

'Tis The Season To Be Jolly

My Favourite
Christmas Memory

All I Want For
Christmas

What Christmas Means
to Me

Homemade Gifts

Top Tips 4 Christmas

Christmas Wordsearch

Leftover Recipes

Secret Richmond III



All
I want
FOR
Christmas



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Welcome to our New Resident

We offer a warm welcome to our new resident:

Frankie Ross-Smith – Queen Elizabeth's Almshouses

Chapel Schedule: 2023

Sunday 3rd December <i>1st Sunday of Advent</i>	10.30am Communion with hymns 5.30pm No evening service
Sunday 10th December <i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i>	10.30am Communion with hymns 3pm Carols around the tree at Michel's
Sunday 17th December <i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i>	10.30am Communion with hymns 5.30pm Carols Cafe Church
Wednesday 20th December	6pm <i>Annual Carol Service with singers from St. Mary Abbots, Kensington</i>
Sunday 24th December <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i>	10.30am Christmas Eve Communion 4.30pm <i>Candlelit Crib Service</i>
Monday 25th December <i>Christmas Day</i>	10.30am <i>Christmas Communion with Carols</i>
All are welcome to join us.	Morning Prayer on Tuesdays at 10am Evening Prayer on Thursdays at 4.30pm

For more information email d.thompson@richmondcharities.org.uk

Editorial Committee: Juliet Ames-Lewis, Lorraine Bradley, Debbie Flaherty, Chantal Richards, Derrick Thompson, Gennie Thompson & Mike Townsin.
Magazine Design: Chantal Richards & Eden Richards

Competition Winner

Thank you to everyone who sent in entries for the Riddles page in our November edition.

Picked at random, our winner this month is:

Connie Yorke
Congratulations!

Answers from last month's competition: page 27.

Contribute to our Next Issue

If you would like to contribute an article for the next issue, the deadline is: **FRIDAY 8th DECEMBER.**

Give the article to your Scheme Manager, or email to c.richards@richmondcharities.org.uk

As a guide on word count, a one page article is ideally 340 words.



Letter from Chantal Richards



Dear Residents,

As we arrive at the yearly celebration of marking Jesus Christ's birth, our community offers you Derrick's packed Chapel Schedule, two carol singing events (see right and below) and of course Christmas Lunch at The Richmond Hill Hotel. May they bring you festive cheer and companionship.

Christmas for my family is spread across many days with various combinations of extended family but on Christmas Eve we stay at home and always have gammon and mash supper. The table is always set for six people although we are a family of five. We leave one chair for unexpected visitors. Sometimes that person is a friend in need or a mate who would otherwise be home alone. It's different every year but they all love our traditional dessert of Lindt chocolate reindeer filled with Baileys and cream!

I recently discovered that 'the spare chair' is a commonly observed custom and a tradition in Polish hospitality. They strongly believe in an old saying, which has it that 'a guest at home is God at home'. Some say, in its early Christian form, the empty seat was being left to commemorate those who had passed away earlier in the year. I hope that you always have a seat at the table. Best wishes for a joyous Christmas filled with love and happiness.

Chantal

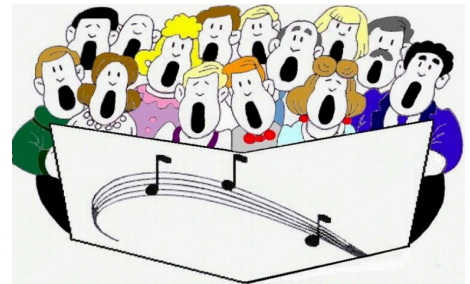
The Parkshot Singers



will be coming to entertain us on

**Friday 8th December
3pm at Hickey's
Chapel.**

Everyone is welcome and refreshments will be served after the concert.



You might want to bring some money with you as there will be a stall selling Christmas cards and decorations hand made by our very own resident crafters.

CAROLS AROUND THE CHRISTMAS TREE AT MICHEL'S

Sunday 10th December at 3.00pm
@ Michel's Almshouses

Come one, come all and join us for Christmas carols, mince pies and not forgetting a glass of mulled wine around the Christmas tree at Michel's Almshouses.

Santa might send us some snow, so wrap up warm and bring a little blanket to cover your knees if you can.



ALMSHOUSE NEWS - My Favourite Christmas Memory



My favourite Christmas memory
"In 1994 I was living in Hong Kong, and having both my grown-up daughters visit, we joined a small number of local friends on a private cabin cruiser floating around HK Island in warm sunny weather. We'd all brought contributions to lunch and Santa managed to find us!"
Alan Shirley

My favourite Christmas memory
"The year my brother and I both had bicycles as our Christmas presents. These were used daily and we loved them."
Anon

My favourite Christmas memory
"My daughter's first Christmas when she had more fun with the wrapping paper rather than the present."
Jonathan Cooke



My favourite Christmas memory
"When I was 16 I became engaged on actual Christmas day and we celebrated with a big party."
Gwen Doyle

My favourite Christmas memory
"All the family gathered around the fire in Mum and Dad's thatched cottage, with all the grandchildren playing the musical instruments they had received as Christmas presents."
Steve Harbud

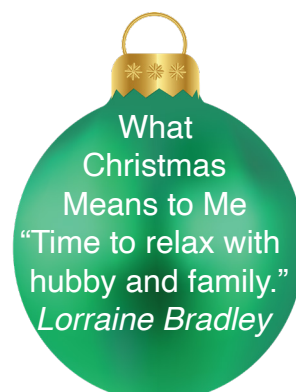
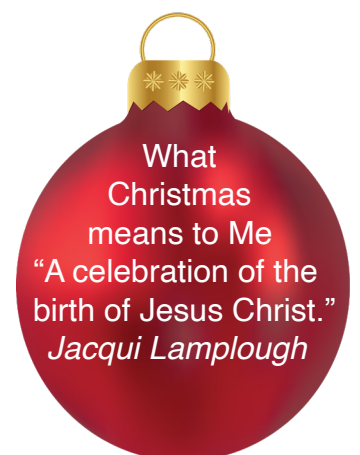
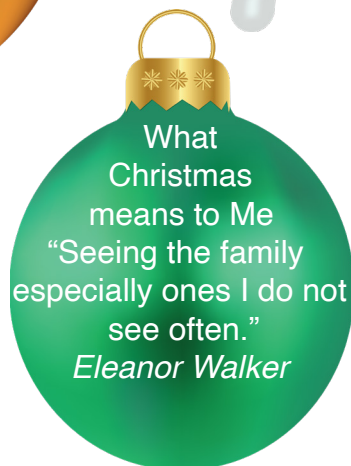
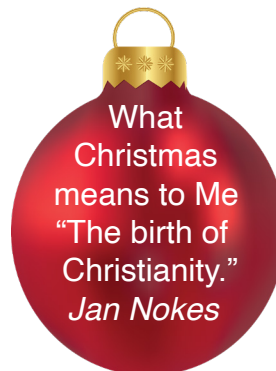
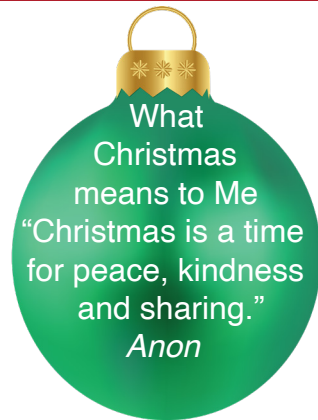
My favourite Christmas memory
"My dad smoking his Christmas day cigar and giving me a glass of wine, which turned out to be Ribena."
Jackie Golding

