

The Rotherwick News

December 2021

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MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE



Absolutely Agnes...

As Agnes sits down to write, there are only 17 days until Christmas.... where the blazes have the days gone?

Will there be gatherings with cheese & wine this year? Will Christmas be cancelled? Agnes jolly well hopes not & is intending to plough on with merriment & gusto – albeit within the rules...take note Mr Johnson!

Speaking of Christmas – Agnes has her tree up, lights twinkling & if indeed there is a surface that doesn't move – it has been well & truly bedecked.



According to Sara Coleridge's *nature poem (1802-1852)*:

Chill December brings the sleet, Blazing fire and Christmas treat.

Well, the sleet can stay away thank you very much, but Agnes is all for the treats...in fact she has been squirreling away mince pies, sherry & perhaps the odd packet of pigs in blankets since mid-August.

Traditionally, Agnes not usually known for living life in moderation, likes to have eaten enough of the Christmas chocolates to be able to watch the Queens speech from inside the tin itself – no mean feat for a 5-inch doll!

As for January, Agnes is a firm believer that this is no time for starvation & depravation...no, Agnes shall take her cue from nature, that is to hunker down & continue to munch her way through the larder & its aforementioned Christmas treats.

Agnes hopes that your Christmas will be filled with warmth, family (unless they're the annoying variety) & stockings filled with cheer.

Warmest wishes,

Agnes

PS. If you would like to see more of what Agnes is up to, do follow her village adventures: Instagram: [absolutely_agnes](#)
Facebook: [absolutelyagnes](#)

(Agnes – we are all smiling at the thought of you watching the Queen's speech from inside the tin of chocolates!!)

Rotherwick Family Christmas Carols at The Church

How much fun was that? I'm sat indoors warming my feet against the open fire, having just had a great evening at the back of Rotherwick Church with a whole host of other like minded families having our very first Christmas sing song this year. Affectionately known as Christmas carols.

Organised by Whitewater PTA along with Marion and Shona from the church and our very own songstress Amanda on the piano.

Mulled wine, hot chocolate and mince pies were on offer on arrival, to get those vocal chords out of their dormant state and ready to charm any festive angels who may be listening.

Hark the Herald Angels, Jingle Bells, Little Donkey and a solo by Lola got us all warmed up and ready to go but before we could really let loose our inner Aled Jones, we had What Does Christmas Mean to me. Two young girls, Efie and Harriet delivered effortlessly what it meant to them by the way of a short poem they had written. All the children sang Away in a Manger on their own which was lovely. Then three of the older children Bella, Zeppe and Evan read The Donkey.

With Amanda knocking out a few more tunes we were now in full swing. The finale was the twelve days of Christmas. Everyone was either assigned or coerced into a separate singing group where we all had our own part. The three French hens got told off for not being loud enough whilst Hook could hear the seven swans a swimming (Luke).



Note to self, if you get assigned Twelve Drummers Drumming, you sing a lot less than the poor chap on Two Turtle Doves.

Dan Pearce

West Green House Illuminated Gardens

I always consider December 1st a good excuse to start feeling festive and this year was no exception with a trip to West Green House Illuminated Gardens booked in.

A crisp cold evening immediately put us into the festive spirit and even as we pulled into the car park twinkling white lights hinted at the treat that lay ahead, it did not disappoint.



Having visited the gardens over the years we knew the paths well, so set off through the Japanese garden to the lake. The boldly lit red dragon, the illuminated wood sprites with the lake behind lit up with floating lights immediately grabbed our attention. It was such a pleasure to meander around at our own speed, there were no crowds at any point which made it feel more special somehow and certainly made it easier for my elderly parents to negotiate the paths. Bridges were made into tunnels

of colourful lights and all the garden's follies were tastefully lit.

Huge, shimmering, boldly coloured flowers dotted around the garden added to the scale and impact of the lighting but I think my favourite bit was the more formal gardens where trails of lights led us through to explore each area ending beside a little wooden retreat offering the opportunity to treat ourselves to a warming tippie. Mulled wine has always been a weakness of mine, so it was rude not to indulge.



We were very fortunate on that evening to be entertained by the Winchester College Quiristers and their beautiful rendition of traditional carols floated around the gardens adding to the ethereal quality of our adventure.

The seasonally adorned glass houses were a delight to explore, full of exquisite tree decorations and gift ideas, so naturally it was impossible for my sister and I to resist adding to our bauble collection! A perfect start to our festive season.

Merry Christmas everyone!

Marion Robak

(Photos- my own, apologies for the quality!)





