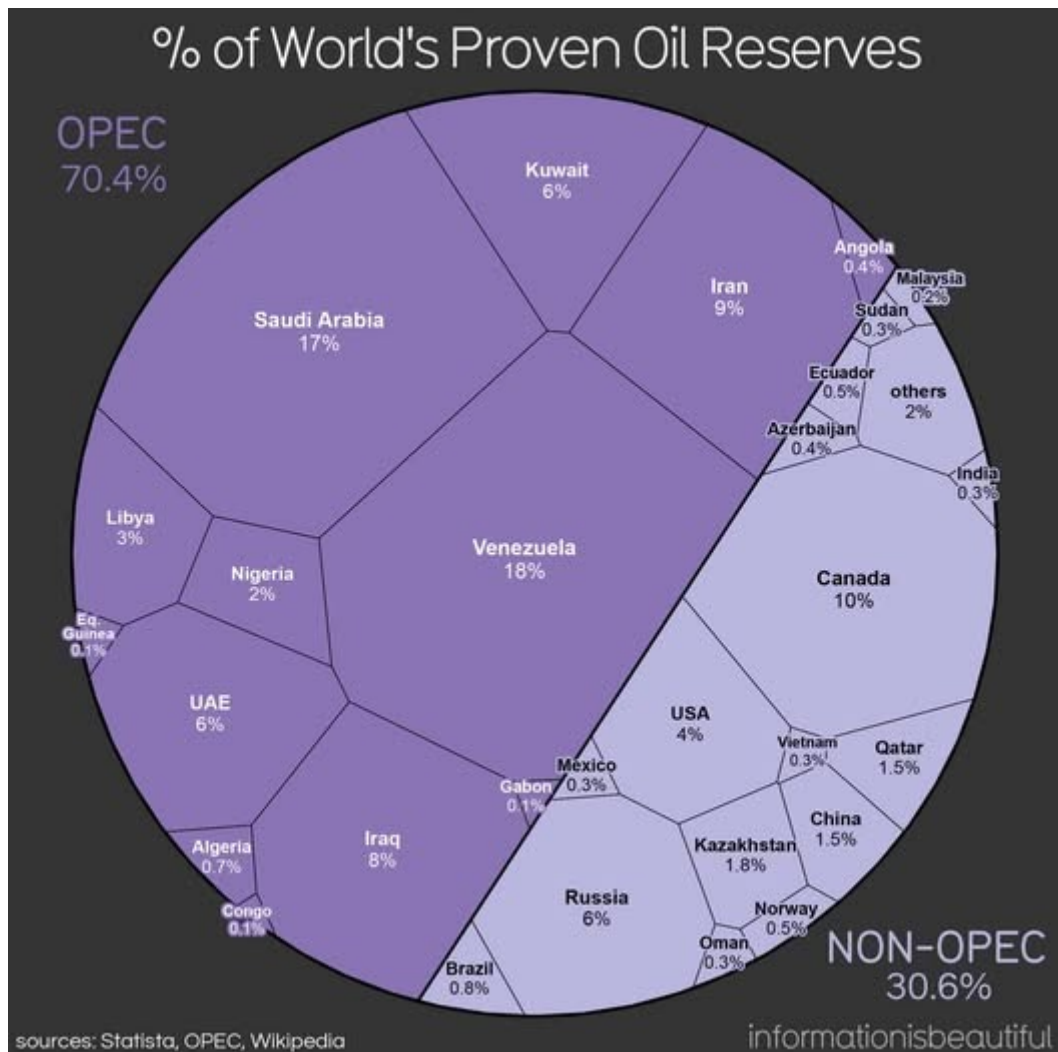
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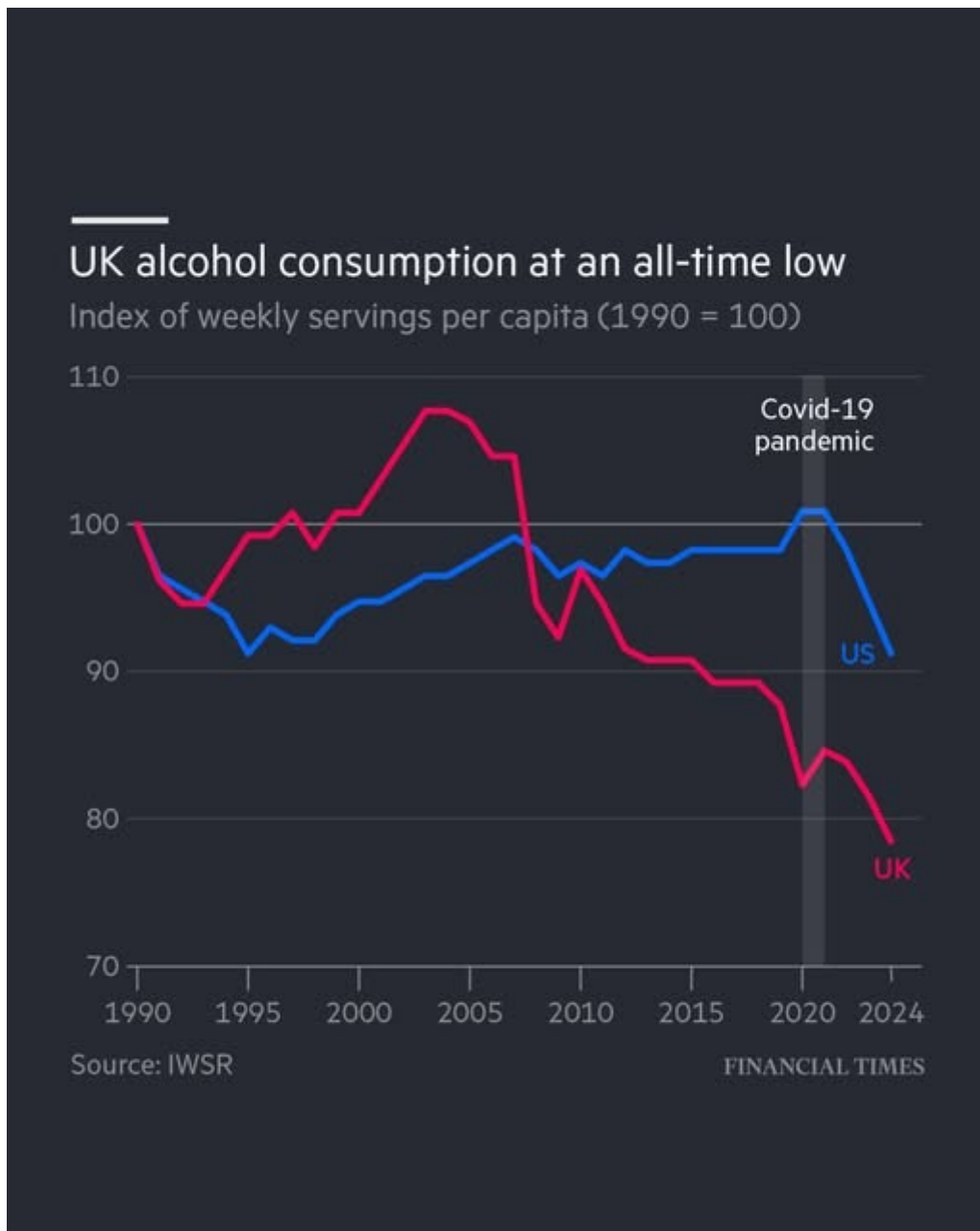




❤️ 794    💬 10    ↻ 74    📌

aymanm Political cartoonist Mike Luckovich from the Atlanta Journal Constitution.





People blame the decline in pubs on cheap booze from the supermarkets, the smoking ban and a host of other things. There is one inescapable fact - people are drinking less.

There will be a similar graph in most Western countries.

Have a nice week

# *Tain*