My favourite Christmas memory
"Christmas day as a staff member in a children's home with 40 children aged under five sitting around one big table."
Sue McAnena

My favourite Christmas memory
"Listening for Mum coming up the stairs with the Christmas Stocking - and then getting caught opening it before going to sleep."
Valerie Keene



What Christmas Means to Me - ALMSHOUSE NEWS



ALMSHOUSE NEWS - Home Made Christmas Gifts

by Gennie Thompson, Debbie Flaherty and Lorraine Bradley

Sustainable Planters

Transform unused tin cans or glass containers into charming planters. Fill them with small succulents, herbs, or seasonal flowers. Paint the containers in holiday motifs or wrap them in recycled paper for a festive touch. This gift combines creativity, sustainability, and a touch of nature.



Homemade Bath Salts

Pamper your friends and family with DIY bath salts. Mix Epsom salts with a few drops of essential oils like lavender or peppermint and add a few dried flower petals for an extra touch of luxury.

Package them in recycled glass jars and tie a ribbon around the lid for a spa-like experience at home.



Repurposed Wood Coasters

Give new life to old wooden pallets or scraps by crafting them into stylish coasters. Supplies can be purchased from any craft or DIY shop.

Simply sand the wood, paint or stain it in festive colours, and seal with varnish. Your friends will appreciate both the functionality and the eco-friendly effort behind these handmade coasters.

Customized Recipe Books

Create personalised recipe books by compiling your favourite recipes or family traditions.

Decorate the cover with festive illustrations or use recycled materials for a unique touch that preserves cherished culinary memories, traditions or helps someone who is not so cook-literate.

- Craft a memory book filled with photos, mementos, and heartfelt messages.

- Upcycle an old notebook or scrapbook and fill it with memories you've shared with the recipient,

perhaps add in memoirs such as tickets or other sentimental pieces.

- This idea not only showcases your creativity but also captures the heart of your relationship.

Lavender's Blue, Dilly Dilly, Lavender's Green



by Jemima Prasadam

Many moons ago, I used to sing this well-loved nursery rhyme to my youngest daughter. She complained that it didn't rhyme... well, that's children for you!

For me, herbs sing the anthem of healing, and lavender is Queen of them all. I love to grow it and to share its uplifting aroma with those I meet. If you think you might like to have a go, here's what I do.

My grandson Tom and I love to grow the lavender together. We use containers big and small, and we harvest it in July. We use brown paper bags to dry the lavender – otherwise we lay the lavender in layers, between sheets of newspaper, and leave it in a dark place for 2-3 weeks.

At this stage, the lavender is ready for making into bags and its perfume fills the air with freshness and fragrance as you make up each little pocket. Small

muslin bags are ideal, but in the absence of those, organza bags are readily available and very handy.

In terms of scents, simple lavender is beautiful just on its own. However, my own twist on this is to add dried orange peel and cloves into the bags. Orange and lemon peel together with lavender go well, too. You could experiment with your own ingredients and see what happens!

Lavender bags are such a welcome gift and I share those I make with friends and family, but also with health workers and people I meet in my day-to-day life. If I can grow lavender, you certainly can! Good luck and enjoy!

Homemade Potpourri

A delightful and aromatically personalised gift can be made with ease and utilise any old jars or glass containers you have lying around.

You will need:

- **Dried Flowers and Herbs:** Select a variety of dried flowers and herbs for your potpourri. Lavender, rose petals and rosemary are popular choices. You can dry these ingredients by hanging them upside down in a dark, dry place.
- **Spices:** Cinnamon sticks, cloves and star anise add warmth and depth to your potpourri.
- **Citrus Zest:** The zest of dried citrus fruits like orange and lemon can provide a fresh and invigorating fragrance.
- **Essential Oils:** Essential oils can enhance and prolong the scent of your potpourri. Choose oils that complement your chosen ingredients.
- **Fixatives:** Fixatives like arrowroot help the potpourri retain its scent for an extended period.

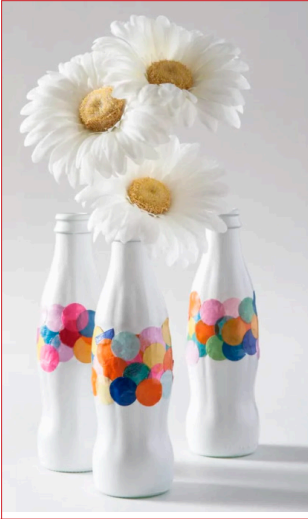
How to make:

1. **Prepare Your Ingredients:** Gather and prepare your dried flowers, herbs, spices and citrus zest. You can break the larger items into smaller pieces to release more fragrance.
2. **Mix Your Ingredients:** In a large bowl, combine your dried flowers, herbs, spices and citrus zest. Start with a 2:1 ratio of dried flowers and herbs to spices.
3. **Add Essential Oils:** Drip your chosen essential oils onto the mixture. Start with a few drops and adjust the amount based on your preference. Mix well, and let the blend sit for a few hours to allow the scents to meld.
4. **Incorporate Fixatives:** Sprinkle your fixative over the mixture and blend it thoroughly. The fixatives will help the potpourri retain its scent for a longer duration.
5. **Store Your Potpourri:** Place your potpourri in a decorated vessel of your choice, cover so it is airtight. Allow it to sit for a few weeks prior to gifting to fully develop its fragrance. Shake the container periodically to mix the scents.

Repurposed Glass Bottle Vases

Transform empty glass bottles into stylish vases. Paint or decorate them with twine, fabric or leftover ribbon.

Simply add fresh or dried flowers for the perfect, repurposed vase that brightens up any space.



Recycled Fabric Ornaments

Dig into your fabric scraps to create unique Christmas tree ornaments. Cut out festive shapes, sew them together, and stuff with leftover fabric or cotton batting. Add a loop of recycled ribbon for hanging.



Make Your Own Pine Cone Decorations

- **Snow-topped pine cones** These look lovely grouped together in a bowl or vase, or just scattered on windowsills and around a fireplace.

Take a big, open pine cone and apply white paint to the edges to look like snow. Once dried, you could add a little sparkle by dotting some of the scales with glue and adding silver glitter.



- **Metallic pine cones** Pine cones look great when they're dipped or painted in gold or silver paint. You can add glitter afterwards if you want to make them shimmer too. Tip: If you're dipping your pine cone in paint or glue, it's always a good idea to check for any small bugs that might be making their home inside.