Whitewater C of E School, Rotherwick Moving Forward

The past two years have been challenging for us all and Whitewater has worked hard to continue to provide a nurturing and engaging environment that supports, develops and challenges every child. We are incredibly proud of our school and passionate about retaining its strengths whilst ensuring we have the right people in place to drive forward improvements and deliver the best possible outcomes for our pupils. We are therefore delighted to announce that effective from 1st December 2021 Whitewater has joined an existing and very successful collaboration of three other local Hampshire schools (Bishopswood Infants & Bishopswood Juniors of Tadley and Bramley CofEPrimary).

Whitewater will be led by Mr Glen Golding who is joining the school within his role as Executive Headteacher of all four schools and he will be supported at Whitewater by Mr Steve Moore, current Head of School at Bramley. In addition to welcoming two very experienced and proven Headteachers, this arrangement will also bring a range of new benefits to Whitewater including having the back up of a larger school and its resources should this be required.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and ask you to join us in welcoming Mr Golding and Mr Moore to the Whitewater community.

Whitewater Church of England School Governing Body

When the Red Red Robin Comes Bob-Bob-Bobbin' Along

...We all know the infamous words and music by Harry Woods – and it's no wonder this upbeat song brings a feeling of nostalgia, being written as far back as 1926 almost one hundred years ago!

In reality, robins are serious throbbers, even by bird standards; only for a short period in late summer while they are moulting and inconspicuous do robins stop singing. I don't know how they manage without a throat lozenge every now and again. Here are a few other singing facts on our red breasted friends:

- ◇ Both sexes sing.
- ◇ Autumn and spring songs are distinctly different. The autumn song starts after the moult, from late summer onwards. It is more subdued and melancholy in its tone, while the spring song is powerful, confident and upbeat.
- ◇ The spring song can start as early as mid-December, reaching full force in spring. Its purpose is two-fold: to defend a territory and to attract a mate. Therefore, spring song is far more powerful in males.
- ◇ Robins are adapted to life in poor light and are often active in half light when few other birds are about. They tend to be among the earliest birds to start the dawn chorus and one of the last to stop in the evening.
- ◇ Street lights and floodlights can trigger singing in the middle of the night, and if roosting robins are disturbed, they can burst into song even in complete darkness.¹



Image credit: Unsplash

And as for all their 'bob-bob-bobbin' along', they do seem to be unusually friendly birds. Or are they just a little bit cheeky?

Relatively unafraid of people, robins often follow gardeners around to take advantage of freshly dug-up worms and even feed from people's hands.

¹ [Robin Redbreast Song - The RSPB](#)

Images of Peter Rabbit in Mr McGregor's kitchen garden spring to mind. A robin is frequently included in illustrations set here – and now we know why! Greedy little Peter is the perfect rabbit to follow for food trails. (Unsurprisingly the author, illustrator Beatrix Potter was also a botanist and conservationist).

A robin's diet consists of seeds, fruits, insects, worms and other invertebrates. It will also visit garden bird tables and feeders to feed on



Image credit: potentialplusuk

scraps and mealworms.²

A few other gems about the British robin:

It may seem obvious but the red on robins is the most magical colour in nature and with a heart rate of 1000 beats a minute, there is genuine fire in that small puff of bright feathers.

The robin's associations with Christ and Christmas were reinforced in the 19th century when the newly created postal service dressed its delivery staff in red uniforms. The workers became known as "Robins" and when Christmas cards were popularised in the 1860s they were often illustrated with the postman's avian namesake.

There were many historical taboos against harming robins, such as the belief that killing one would cause your cows to produce bloody milk. Children once thought that if they took eggs from a robin's nest they would develop bent fingers.³

(Check out 'Radio 4 in Four' online for more corksers like these!)

² [Robin \(Erithacus rubecula\) | Natural History Museum \(nhm.ac.uk\)](https://www.nhm.ac.uk/explore-nature/animals/birds/robins/erithacus-rubecula/)

³ [BBC Radio 4 - Radio 4 in Four - Eight reasons why we love robins](https://www.bbc.com/radio4/in-four/eight-reasons-why-we-love-robins)

For all the reasons listed here and many more, we hold our British robin in national affection, and in 2015, the robin was officially chosen as our national bird. But with Christmas on its way, at this time of year we recognise it as a festive icon; it cannot be escaped, on cards, decorations for our trees and ornaments, in Christmas films and television advertisements. It brings us great joy to see and hear them.

