

This month our online visits take us through the 12 days of Christmas – from the Partridge family to virtual drums

Online

Site of the month

Five teenagers forming a band with their mum and touring the States in a multicoloured bus may sound like a bizarre idea, but this is exactly what the Partridge Family did in the Seventies (remember them?).

If you thrilled to David Cassidy's croonings or stared open-mouthed at the TV screen when Susan Dey tinkled those ivories, then the Web is the place for you and the Unofficial Partridge Family Homepage has the most information.

Whether it's a chord breakdown for 'I think I love you', a description of every single episode, or a collection of Partridge Family icons, this site has it all.

● www.eden.com/~gregandi/partridg.html



Comedy Zone: Shooting Stars

If anyone likes a dove or two, it's Reeves and Mortimer. However, the Shooting Stars section of the BBC's Comedy Zone Web site has ditched the 'Dove from Above' and gone for the 'Beast from the East' instead.

Answer the six questions on the apples around Ron Atkinson's head and you can win a prize. Questions change every Friday and there's a free screen saver to watch if you get bored.

● www.comedyzone.beeb.com/shooting_stars/



Best site on France

French cooking has long been held in high regard around the world and the gastronomy section of France.com tells you why.

The site covers cuisines from haute to bourgeois and gives tips on reading menus, explains French mealtime traditions and gives advice on restaurant etiquette (never put ice in your wine, even if it's white!).

● www.france.com



Klassic Jewellery

Christmas is traditionally a time for giving gifts, and what better gift than a 24-carat gold ring. Or, indeed, five of them. Yes, it's now possible to view and buy gold rings, and a selection of other expensive jewellery items, online. The only problem is that payment has to be made in Indonesian rupiahs. Oh well, it's the thought that counts.

● www.inet.com.my/klassic



Wildlife Technologies



Ornithologists looking to attract birds within the range of their binoculars now have much more in their arsenal than a water-filled whistle. Wildlife Technologies specialises in digitally recorded wildlife calls and claims to have the best wildlife caller on the market. Its KAS-2001-RC is billed as the 'caller you can take to the bank' and at \$25 per animal call, you could well need to just do that to explain a few things to the manager.

● www.wildlifetech.com/

Gaggle Newsletter

If you're fascinated by geese – and let's face it, who isn't? – then you should take a gander at the official Web site of the Gaggle newsletter. As well as being the collective term for a gathering of geese, 'gaggle' is apparently an acronym for 'General Association of Gleeful Goose Lovers Everywhere'. No sign of any geese a-laying, though.

● oeonline.com/gaggle



Swans Crossing World

Swans Crossing was a short-lived US soap opera that focused on the lives of 12 rich, spoilt teenagers. It looks thoroughly awful but by the evidence of the site's 'hit counter', at least 1,600 Americans (0.00064 percent of the population) want the show brought back.

● members.aol.com/phantasy4/sc.htm



Historical Photos of Wisconsin

This page is simple but serves our purpose (almost) perfectly. It has a picture of not eight, but one maid milking a cow in 1929. This fine piece of Web wizardry is brought to you by former Wisconsin Senator, Herb Kohl. We have absolutely no idea why his political career ended so abruptly.

● www.senate.gov/member/wi/kohl/general/agpic.html



Piper at the Gates of Dawn - The Syd Barrett Page

Named after a chapter in *The Wind in the Willows*, Piper at the Gates of Dawn was one of the first albums from Pink Floyd. If you listen to Syd Barrett's psychedelic lyrics you'll be as puzzled as anyone but at least his home page gives you the chance to read them instead as well as admire the album's artwork.

● www.ozemail.com.au/~hektor/syd.htm

Traditional Border Morris Dancing

Most Web sites about dancing ladies are rather risqué for a family magazine but if your tastes are a little more respectable, look at Paul Millennas' Morris Dancing home page. As home pages go, it's not the most exciting but there's a regional breakdown of dances complete with dance steps.

● ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/PaulMillennas/tradbord.htm



House of Lords Home Page



Talking of dull sites, there isn't a picture in sight on the House of Lords home page but at least there's lots of factual content. If you really want to know, there's a list of forthcoming business, the texts of previous debates, bills and reports plus information on paying the House a visit.

● www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/ld/ldhome.htm

Jim's Drums

Most parents would agree that the best kind of drum kit is a virtual one and that's exactly what Jim's Drums Web site provides. Click on the image of a large drum kit and you can experience one of 40 percussion sounds. Sadly, the site isn't particularly high-tech and dreadfully slow so it's best used for those moodier jazz pieces.

● www.interlog.com/~thrum/jimsdrum.html