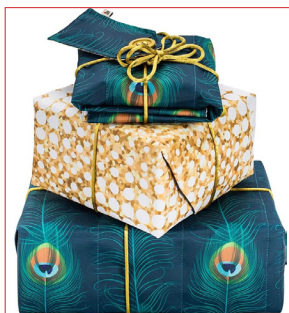
- **Mini Christmas tree pine cones** Make your own mini Christmas tree by choosing a large, open pine cone. Dip or cover it in green paint. When it's dry, glue small pom-poms or beads onto the face-up ends of the pine cone scales. Add a dusting of glitter after painting if you'd like to create a tinsel effect.

- **Pine cone heart** Still have some pine cones left over? Dip them in white paint and, when they're dry, use strong glue to stick the sides together and create the outline of a large heart. This one's a little tricky but you'll get really effective results if you're working with smaller pine cones that are a similar size. Once you've finished, you can hang your creation with ribbon as an alternative Christmas wreath or prop it up against a big pile of presents.



The Ultimate Sustainable Wrap

Choose re-usable wrapping paper by using a decorative scarf or material to wrap your gifts. You can also buy re-usable wrapping sheets in most gift shops now.



Wrag Wrap Reversible Crackle Wrap. (Amazon £11.44), this is made from a mix of recycled waste plastic, with a vivid disco and fine feather print. There's a different pattern on each side and once the

item has been received the packaging can be washed and reused. No need for any cutting or stitching in order to seal the wrapping either, simply cover the items and use the accompanying wrap to tie it together in place.

Furoshiki (風呂敷)

Japanese wrapping cloths traditionally used to wrap and/or to transport goods.



A large furoshiki measures approximately 43" square and can be made from any light or medium weight fabric strong enough to tie knots and carry items; linen, cotton, rayon, polyester, silk or similar. You can also use recycled fabrics like vintage feed sacks or table linens. You can find plenty of ideas online too, just type in 'furoshiki'.

Recycle Newspapers & Magazines

For a chic wrapping option, utilise old magazines or newspapers to wrap your gifts, decorate with ribbons, bows, string or garden twine.



Hand-Stamped Gift Wrap:

Put a personal touch on your gifts by creating your own hand-stamped wrapping paper. Use recycled brown paper and carve simple stamps out of potatoes or sponges. Dip them in eco-friendly paint and decorate the paper with festive patterns. This not only reduces waste but also adds a unique personalisation to your gifts.



Wonka Film Preview



by Juliet Ames-Lewis

The *Wonka* movie, which will be released in cinemas in the UK on 8th December 2023, is a prequel to Roald Dahl's beloved 1964 novel *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, and as the much-anticipated release date gets closer, trailers have been released showing Timothée Chalamet's version of the iconic chocolatier. While it's known that *Wonka* will focus on a never-before-seen period in Willy Wonka's history and provide him with an origin story of sorts, much still remains shrouded in mystery. As such, the Timothée Chalamet *Wonka* movie is the subject of intense speculation among Roald Dahl fans —

as well as casual moviegoers who enjoyed both the Gene Wilder and Johnny Depp versions of Willy Wonka.



Timothée Chalamet will be playing the titular character of Willy Wonka, the eccentric chocolate factory owner. Already there have been a few sneak-peeks and promotional shots released for the *Wonka* movie, and it's clear the world Warner Bros. is inviting audiences into is just as magical as Dahl's original book. Some show Chalamet in the characteristic brown top hat and long purple coat, the same look previously donned by Gene Wilder in 1971 and by Johnny Depp in 2005 in previous versions of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. The film will focus on a young Willy Wonka and how he came to meet the Oompa-Loompas on one of his earliest adventures.

As well as starring Chalamet, the film also includes Sally Hawkins and cameos from Hugh Grant (as an Oompa-Loompa) and Rowan Atkinson.

Top Tips for Christmas

Nutcrackers!

Use your nutcrackers to open jars and bottles, even those bottles that house eye drops.

Eco Friendly Oven Cleaning!

Why not give your oven a refresh before the Christmas season. Sprinkle bicarbonate of soda across the inside of the oven door and at the base of your oven. Squeeze fresh lemon on top of the baking powder. Gently clean with a soft cloth. Ta-da! Grease and smells disappear.

Know where your old stamps are?

Regular stamps without a barcode* are no longer valid for postage. Swap them for the new barcoded ones. The stamps that have changed are the stamps pictured above.

*Note: Special Stamps with pictures on and Christmas Stamps without a barcode will continue to be valid and don't need to be swapped out.



GiftList is an app that will help you sort and budget all your gift giving. I've tried it and it helps immensely! (Ed). If you get stuck for gift ideas you can also browse and shop in the app from shops and brands. It is free too.



Christmas Leftovers Reinvented

by Derrick Thompson



Whether it's a parcel of turkey your family sent you home with, the remains of the family size Christmas pudding you bought for yourself, or the excess of Brussels sprouts

you cooked, here are some ideas for what to do with them so that you can enjoy them in different ways!

First, a reminder, always ensure cooked food is cooled quickly, not left out on the side for more than an hour or two and is thoroughly reheated before eating!

Leftover Turkey reinvented as Turkey, Leek and Mushroom Pie



Chop an onion and fry it until it is beginning to soften. Add some chopped leek and sliced mushrooms and continue cooking until all cooked through. Drain off any juices and add some chicken stock, or milk, then thicken with some cornflower. Once you have a nice thick vegetable mixture, leave to cool.

Meanwhile, take any leftover potatoes, or boil some fresh ones, and mash with a little butter and milk, but don't let them get too runny, and allow to cool. (You could include other left-over root veg like carrots or parsnip in this mash).

Mix the cold vegetable mix with chopped up turkey (and ham if you have some) and put into the bottom of a heatproof dish, then spread the mashed potato mix on top. Dot the top with a little more butter, then put in a medium-hot oven until thoroughly

reheated (if you use a thermometer, at least 70 degrees centigrade). Serve with green vegetables, like fried brussels sprouts!

Leftover Brussels Sprouts — Fried



Slice the cold Brussels sprouts, chop some bacon into small pieces and finely chop some garlic.

Fry the bacon and garlic for a few minutes until the bacon is cooked through, add the sliced sprouts and fry until hot. Finally sprinkle on some lemon juice, stir and serve. (We actually prefer our Brussels Sprouts cooked this way!)

Quick Reinvented Christmas Pudding



Cut the pudding into 1cm thick slices. Heat some butter (could be leftover Brandy Butter), or oil and butter in a frying pan. Add the slices of Christmas pudding and fry lightly on each side until hot all the way through. Best served with your favourite cream or ice cream!

If you try out any of these ideas I take no responsibility for how they taste! I have taste tested them, but they are never the same twice!

Chaplain's Chat



by Derrick Thompson

Looking back it was great to see so many people in Chapel for our Remembrance and Memorial Services on Sunday 12th November.