With versions from Bob and Bing Crosby, Doris Day, Julie London, Eydie Gormé, Dean Martin and Steve Goodman, and a plethora of film features and TV references, here are Harry Woods' song lyrics:

*When the red, red robin comes bob, bob bobbin' along, along,
There'll be no more sobbing when he starts throbbing
His own sweet song.
Wake up, wake up, you sleepy head,
Get up, get up, get out of bed,
Cheer up, cheer up the sun is red,
Live, love, laugh and be happy.
What if I've been blue,
Now I'm walking through fields of flowers,
Rain may glisten, but still I listen for hours and hours.
I'm just a kid again, doing what I did again, singing a song,
When the red, red robin comes bob, bob bobbin' along.*

And being such a catchy number, I look forward to the thought of villagers humming this tune for the next couple of weeks (and cursing the village mag for getting it stuck in their heads!). I am sure the robins will enjoy listening too. 🤪

Harriet Steger

Dog Poo

To the person who did not clear up the very large deposit of dog poo left on the grass on the other side of my hedge (1 The Street), very close to the pathway. Have you considered the small children running up and down to school who may step in it or worse, as small children do fall, may fall in it?

When I put my bin out in the pitch dark on a Monday evening, without the knowledge that it is there, I may step in it and walk it back into my house.

Please come back and remove it. It can take up to a year to decompose so you have time.

Amanda Palmer

Dress up your fizz



We all love a glass of something fizzy during the festive season so whether your fizz is Moët, prosecco or a humble cava here are a few ideas to liven it up this Christmas.

Poinsettia - To the glass add 15ml Cointreau, 30ml cranberry juice, top with fizz, stir and garnish with fresh cranberries.



Classic Champagne Cocktail – Shake 2 dashes of angostura bitters onto a sugar lump in the glass, add 2tsp brandy (optional), top with fizz, add a twist of orange peel.

Black Velvet Cocktail – Half fill the glasses with Guinness, slowly top up with chilled champagne.



Aperitivo Spritz – Drop a few ice cubes into a wine glass, add 50ml Aperol or Campari followed by 25 ml sparkling water, top up with fizz, garnish festively.

Marion Robak

Ideas adapted from bbcgoodfood.com

Photos bbcgoodfood.com

Lisa's Recipe of the Month...



Stained glass window biscuits

These Christmas stained glass window biscuits are perfect for hanging on the tree - the lights will twinkle through the 'windows', which are simply melted boiled sweets.

Makes about 30 biscuits

Ingredients

150g softened butter	1 tsp baking powder
100g muscovado sugar	Pinch salt
1 large egg	1 tbsp mixed spice
250g plain flour, plus extra for flouring	1 tsp vanilla extract
	1 pack boiled coloured sweets

Method



1. Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas 4 and line a baking tray.
2. Using an electric hand whisk, whisk together the butter and sugar in a large bowl. Once lightened and creamy add the egg and mix thoroughly.
3. Sift in the flour, baking powder, salt and mixed spice and then add the vanilla extract and mix with a wooden spoon until you reach a biscuit dough consistency.
4. Turn the dough onto a floured work surface and roll out to about 1 cm thick. Cut out biscuit shapes (such as stars or Christmas trees) and place onto the lined baking tray (you may need more than one tray).
5. Using a smaller cutter or a small knife cut out the centre of each biscuit. Place a boiled sweet into the hole (cut in half if your hole is smaller than 2.5cm) and place in the preheated oven to cook for 15 minutes, or until golden-brown and crisp with the sweet melted.
6. As soon as the biscuits are baked and while they are still warm, use a straw to poke a hole out of the top of each biscuit. Be careful not to make the hole too near the top of the biscuit. Once the melted sweets have hardened, transfer to a wire rack to cool. Thread a length of string, ribbon or florist's wire through the hole and hang the biscuits on the tree Christmas tree so the lights can shine through the centres.

Get Gardening

Has anyone noticed there seem to be molehills springing up everywhere including our garden?!



<https://blog.happybeaks.co.uk/wildlife/6-fun-facts-about-moles/>

At the last count we had 14 mounds of freshly dug earth! Our first thought was to ignore them and hope the mole took a detour elsewhere but this particular one (I assume it is only one) is determined to make its presence known in most of our garden! Our clay soil is not the easiest to dig over as we have often discovered but these little creatures have no problem (I gave myself back ache making a new flower bed which apparently looks like a burial mound, but that's another story!). Unfortunately, they don't hibernate and apparently are at their most active from April to October – someone needs a word with our little visitor!

I found out a few more facts about moles that I never knew. It's hard to believe but there are no moles in Ireland or Northern Ireland (they don't have snakes either). It is said that sea levels rose so quickly when the ice age ended that they didn't have a chance to make it to Ireland – you'd think they would have dug their own 'channel tunnel' – just a thought.

They are also carnivorous and unfortunately, they can dig 18 feet in an hour!! Thankfully, they are usually solitary unless breeding which is between February and June. Moles are said to rarely be seen above ground but amazingly we once caught one as it surfaced and managed to put it in a bucket. We had cats at the time and didn't want them to get it, so we took it to a field a few miles away just in case it thought about coming back. After being released it disappeared in seconds even though the soil was rock hard.

They are cute to look at and really are amazing creatures, just not in the middle of our garden. Although according to some they are the unsung heroes of the animal world as they eat all the nasty bugs that destroy crops, aerate the soil and their tunnels are said to improve drainage. So hopefully we did our bit for the farmer by releasing one onto their land!

On a different note, although related to December, as, like those moles, Poinsettias seem to be everywhere, have you ever wondered why poinsettias are given at Christmas. (Did you know they are the national emblem of Madagascar?) I'd never really given it much thought before, but it seems they were first cultivated by the Aztecs who used them for their medicinal qualities and ability to produce a colourful dye. Later they were seen as a miracle flower by the Mexicans after a young girl left weeds next to an altar as a Christmas Eve offering. Those weeds turned into beautiful red and green flowers. Which may be why in the 1600's Franciscan priests used their colourful leaves and flowers to decorate nativity scenes. They are said to be named after Joel Robert Poinsett (an ambassador to Mexico) who introduced them to the USA in 1827. A better explanation can be found at <https://www.whychristmas.com/customs/poinsettia.shtml>.

Of course, it may be that they are used at Christmas because the flower is star shaped!

Happy Christmas!

Catherine Bolt

(Don't we all just love a mole in our garden?!)



It's Christmas.

(In your best Noddy Holder voice)

So with less than Twelve days to go until the Most wonderful time of the year, you are excited, tired and wondering what you are going to buy for uncle or your sister as they'll be Driving home for Christmas, all 2000 miles. This Christmas you have got your Mistletoe and wine and the Chestnuts are roasting, the Christmas wrapping is done as you don't want to run short after Last Christmas. But with the threat of a White Christmas you want to Step into Christmas and have something Underneath the Christmas tree for everyone and uncle along with your sister is no exception. Now I believe in Christmas and goodwill to all men, as well as shopping local but I haven't got time to go shopping so I'm going to make something.

Do you hear what I hear? That's right I'm going to make some gifts, they will be created using my own hands as well as having my own little elf to help, and they are all extremely simple yet lovely and festive. Some will require a tool or two, some will require nothing but patience. Leaving plenty of time to Deck the halls and Have yourself a merry little Christmas. Now let's get started...



First up is a very simple Christmas tree. This is made from a magazine, it is one of the simplest festive recycling ideas ever and I can tell you that you won't See mommy kissing Santa under this tree. It takes 3 folds for every page.

1 Take your magazine and fold the page from the top right.

2 The second fold is the folded page but in half again.

3 The last fold is is to fold the excess at the bottom, upwards.



Repeat this for every page including the cover and Ta Da. You'll be Rocking around the Christmas tree.

Now I know Christmas can be expensive but you must admit you won't find a cheaper more sustainable example of festive recycling. Of course you could take this further by spray painting or adding a sprig of The Holly and the Ivy to it.

Now just to note this next one will take a quick you tube tutorial and a trip to hobby craft (other hobby shops are available) to purchase some felting needles, but believe me once you have mastered the basics of making a ball you will be able to make a Christmas pudding, a Robin or even a Frosty the Snowman in no time at all.

Now felting is traditionally done with sheep wool and we are traditional so we will be using the same material. The felting needles are specifically designed for the task in hand as they are longer than normal sewing needles yet a lot shorter than knitting needles. They come in different numbered sizes but we used just one large and one fine. Oh and a few plasters or Band Aids. Do they know its Christmas was on our mind as we spent time making our feathered friend and our Christmas pudding.

We were lucky to have plenty of excess Woolcool packaging laying around left over from our Saxon House build so this was our impetus to teach ourselves felting.



Firstly, we pulled out of the wool packaging to separate the colours. We ended up with plenty of different coloured fibres, identifying plenty of different shades of brown that we could use as the feather for our robin and our Christmas pudding. The white wool fibres were also separated to use as the icing. You guessed it, we also separated the black fibres too.

To be honest the colours within the wool packaging are amazing and plentiful. I must admit the green and the red were purchased from the hobby shop we mentioned before. I think we all stabbed our fingers a few times, due to not concentrating and getting complacent.

Now, to start with you get a handful of wool as seen in the first picture and make into a ball shape in your hand. With your needle, you stab the wool being careful to not stab yourself. Over and over the wool you go until it tightens up. This process happens by the needle pushing the fibres in on themselves, locking them together making the ball shape tighter.

Once you are happy, you start to add your colours, using your fine needle. You will soon get the hang of this and realise just how easy the whole process is. A few more trial and error attempts and you have made wings for a robin and leaves for your pudding, allowing plenty of time to Deck the Halls.

Over the years my elf has been instrumental in helping make our homemade Christmas decorations and presents for family and friends. These final few are self explanatory, they require some old pallet wood, paint and wood glue, to make some festive Christmas trees along with some days till Christmas calendars.