Our Remembrance Service, complete with the Last Post, Two Minutes Silence and Reveille, was supported by resident Norman Bramfitt, who read the Exhortation and Chapel attendee Thomas (Grandson of resident Jemima Prasadam), who read the Kohima Epitaph.

The Chapel was poignantly decorated with poppies, and a Union Jack which was lent by resident Jenny Ruff. The flag was brought back to the UK from Burma by Jenny's father after the liberation. It had been used by British soldiers in a prisoner of war camp there. *(see photos right)*

The Memorial Service was well attended by residents, their families, and the families of former residents. Whilst listening to the beautiful singing of the St Mary Abbots singers, under the leadership of organist Mark Uglow, people lit candles and wrote the names of their loved ones on wooden hearts to hang on the Memory Tree. It was a very gentle and moving service.

Looking forward we are now in the season of Advent, preparing for the arrival of the baby Jesus which we celebrate at Christmas. I would love to see you at the **Carol Service on Wednesday 20th December at 6.00pm**. If you have a carol or reading that you would like to have included in the service, please let me or your Scheme Manager know by **Sunday 10th December** and I will do my



"Thank you to all those who gave in the offerings at the Memorial and Remembrance Services. £204 has now been sent to the Al Ahli Anglican Hospital in Gaza"

Derrick Thompson

best to include them. If you would like to read out one of the readings in the service let me know as soon as possible.

This year on **Christmas Eve** (Sunday 24th December) we will be having a simple **Candlelit Crib Service at 4.30pm**. This will have simple carols, short readings, and the setting up and blessing of the Crib Scene. The service will be suitable for all, but hopefully special for any grand or great grandchildren you would like to bring along.

May you have a blessed Advent and Christmas!

New Almshouse Developments



by Mick Tinson

Queen's Road

We're two months in and the team are steaming ahead. The piling, as mentioned in last month's issue, was completed on time and things are really starting to take shape. The image below shows the completed foundations of flat No. 1 giving us the very first impression of the overall size of each almshouse.

To the left of the image, the team are preparing the areas around the piling in readiness for the concrete to be poured which will complete the foundation of almshouse No.2.



St Mary's Grove Garages

In the blink of an eye, the garages are gone. In just over three weeks the team have demolished the 17 garages and are removing the last of the rubble.

The next step is to remove the last couple of supporting walls and carefully remove the old garage at the rear of the Mitre. The garage will be rebuilt during the construction of property No.1 which we anticipate to be complete by early spring 2024. The whole development will be complete in Autumn 2024.



Thank You Message from Macmillan



by Pat Platt

I was very touched at receiving the following 'thank you' card from Macmillan Cancer Support. Thank you to everyone who has made donations during our annual coffee morning over the past 19 years.



Dear Members of Almshouse Residents Club,

I wanted to thank you for taking part in a coffee morning again this year. You have been making a difference for 19 years and have raised an incredible £18,238.46, which we have used to fund a Macmillan nurse for over 552 hours! Thank you!

I'd love to pop along next year to mark 20 years of coffee mornings, and get to meet all of you! I will be in touch.

Best wishes, Bekki

Staff Update



by **Juliet Ames-Lewis**

As you have probably heard, or seen, our Scheme Manager Gennie is pregnant and her new baby is due in February 2024! We will be delighted to welcome a new addition to our community and a brother or sister for Tafari. Gennie will be going on maternity leave at the end of January 2024.

For the duration of her maternity leave, Claire will be the Scheme Manager for Hickey's. Debbie and Lorraine will continue to be the Scheme Managers for Adelaide Road, Benn's Walk, Church Estate, Houblon's and Manning Place, but they will also be supporting Claire with Hickey's. Jo and Linda will continue to be the Scheme Managers for Bishop Duppa's, Candler, Christchurch Road, Juxon's, Michel's, Queen Elizabeth's and Wright's.

The overnight on-call rota for Mondays – Thursdays will remain as it is currently with Linda on-call for Monday nights, Lorraine for Tuesday nights, Debbie for Wednesday nights and Claire for Thursday nights.

I am delighted that Derrick will be joining the on-call weekend rota from February 2024 for the duration of Gennie's maternity leave, and therefore the weekend rota will be covered by Derrick, Debbie, Claire and Jo.

This Is My Story Group



by **Derrick Thompson**

The aim is to come together once a month to share stories, listen deeply, speak from the heart and cultivate empathy and compassion among participants and promote a sense of community.

How does it work? A simple way is sitting in a circle, creating a centre, agreeing basic intentions, using a talking / listening piece and conducting our attention to listen, witness, and facilitate learning.

Sessions start in February 2024 with Derrick and Marisca from Richmond Mind.



“In traditional societies, personal experience, what a person has actually seen or done or heard in the bush or during a dream or vision, is considered to be the most valuable form of knowledge. When Native Elders want to make a point they tell a personal story and leave their audience to make the necessary connections and understand how the story illustrates and illuminates the issue in question”
David F Peat – Blackfoot Physics (edited)

Resident Forum Headlines



by Derrick Thompson

What a great time we had at the three residents' forums last month with deep discussions, fascinating feedback and super sandwiches! My favourite suggestion was for a jacuzzi, but that's probably because it was my suggestion! The swimming pool and sauna were also high on my list.

The full report of the meetings is going to take a while to write. 'Why?' Well, that's because this year we sat around tables and looked at four themes, each with three questions for residents to answer with encouragement from the staff and Trustees who were present. This resulted in roughly 375 post-it notes, written by the 53 residents who attended that I now need to collate and summarise!

Meanwhile, some headlines from each of the four themes:

Our Community Life – Activities and Events

- Residents are pleased with the variety of activities on offer and appreciate the staff's hard work for the 'big events'.
- Residents would like more Art and Gardening activities.
- Volunteers to lead activities could be found by asking in the Almshouse News!

Our Diverse Community

- Residents are aware of the potential opportunities and barriers created by technology.
- Whilst residents felt welcome on arrival at the Almshouses some also found moving to a new environment to be a worrying or frightening experience.
- There were a lot of people suggesting

'welcome teas' for new residents to meet existing residents and get to know people.

Our Maintenance Service to Residents

- Gerry is great! He sees to repairs quickly and effectively.
- Maintenance service could be improved by sub-contractors' work being checked after completion.
- Residents asked for more double or secondary glazing where possible.

Spiritual Wellbeing

- Meditation sessions were requested as a new activity.
- Some like spiritual activities to happen in the chapel, and there were requests for outdoor spiritual activities.
- Residents suggested we have some relaxed Christian worship services in the Chapel, perhaps mid-week.

I hope this gives you a flavour of what was discussed in our forum. Thank you to all who attended and took part. The full report will be finalised and published in the New Year.



We are calling for volunteers to host the popular **Film Club**.

We are open to new ideas, suggestions and ways of sharing each responsibility. We require new hosts from **January 2024**.