The cheese board was made from some left over oak planks and once cut and sanded they had plenty of Tung Oil applied. Knife bought separately.



Our final use of natural materials that we are recycling to share with you is our birch tree discs. The birch we cut and then drew a traditional Christmas design with a pencil. Once happy using a standard pyrograph pen we then carefully burnt or pyro the design into the wood. Drilled a hole and added some twine and Rudolph the red nosed reindeer, we have some Christmas tree decorations.

I hope you all have a Happy Xmas, and we know Christmas time is here as It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas in our house, along with the added excitement of Santa Clause is coming to town.

Merry Christmas.

Ramblings of Rotherwick

PS How many Christmas songs did you find? Answer on page 23.



Christmas Angels



You will need, paper, paint, card, felt pen, string/ribbon, glue

1. Paint/colour an A4 sheet of paper, or get a page of tabloid newspaper
2. Concertina paper by folding back and forth
3. Tie string around middle of concertina paper
4. Fold paper over to make a fan shape and glue together keeping the string in the middle
5. Do the same to make the angel wings and trim to make smaller than body of angel, although this is not necessary if using newspaper
6. Tie string around middle of second concertinaed piece of paper
7. Cut out circle for head from card and draw on face
8. Cut narrow strip of paper to make angel's hair and glue to top of face
9. Fold strip of paper backwards to make hair either side of face.



More examples can be found on www.redtedart.com.

Catherine Bolt

Christmas comes early to Rotherwick Village Hall



Who knew.... Together, the circular shape and the evergreen material make the wreath a representation of eternal life. It is also a representation of faith, as Christians in Europe often placed a candle on the wreath during Advent to symbolize the light that Jesus brought into the world.

The Village Hall became a flurry of activity on December 8th as approx. 30 villagers and welcome friends joined together for an evening of wreath making. **Flowers by Becky** provided the materials and very soon plain moss rings were adorned with all matter of greenery, baubles and ribbon!! We have already been asked to hold the event again next year and perhaps even hold an Easter wreath making event. Thank you to all who came, such a lovely evening and what a creative lot we are!!



(Wow, they all look fabulous!)

Village Lunches are back!



On the 2nd December we resumed Village Lunches at the Coach & Horses. We hope that this will be able to continue into the New Year but it is of course subject to any Covid restrictions. On this issue the rooms are aired and given a careful cleaning to minimise any infection risk and the tables are smaller than our usual large one.

The next lunch will be at the Falcon on the 6th Jan 2022 12.30 for 13.00 Two courses for £ 12.95.

All are welcome but please book in advance by e-mail
anthony@merricks.me.uk



What are your family traditions? Here are a few kindly sent in from readers...



MY SPECIAL CHRISTMAS MEMORIES...

Christmas was a magical time when I was growing up. Way back then in the 1950s-60s we'd not long come out of WW2 and rationing; my older sister was born in 1943, with my brother and I both born during the early 50's, so there were varying ages for gifts. We were just an "*ordinary*" family with no claim to fame, merely trying to make our way through life. Money was tight and so Christmas spending was limited. Nevertheless, we all had plenty of presents – they might not have been the most expensive toys or articles from the shops, but we certainly didn't feel as though we'd missed out.

A story book or two were always there each Christmas, as was a boxed game, new clothes, slippers and chocolate pennies, one year even a wind-up robot for my brother, a nurse set for me, complete with apron and cap; and one gift when I was 5 years-old which I will always remember was a wind-up "book" musical box which played "Silent Night". As for us youngsters, as Christmas approached it was exciting to be allowed to visit the shops on our own (or to sneak off) to buy gifts for the family.



My parents made every effort to make Christmas special for us all. The sideboard (does anybody remember those?) was laden with dishes bought for Mum & Dad on their marriage, and which I still have today, which were then filled with tangerines, mixed nuts and other fruits and there was always (don't laugh) a pair of nutcrackers to hand. A Tunis cake sat nearby, waiting to be sliced for Christmas tea, along with the yearly tin of Quality Street for later.

Decorations were paper chains which opened concertina-wise, found in Woolworths back then, and fixed by drawing pins to the picture rails or wherever they would go. Occasionally these were added to by our

home-made chains bought in packs of small strips, with the glued ends licked (we knew little about additives or germs back then!) and looped together. The small, real tree was decorated with baubles, Father Christmas made by us from pipe cleaners, crepe paper and cotton wool, and tinsel strands draped like string over the branches. Meantime, the Christmas shopping had to be done; the car wasn't an option as my dad, who was the only driver, worked, as did my mum.

My brother and I would accompany Mum on the bus to the town, either after school or on a Saturday to buy the Christmas supplies, carrying them back in paper carrier bags to catch the return bus followed by a short walk the rest of the way home.

Christmas Day always started with a visit to my grandparents, taking them gifts, and where the grown-ups would also enjoy a small glass of sherry, before we headed home for our usual Christmas roast. In those days Mum would often roast a large chicken/capon (or when we had turkey it would be slow-cooked overnight!). We had the usual stuffing and vegetables that we still enjoy today, although I'm sure we now all realise that in times past they were often stewed beyond recognition!

Later, after an early evening tea, we would all settle down to watch a film on our black-and-white TV, and if we were good (weren't we always?) we youngsters would be allowed a Port & Lemon (or rather a glass of lemonade with just enough Port to turn it pink!).

As we grew up and married we still enjoyed Christmas with Mum and Dad, although in later years the roles were reversed when my parents were invited each year to come to our home and stay with us over the Christmas period. We both did our very best to make it a special time for them, and to give them both the magical Christmas they deserved, and which they'd always given me!



Our Christmas Tradition

Our family Christmas tradition is a relatively new one. It's definitely not old and it hasn't been passed down the family from great grand parents to grand parents to parents to us.

It doesn't involve fantastic old cake recipes, naughty elves or grandad getting dressed up in a red suit. It does however involve a certain little brick.

Every year since our little person has been old enough to play with the famous little brick, we have bought a Lego Christmas set especially to build and play with leading up to the magical day.



It's the first of the decorations to go up in our house, sorry built in our house. That is built by our very own master builder.

It's always exciting to see them as unlike all the other Lego that lives here, these Christmas ones go up in the loft when the decorations come down. So, it is a full twelve months before we see them and they get played with.

This year's new addition is Santa's Visit, which is another Lego house that will get built and then added to the ever growing Christmas display. After New Year when Christmas is over, it will then get packed up and put back in the loft until another year passes.

Here's an interesting fact for you. Investors have had a better return on some sets of Lego than gold. Mint condition sets have increased in value by 12% every year since 2000.

Now let's hope you all put Lego on your list to Santa. Everything is Awesome.

And another.....

Family traditions:

Black tie in the evening on Christmas Day. Even the babies.

And

Crispy duck and pancake rolls on Christmas Eve for the last 25 years. A family favourite!! This year will be no different...

And lastly...

Memories of Christmases Past

Life was tough UP NORTH when I was a kid.
But Christmas was a special time.

On Christmas morning, because it was a special day, my mother would come down early in the morning and light the coal fire in the front room (only used on special occasions). As usual, none of the other fires in the house were lit. Shivering was our form of exercising our muscles. Gift cards for gym membership weren't invented then. In fact, gyms hadn't been invented!

After Christmas lunch, which consisted of Shippams turkey (well it was Christmas after all) paste sandwiches, dad and me went back to the mine for our afternoon shifts. He was hewing coal and I was mucking out the pit ponies.

Those were the days!



Rotherwick Christmas Tree Trail

Some of you have been asking about what happened to the Rotherwick Christmas tree trail idea that was advertised a couple of months ago. On reflection, the village hall committee decided to postpone that event until we were confident the trail would work in this village for everyone to enjoy.

However, we do hope to revisit the idea maybe for 2022.

There were 24 Christmas carols (25 if you count Deck the Halls twice!).

BEST PRESENT / WORST PRESENT.....

So we all know the best Christmas gift is to realise how much you already have but just for fun, here are some from our very own writing group !!

WORST.... As a young child I was so excited to see what my parents had given me for Christmas. I was led outside to an old bike that had been repainted a maroon colour especially for me. I've never been so disappointed. All I wanted was a 'Tressy'! Some might remember but a Tressy was a doll that had hair that grew!

BEST..... A toy wooden theatre with scene changes and puppets. Or my Walkman and 'Now 44' cassette. Close call 😊

WORST.... Thick soled granny slippers complete with fluffy tongue and maroon stitching, from Granny. I was an unappreciative teenager, but would love a pair like that now 😊

BEST..... It was always tradition that my sister and I made my mum and dad a cup of tea (to soften the blow of the ridiculously early wake up call) and jumped into bed with them to open our presents. One year when I was about ten, we'd opened all of our presents and my dad asked me to lean over the edge of the bed to plug something in (I don't remember what it was but it didn't arouse any suspicion of trickery in me!). After a few seconds, out from under the bed came loud and clear, the sound of "Thank You Very Much" by the Scaffold – giving my age away now!

Leaping out of bed to see what was underneath, there it was, my best present ever... a Dansette record player!

BEST.... I had always driven past many a house adorned with Christmas lights over the festive period and had dropped many a 'hint' over the years about having Christmas lights outside as well as in!! One day, 'him indoors' seemed particularly enquiring of my whereabouts, what time I would be back etc etc.....maybe he's having an affair I thought...!! Imagine my surprise when I turned into the drive that evening to a beautifully decorated house all lit up and twinkling at me!!