If you would like to nominate yourself, please inform your Scheme Manager who will inform the activities committee.

We look forward to hearing from you soon!

Age UK IT Sessions



by **Linda Prendergast**

You may be new to the world of IT and computers, or you may be looking to develop your existing skills. There are lots of benefits to being online!



You may want to:

- Use a laptop, computer, smart phone or another device for the first time
- Learn how to use the internet
- Learn a particular skill such as shopping online, using messaging apps, making video calls (Zoom, Skype, Facetime) or how to find information online.

In fact, Age UK can help with most things from internet searches to Zoom to online shopping.

For residents without a device, Age UK can also lend you an Android tablet for up to 8 weeks with tuition free of charge. The tablet also comes with 40GB of data.

The Richmond Charities has arranged for Age UK to come and help residents get to grips with technology. Initially we have confirmed two dates in which to hold pre-booked timed slots so that each tutor spends 1 hour one-to-one with the resident.

Please note.... places are limited therefore sessions are by appointment only and on a first come first served basis.

When making your appointment, it would be useful if you let your Scheme Manager know what device you have, whether it's a laptop or a mobile phone, or if you don't have a device but would like to borrow one of the Android tablets with tuition from Age UK.

Sessions are being held in the Garden Room on the following dates:

**Wednesday 10th January
between 10.00am – 12.00noon.**

**Wednesday 24th January
between 10.00am – 12.00noon.**

If you would like to make an appointment, please contact your Scheme Manager.

Are you a foodie? Join us at

FOOD GLORIOUS FOOD

IF YOU LOVE TALKING, LEARNING AND EATING FOOD, PLEASE JOIN US

**Monday 8th January
at 2pm
in The Green Room**

Out and About Group in Reading for the Bayeux Tapestry

by Richard Yardley

On 10th October we went to Reading on the Elizabeth Line from Ealing Broadway passing through West Drayton, Slough, Maidenhead and arrived at Reading. The museum is just a short walk from the station.

The original Bayeux Tapestry is preserved in Normandy, France. Nothing is known for certain about the tapestry's origins. The first written record of the Bayeux Tapestry is in 1476, when it was recorded in the cathedral treasury at Bayeux as 'a very long and narrow hanging on which are embroidered figures and inscriptions comprising a representation of the conquest of England'.

The Bayeux Tapestry was probably commissioned in the 1070s by Bishop Odo of Bayeux, half-brother of William the Conqueror. It is over 70 metres long and although it is called a tapestry it is in fact an embroidery, stitched not woven in woollen yarns on linen.

The Victorian replica.

It was the idea of Elizabeth Wardle to make the replica Bayeux Tapestry, now on display in the Reading Museum. She was a skilled embroiderer and a member of the Leek Embroidery Society in Staffordshire. Her husband, Thomas Wardle, was a leading silk industrialist. Elizabeth Wardle researched the Bayeux Tapestry by visiting Bayeux in 1885. The society also based the replica on hand-coloured photographs of the tapestry held in the V&A Museum, London. The aim of the project was to make a full-sized and accurate replica, 'so England should have a copy of its own'. Elizabeth and 35 women worked on the reproduction. This ambitious project was completed in just over a year. As well as members from Leek, women from Derbyshire, Birmingham, Macclesfield and London took part. Each embroiderer stitched her name beneath her completed



Bayeux Tapestry - Norman invasion of England AdobeStock/jorisvo

panel. The replica was first exhibited in the Nicholson Institute in Leek in 1886. Over the next ten years the tapestry was put on display in towns and cities across Britain and it travelled to Germany and America. In 1895 the replica was exhibited in the Town Hall at Reading. A former Mayor, Arthur Hill, offered to buy the replica. This offer was accepted by the Leek Embroidery Society. He then presented the tapestry as a gift to Reading.

Also at this museum is a collection of biscuit tins by Huntley and Palmer which started life in 1822 as a small bakery on London Street. In 1846 the firm opened a large factory on Reading's Kings Road. By 1900, it was the largest biscuit manufacturer in the world employing over 5,000 people. Biscuit production at Reading finally ended in 1976.



After tea or coffee in the town and a quick look at some of the many shops in Reading, we returned to Richmond on the Elizabeth and District line trains.

Let's Get Quizzical



by **Angus Douglas**

So, as we bade farewell to Halloween for another year, Hickey's Chapel played host to another Quiz Night, a Tricky Treat.

The tables filled with residents, Trustees and other notables, teams coalesced, and grey matter was fed with nibbles and lubricated with wine – a big thank you to Jo and Claire.

Margaret Goddard and Richard Howard, ably assisted by Trustee Emma, kept the evening happily rolling along without too much controversy though there were some rather devilish questions.

So, to battle, the tables vying for the title of (and the chocolate) Smarties.

There was no time to lose: a map of Great Britain with twenty numbered locations and a list of clues related to those places. This was the marathon round and not at all easy.

Before finishing that we were off with eight cryptically titled rounds, four in the first half, four in the second. Each table with their joker had to gamble on actually understanding the title of the round; examples being Fictional Animals or Movie Modes. Choosing the

best round for the Joker was essential.

There was a round on words that threw up a word that I'm not sure many in the room knew, 'Speleologist' - a scientist who studies caves or a sporting caver. Such a person would have been mighty useful on any team to retrieve a deeply hidden answer from the cavernous recesses of the mind: for example, the fictional dog who was companion to George, Harris and J: a Fox Terrier called Montmorency in Three Men in a Boat.

There was some hilarity in the room during a round based on Almshouse Events and a question asking for the Feast Date of St Francis of Assisi. The team with Chaplain Derrick were confident of their answer but, alas and alack.

Everyone had a great evening of quizzing and look forward to the next one. And who won? I couldn't possibly comment...

On This Day:

13th December 2013

Egypt's capital city Cairo saw snow for the first time in 112 years.

On This Day:

336 CE

Christmas was celebrated for the first time in recorded history.

On This Day:

31st December 1907

New Year's Eve celebrations were first held in Times Square in New York City featuring the first "ball drop" a ball descending down a flagpole to count down the new year.



Papa George Review



by Derrick Thompspon

An enthusiastic audience of residents, staff, their families and friends, aged from 2 to 95, nearly filled the Chapel on Thursday 16th

November for a compelling concert presented by the Papa George Band.

The band comprises international musicians: Papa George, with his gritty vocals and dextrous lead guitar playing, Pete Rees, one of our own residents with his super-versatile fingers on bass guitar and Darby Todd, who the day before had just returned from a six day tour of Australia, with his rhythmic and smooth drumming skills.

The band played old blues classics, *Hard Way*, *Need Your Love So Bad*, *The Blues ain't Nothing, but a Woman Looking for a Man*, *Jesus left Chicago* and *He's Bound for New Orleans*, *John the Revalator* and *Seven Spanish Angels*. They also played Papa George's own composition, *Black Jack*, and a piece written by Papa George and Pete Rees, *Flooding Down in Texas*.