Use of Photos in the Rotherwick News



Please Read the Following Carefully

It is great to have photos in the Rotherwick News to add interest and bring an article to life. A picture paints a thousand words as they say. However, the editors are aware that photos are personal data and as such will take every care to ensure that privacy is respected.

Before publishing any photo, the editors will always seek your permission, or in the case of children, the permission of the parents before publishing any photos sent in by a third party. This will be sought either verbally, by email or text. You may be asked to give written permission for the photo to be used. This maybe in the form of an affirmative reply to an email or text. It will be assumed that by sending in a photo of yourselves, including your children, you are giving permission for it to be published.



**LET'S STAY
SAFE.....
Top tips when
going out to clubs
and bars.**



The recent spate of drink spiking and injecting and extensive media coverage has heightened awareness of the risk, especially to young women going out, and not surprisingly has made many anxious and nervous. A few things can really help young people stay protected and feel more confident in the night time economy including:

- choosing well run venues with door staff and CCTV
- staying with trusted friends, and looking out for each other being careful not to drink too much as this can make them more vulnerable to others as they are less aware of what is going on.
- if on a new date, choosing a well lit, well supervised and public/central setting. Letting someone else know exactly what their plans are – and inform them if they change. Having a phone locator such as find my friends/ snap chat is a great way for those close to know where they are.
- if wanting to accept a drink from a someone they don't know well, going to the bar to take the drink direct from the server, so there is no opportunity for spiking.
- being wary if a stranger buys them a drink and it's not what they requested.
- keeping an eye on their drink. If they have to leave the table (to go to the toilet, for example), it's best to ask a friend to watch over the drinks.
- buying drinks that come in bottles with screw-top lids and carrying the bottle in their bag when they go to the toilet or dance. Alternatively, they could bring drinks covers/ bottle stoppers to the venue.
- never consuming a drink if they think it may have been spiked and discussing their concerns with the manager or host.

**Further information Drink spiking fact sheet for 16-25 year olds and relevant film clips talkaboutalcohol.com/drink-spiking/
<https://alcoholeducationtrust.org>**

Taking a taxi home?

Attention all you young Party people out there, top tip for your safety over Christmas and New Year's, when getting into a taxi instead of taking a selfie start a new trend, take a photo of the taxi driver / plate / badge that is displayed in the cab and send it to your Mum or friend, GENUINE drivers will understand & Bogus taxi drivers will not pounce if they know you have sent a photo to some one.



Have fun but PLEASE Stay safe



Rotherwick Community Support Network



The Rotherwick Community Support Network was set up in anticipation of the first Covid lockdown in March 2020 and supported several early requests for prescriptions and shopping.

Although the phone line has been discontinued, the network itself is ongoing with no plans to disband. There is an associated WhatsApp group of over 25 members around the village ready to connect and respond when needed – if you would like to access any support or be added to the group, please do let me know.

Nicky Howell s 07787 541927
Kernets

Your Wellbeing Matters



Mental health doesn't take time off at Christmas, and with all the added stresses that can come with the festive season it's very important to care for your wellbeing. Follow our Christmas tips to support your wellbeing over the festive season.

Be active

Are you feeling tired and exhausted in the run up to Christmas? Research suggests keeping active can help beat tiredness. Why not try a walk around a Christmas market, a brisk stroll around the countryside or even ice skating?

Take notice

Have too much to do before Christmas? Often we can be so focused on growing to do list that we forget to pay attention to what is happening now. Take notice of your surroundings – wrap up warm and pay attention to all the seasonal smells of freshly cut Christmas trees and logs burning on the fire.

Keep learning

Stuck for Christmas present ideas? Why not learn a new skill? It can not only improve your wellbeing but also make for exciting, personal Christmas presents. Save Santa's elves a job or two!

Give to others

Feeling stressed this Christmas? Christmas can be a great time of year to do something for someone else. It doesn't have to break the bank – something as simple as a smile or a 'thank you' can help with your own wellbeing as well as theirs.

Connect

Feel lonely this Christmas? Christmas can be a tough time of year. Talking to and interacting with the people around you, whether that be family, neighbours or a friendly 'hello' to the person standing in the queue behind you at the shops, may help.

Keep your expectations of the festive period realistic

Many of us have a perfect vision of what the holidays should look like, and are disappointed when they don't live up to their expectations. Remember, nobody has a perfect holiday or a perfect family, so don't pressure yourself to live up to unrealistic standards!

Coping with anxiety

Christmas parties and events can be stressful if you struggle with social anxiety. Don't feel pressured to say 'yes' to every invitation – you are allowed to decide which festive events and traditions are more important and enjoyable for YOU, and decline the activities which cause you unnecessary stress.

Christmas prep causing stress?