The music was of the highest quality: tuneful, accurate, toe-tapping and stimulating!

It was great to see so many people in the lovely venue of the Chapel enjoying the engaging entertainment of these skilled and talented musicians with drinks and snacks in hand.

Would You Like to be Part of a Photo Documentary Project?



by Chantal Richards

“Earth’s population is about to become the oldest it has ever been: by the year 2030, 1 in

6 people will be over the age of 60. In the seven years leading up to 2030, photographers around the world will show us what it looks like to live in this historic time”. *Ed Kashi, Ilvy Njiokiktjien, Sara Terry.*

This new photo documentary project established by Ed Kashi (a renowned photojournalist), aims to bring photographers from around the world to put a human face on one of the most important 'statistics' of our time.

1 in 6 by 2030 is a global, collaborative project documenting this shift in human history. It will be filled with challenges and also huge potential — as individuals, societies and governments confront this change.

I have joined this project and hope to contribute a story, so I am looking for someone who would like to share their story as to why they are still working past retirement age. The deadline is March 2024. We will create a photo essay with your story. There is no money I'm afraid but the project will be submitted to an international platform and potentially exhibitions and press interest in 2030.

In the first instance, email me if you are interested and we can have a chat: c.richards@richmondcharities.org.uk Have a look at the website if you would like more information. www.1in6by2030.com

Secret Richmond Part III

by Mike Townsin



The Chestnut-leaved oak: tallest tree in Kew gardens, and of its kind in Britain. Planted as an acorn from the Caucasus in 1846 by Sir William Hooker, Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, and Darwin's closest friend and collaborator.



Old Palace Lane which leads to the Thames. Used in the fourteenth century as the tradesmen's and servants' entrance to the Palace.

Gateway from Cromwell's House, Williams Lane.



The Wardrobe, Old Palace Yard. Built in 1501 to store clothing and soft furnishings at Richmond Place.



The Herbarium, Kew Green. Housed Darwin's collection of plants from the Beagle voyage.



Tapestry Works, Mortlake. Built in the early 17th century under James I, renowned for the quality of both their design and wool, silk and gold thread yarns.

What's On in December: Theatre and Music

- **Dick Whittington** with Paul Merton
Richmond Theatre, 9th Dec to 7th Jan
www.atgtickets.com
Tickets from £13
- **Robin Hood** The Pantomime
The Exchange Twickenham, 16th to 30th Dec
www.exchangetwickenham.co.uk
Tickets from £12.50
- **Tiny Tim's Christmas Carol**
Orange Tree Theatre, 18th to 23rd Dec
www.orangetreetheatre.co.uk
Tickets from £12
- **Jack and the Beanstalk**, Prince Albert Pub,
Twickenham, 23rd Dec 3pm and 5pm.
www.princealberttwickenham.co.uk
Tickets from £15
- **The Nutcracker** with The Royal Ballet
A live event at Curzon Cinema, Richmond
12th December at 7.15pm.
www.curzon.com/ticketing
Tickets from £20
- **Crawdaddy Blues Band**, Richmond Athletic
Ground, 8th Dec at 7.30pm. Tickets from £12
www.crawdaddyclubrichmond.com

Richmond Council is investing more than ever to keep its roads and pavements in good condition. Over £5 million has been allocated this year to permanently repair potholes and resurface parts of its road network.



Richmond Furniture Scheme is now selling **refurbished appliances**, including fridges, washing machines and cookers.

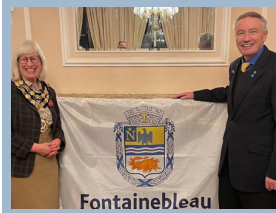


Mayor attends Richmond in Europe Association's 46th Annual General Meeting. The Mayor, Councillor Suzette Nicholson, attended the meeting at the Salon, York House in her role as the English patron of the Association.

Richmond Council has reaffirmed its commitment to supporting residents through the cost of living crisis.



Richmond Council has approved plans to finance a **new group exercise studio at Pools on the Park** to enable greater community activity and improve access to services as part of the work promoting healthier, more active lifestyles for all residents.



The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames has been recognised as one of 119 cities across the globe — and one of three London boroughs — that is taking bold leadership on environmental action and transparency, despite the pressures of a challenging global economic situation.

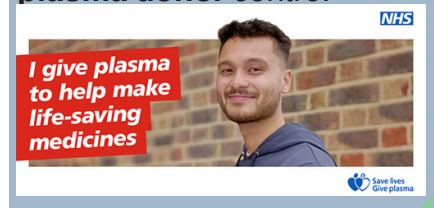
On Thursday 9 November 2023, the Planning Inspectorate and Secretary of State approved Richmond Council's use of Compulsory Purchase Powers to acquire land within Diamond Jubilee Gardens. This will enable the Council to press ahead with **redeveloping Twickenham Riverside** and providing a brand-new heart for Twickenham.



Twickenham Repair Café express their gratitude to their team. The repairers have shared their skills, saved over five tonnes from landfill and raised over £2,000 for charity over 19 months since the café opened.



An NHS campaign is seeking more people to become donors at the **Twickenham plasma donor centre**.



If you want to find out what's going on in Richmond — events, shopping, food and drink, outdoor activities or attractions — visit www.vistrichmond.co.uk
For church events in Richmond, visit www.achurchnearyou
If you don't have internet access, please contact your Scheme Manager, who can help you.
For more information on any of the news articles visit www.richmond.gov.uk

Getting To Know You

Mary Bronks

- What is your favourite song and how does it make you feel? ***The first time ever I saw your face* by Roberta Flack (emotional).**
- Who is your favourite artist and why? **Monet (and all impressionists). They use light & colour and also introduced a new style of painting.**
- If you could be a star in a movie – what movie would it be? ***Cleopatra***
- What book do you currently have on the go? ***Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus**
- What words of wisdom would you pass on to the younger generation?
Be kind and save for a pension!
- What makes you laugh? **Babies laughing, Dawn French and *Friends* (the TV show)**
- Which public figure do you most admire? **David Attenborough**
- What is your greatest achievement?
My children and grandchildren
- If you were Prime Minister for the day, what would you do?
Provide homes for all homeless people. Ban chewing gum!
- If you could travel back in time, where would you go? **Ancient Egypt**

National Awareness Days



Collated by Lorraine Bradley

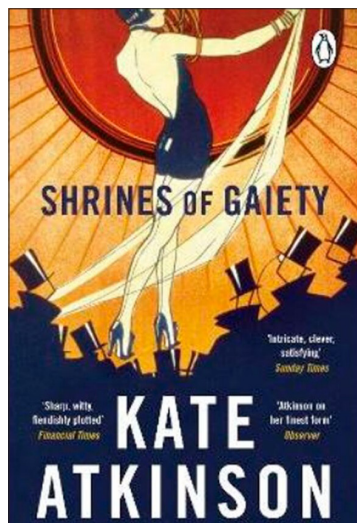
International Volunteers Day, December 5th, is a global observance that celebrates and recognizes the contributions of volunteers worldwide. It serves as an opportunity to applaud the selfless efforts of individuals who dedicate their time and skills to make positive changes in their communities and beyond. For more information visit: www.un.org/en/events/volunteerday

International Animal Rights Day, December 10th, is a global observance dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of animal rights and advocating for the ethical and humane treatment of animals. It serves as a reminder that animals deserve respect, compassion, and protection from cruelty and exploitation. www.internationalanimalrightsday.org

National Grief Awareness Week, 2-8th December, is a campaign that aims to raise awareness of the breadth of support available in the UK for those living with grief as part of their life and those who have never experienced a significant bereavement. www.thegoodgrieftrust.org

Festival of Winter Walks, 17th December, takes place from the third Saturday in December to the first Sunday in January. This year, it will be held from 17th December to 1st January. Organized by the Ramblers, this celebration has been a beloved tradition in the United Kingdom for nearly three decades. The main goal of the festival is to encourage more people to go on walks, especially in beautiful natural areas, and appreciate the winter beauty of Britain. These walks are typically free and open to everyone. Each walk offers a unique experience, allowing participants to select the kind of scenery they would like to explore.

The Shrines of Gaiety



by Kate Atkinson

Review by Kate O'Brien

I have read a number of Kate Atkinson's books – *Behind the Scenes at the Museum* was the first, followed by many other as well as all her Jackson Brodie detective stories.

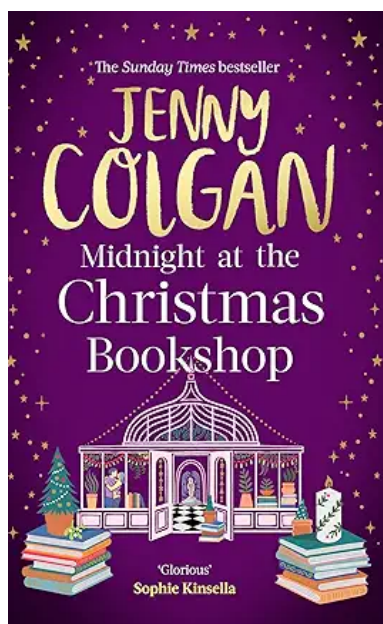
This book is set in Soho in the 1920s and the war still resonates with many of the characters, both men and women. The main focus is Nellie Coker who we meet as she is leaving prison in the first chapter. Given the amount she has been spending on backhanders to the police, she is wondering if her money is working as hard as it should! Nellie owns several nightclubs – all different according to their clientele, and has six children who work, or not, for her.

The intertwining plots include a new detective brought in to clean up and who is obsessed by the murders of a number of young girls; two such girls who run away to London to 'go on the stage'; a librarian who follows them and who ends up involved in the nightclub scene; an all-women gang called the *Forty Thieves*; a Maltese gangster looking for his ill-gotten gains ... the plots are many and numerous. Yet despite all these strings, you don't lose your way and the story neatly interweaves. There is a satisfying round-up at the end where the strings are neatly tied off.

Having worked in Shaftesbury Avenue for several years, I really enjoyed reading about the local area, and even a reference to a French patisserie that I still visit!

One reviewer calls this book "a heady brew of crime, romance and satire" which is an excellent description.

Midnight at the Christmas Bookshop



by Jenny Colgan

Review by Mike Townsin

'Bring Christmas in. Bring everybody in'. Thus ends this delightful seasonal helping of romance.

Carmen, proprietor of a charming, but unprofitable, bookshop in Edinburgh faces a less than jolly Christmas having been chucked out of her sister's house, *and* without the love of her life, who has recently shot off abroad.

Then the elderly owner of the shop drops by wanting money to follow his dream, at which point Carmen realises she has to get a grip of her finances in order to help him, and help herself save the shop from closure.

Fortunately, the shop's premises have the potential for expansion, but only with a lot of hard work, ingenuity and much rallying round by neighbours, nephews, nieces and a rather sexy male nanny.

Natural Remedies



by Debbie Flaherty

Cold Sores

Cold sores are caused by the herpes simplex virus that is related to the virus that causes chickenpox and shingles. Many people carry the virus but do not suffer from cold sores. They usually appear on the lips, around the mouth or nose and sometimes the eyes.

Causes may include:

Stress, poor diet, low iron levels, amino acid imbalances, and bright sunlight.

Cold sores are often a sign that you are run down and you need to look after yourself and your diet.

Eat/Drink

- Fresh fruit and vegetables,
- Zinc rich food including fresh fish, pumpkin seeds, brown rice, chicken and sesame seeds.
- Water up to two litres a day.

Avoid

- Sugar, coffee, alcohol, fried foods, spices, chocolate, peanuts, soya dairy products, pineapple, tomatoes, walnuts and shellfish.
- A good tip is to apply a garlic clove to the sore twice a day. Garlic has antiviral properties. It is also beneficial to include raw garlic in your diet.
- Do not share towels or facecloths as the virus is contagious.

Wit and Wisdom



Curated by Mike Townsin

- Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life. *Picasso*
- There are those among us who live in rooms of experience that you and I cannot enter. *John Steinbeck*
- People in those old times had convictions; we moderns only have opinions. And it needs more than a mere opinion to erect a gothic cathedral. *Heinrich Heine 19th-c German poet*
- In politics, you may have to be slippery, but it's foolish to *sound* slippery. *Matthew Parris*
- There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it. *Edith Wharton*
- It's your fault, Eeyore, said Rabbit. You've never been to see any of us. You just sit here in the Forest waiting for the others to come to you. Why don't you go to them sometimes?' *AA Milne, about 'Give and Take'*
- There are no happy endings. Endings are the saddest part. So just give me a happy middle, and a very happy start. *Shel Silverstein American writer and poet.*
- I have been entirely motivated by a desperate desire to put the 'Great' back into Great Britain. *Prince Charles 1993*
- You know you've reached a certain age when you find yourself reading the British Museum's Christmas catalogue.....in October! *Mike Townsin Trustee, The Richmond Charities*

DIABETES UK
KNOW DIABETES. FIGHT DIABETES.

RICHMOND & TWICKENHAM
Local Support Group
DUKRT

DUKRT is a local support group run by volunteers, all with lived experience of diabetes. We are part of Diabetes UK.

We give advice, information and support in our area to people, and their friends and family, who are living with diabetes.

Group Meetings

We hold regular meetings in St Mary's Church Hall, Twickenham. Everyone is welcome. Please check our website for details of the next meeting.

We have visiting expert speakers give talks on diabetes-related topics. Afterwards, there is the opportunity to chat with others in a safe and friendly environment over refreshments.

Social Events

We host monthly daytime meet-ups where people can catch up over tea or coffee. We also arrange ad hoc events such as a quiz night and a Christmas Lunch.

Fundraising

We raise funds to meet our modest running expenses. We also try to support research by making an annual donation to Diabetes UK. We run a stall at several local summer fairs.

Diabetes UK is the leading charity for people living with Diabetes in the UK. It is the largest charitable funder of diabetes research in the UK, and provides expert information to help people with diabetes manage their condition well. The charity also runs campaigns to influence decision makers, and works closely with healthcare professionals to help them provide better care for those with diabetes.



DID YOU KNOW

Research suggests that if you are overweight even a 5% reduction in body weight through diet and exercise can significantly improve your metabolism and wellbeing.

Get in Touch

Diabetes UK Richmond & Twickenham
(DUKRT) Local Support Group

Website: www.dukrt.org.uk

Email: dukrt@outlook.com

X (formerly Twitter) [@DiabetesUKRT](https://twitter.com/DiabetesUKRT)

Diabetes UK Registered Charity No. 215199

ALMSHOUSE NEWS - Christmas Wordsearch

I K Q E J X X C C K B G U C W W J H F Q X Z S C
 W J J N B Z B O M E H E L H T E B R I X Z N J H
 R K F M P N M O S F U L Y I V A E O S N W V R R
 E L Z V U E G S T H R F E J Y I K O W V E U A I
 A P H R T W J T N D Y A Z E N C B R R R Y K N S
 T B R G E L N D E U T W N D M S T A R L B X M T
 H K O I C C O N M R H N E K V I X E N U D I I M
 K Z Q U K N N V A F Y E B Y I G D Y M Y S J W A
 Q E P G N N N A N H R Z X R Z N T R R T E O J S
 Q I E E D Z N F R D V T K U V I C O L P Y D I P
 D F R Y Y V B C O P S I M B V W U E Q U I W C K
 D H Y S L E I G H P K L F I G Z T Y N S P J F F
 H U J C H X S A N T A B T B J O W W L S Z I B P
 D N X R T G V L K G M A E D E Z S G L L E C H B
 N D A S H E R K T K N O D V V C U P R O O J U T
 B S U X S L P P P J B Q B V O G R F S I V H Y C
 E C H E S T N U T S P Q F Q E R N J X L N K P X
 P U U H P L O D U R U B H M H N S I C E O C W J
 I U J Y L M B I N V P P Y E Q R T X K D I R H U
 X A U A V U A M T I D I N G S Z R U L C A F A W
 Z X O S T P G R H N Y L R S C L T Y W I O P Q C
 L C T J A A O H M F W L M P O Q Q S M J Y T Y E
 P D Q C I I X B O T B O L M Y G D A N C E R S L
 L C Y S N O W M A N R G P A D H S E L B U A B F

Bethlehem	Santa	Donner	Prancer	Dancer
Dasher	Blitzen	Rudolph	Cupid	Comet
Vixen	Star	Baubles	Wreath	Tidings
Advent	Christmas	Grinch	Myrrh	Stocking
Mistletoe	Holly	Nativity	Snowman	Carols
Reindeer	Sleigh	Chestnuts	Ornaments	Frankincense

Your chance to win a £10 M&S Voucher! Find 30 Christmas words.
 Give this whole page to your Scheme Manager, or place in the suggestion
 box **before FRIDAY 15th DECEMBER**



Name: _____

Miscellany



Curated by Mike Townsin

- Ferrets wearing harnesses were used to wriggle under the floor of St. Paul's Cathedral and the Millenium Dome to drag cables to enable TV transmissions.
- The human heart pumps enough blood in a lifetime to fill three supertankers.
- Edmund Hillary, the first man to climb Everest, was a professional beekeeper. When filling in forms, he gave his occupation as 'apiarist'.
- In the 19th and early 20th century, having all your teeth removed and replaced by false ones was a popular 21st birthday present.
- It is unsafe for travellers to rely on 'St Christopher' anymore: he was removed from the calendar of saints in 1969.
- Florence Green, the last veteran of the First World War, died in February 2012. Asked what it was like being 110, she replied, 'Not much different to being 109'.
- Cardiff has more hours of sunlight than Milan.
- In 1251, Henry III was given a polar bear by the King of Norway. He kept it in the Tower of London so that it could swim in the Thames.
- The Dyslexia Research Centre is in Reading.
- If you drilled a tunnel straight through the earth and jumped in, it would take you exactly 42 minutes and 12 seconds to get to the other side.
- Historical Catholic clergy include: Bishop Boil, Bishop Boom, Bishop Broccoli, Bishop Bolognese, Bishop Busti and Bishop Bishop.
- On average, most people have fewer friends than their friends have. This is known as the 'friendship paradox'.
- Metrophobia (n). Fear of poetry.

Interesting Podcasts as Recommended by our Trustees



Young Again:

BBC podcast, Kirsty Young – advice to youth of today.



The Rest is Politics:

podcast with Alistair Campbell and Rory Stewart – current politics discussion.



The American Life:

podcast, life stories of ordinary Americans.



History of English:

www.historyofenglish.com podcast, the evolution of the English language.



The Rest is History:

podcast, Tom Holland/Dominic Sandbrook – interrogating the past.

ANSWERS: Riddles

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Footsteps | 10. Heroine |
| 2. A Hole | 11. 888+88 |
| 3. Queue | +8+8+8=1000 |
| 4. Carrot | 12. A Chain |
| 5. Post Office | 13. Rice |
| 6. A Dictionary | 14. A Wedding Ring |
| 7. Bookkeeper | 15. An Apology |
| 8. A Map | 16. Lead Pencil |
| 9. E N T (Eight Nine Ten) | |



by Nigel Davis

Sometimes, when we watch the way some people choose to conduct themselves in 'celebrating' Christmas, it is possible to wonder if they give any real thought as to why Christmas is celebrated by them at all. But they should.

Wendy Cope can be relied upon for accessible, sometimes quizzical, always insightful poems. One of her very best poems takes an orange as its subject; and she is the only poet I personally know who has written a poem on the subject of socks.

This one, on the subject of Christmas, starts with the conventional social aspects of Christmas — the tree, the holly, the tinsel, the food, the drink. But then it moves on to reflections and memories, before moving on again to the events of over 2,000 years ago. What she reminds those of us who choose to celebrate Christmas is that in order to bring the Christmas life into the house it is not enough simply to bring in the conventional trappings — the turkey, the tree, the crackers and so on. We also have to bring Christ into the house. And he will be knocking softly at the door, if only we are prepared to listen.

Poetry Corner wishes all in or connected with the The Richmond Charities community and their families a very happy Christmas and New Year!

The Christmas Life

by Wendy Cope

Bring in a tree, a young Norwegian spruce,

Bring hyacinths that rooted in the cold.

Bring winter jasmine as its buds unfold,

Bring the Christmas life into this house.

Bring red and green and gold, bring things that shine,

Bring candlesticks and music, food and wine,

Bring in your memories of Christmas past,

Bring in your tears for all that you have lost.

Bring in the shepherd boy, the ox and ass,

Bring in the stillness of an icy night,

Bring in a birth of hope and love and light,

Bring the Christmas life into this house.