Christmas can be a huge source of stress, and it's easy to feel there's too much to organise, or too much pressure on you – but don't hesitate to reach out for help if you need it. Ask a friend or family member to help you with chores, or contact local mental health services who can offer support, advice and resources.

Take some 'me time'

The holidays can be an overwhelmingly social time, with gatherings of family, friends and colleagues. Don't forget that you're allowed to set aside some 'me time' as well, such as curling up to read a favourite book or watch a Christmas TV special.



A message from Father Christmas

We enjoyed our visit to Rotherwick so much last year, that we've decided to do it again!



We shall be driving round the village on **Sunday 19th December between 2pm and 3pm** and invite you to give us a wave from the end of your drive as we go by (it cheers up Grumpy Elf no end)!

Last year one villager asked me to stop and give a present to their child (secretly given to me in advance as my presents aren't ready until Christmas Eve). What a lovely idea... so please, if you would like Father Christmas to stop outside your house with a present for your child this year, contact the kind people at Rotherwick Village hall who will arrange it on my behalf. Email chairman@rvh.org.uk.

Merry Christmas!

ROTHERWICK ITW Cricket Club June 2021

**Sat 5 June Away v Easton & Martyr Worthy III. Hampshire League.
Played at North Walls Recreation Ground, Winchester.**

WON by 34 runs (40 overs per side)



Captain Paul Buckingham (65 years young) played 20 mins of football in a morning memorial match, drove to Winchester, batted for 38 overs in getting 77 then kept wicket for 40 overs! Big ground, sunny day with the opposition a mix of callow youth and more experienced hands. Batting first, Rotherwick ITW posted a useful score of 201 for 7. Other than the skipper's 77, Rob Jones contributed 39 before falling lbw, Matt Mitchell hit

a swashbuckling 32 before being bowled and his father Phil swatted an unbeaten and valuable 16. John Holder and Phil Mitchell opened the bowling and kept it tight then Rob Jones chipped in with an excellent 4 for 28 putting the home side behind the run rate, try as they might to keep up with it. Graham Hooper and Andy Roberts also plugged away to enable their side to achieve 22 points and 6th place in the league after Easton ran out of overs on 167 for 6.

Mon 7 June Away v Kingsclere. Cyril Thompson Trophy.

**Played at May's Bounty, Basingstoke
LOST by 125 runs (20 overs per side)**

A remarkable innings of 169 not out by Kingsclere opener Ed Kyle left Rotherwick ITW somewhat up against it in this local knockout cup competition. He had also recorded a score of 254 not out 2 days before on Castle Fields (behind the main May's Bounty pitch). Kingsclere eventually racked up 241 for 3. Rotherwick ITW batsmen came and went at regular intervals, succumbing to 116 for 7 and losing by 125 runs.



Wed 9 June Home v Sherfield-on-Loddon. Midweek League.

LOST by 5 runs (18 overs per side)

As is usual with midweek league matches, the away side batted first and recorded a total of 123 for 7. Adam Cordery and Matt Warmington both took 3 wickets each. Rotherwick ITW couldn't quite keep up

with the chase finishing on 118 for 7. Kyle Frost top scored with 37.

**Sat 12 June Home v St Mary Bourne. Hampshire League.
LOST by 135 runs (40 overs per side)**



Probably the best day weatherwise of a generally dismal summer, but playing-wise, a disappointing performance. Rotherwick ITW were a couple of regular bowlers short enabling St Mary Bourne to capitalise on this, scoring 236 for 7. Tim Culver, Rob Jones and Phil Mitchell picked up 2 wickets apiece. The cause was also hampered by conceding 24 wides and 10 no balls.

In reply Paul Buckingham carried his bat for an unbeaten 47, left stranded as Rotherwick ITW were all out for 101 – not helped by only having 10 batsmen and Phil Warren picking up a nasty head wound after getting a top edge and having to retire.

**Wed 16 June Home v Badshot Lea. Midweek League.
WON by 8 wickets (20 overs per side)**

A very welcome win after being set a target of 111 (110 for 8) by our visitors. Ali Brown took 4 for 15 with a fine spell of off spin bowling. On the batting front Gregg Cloete clubbed his second 50 of the season assisted by Richard Williams with 29 and Kyle Frost with 21 not out enabling Rotherwick ITW to close on 114 for 2.

Sat 19 June Home v Colden Common, Otterbourne and Sporting Wessex II. Hampshire League. Match CANCELLED – rain

Wed 23 June Away v Stratfield Turgis and Hartley Wespall. Midweek League. LOST by 9 wickets (20 overs per side)

A truly beautiful summer's evening but with a surprisingly slow wicket and outfield. Kyle Frost and Richard Williams were the main contributors to Rotherwick ITW's under par total of 117 for 6. The home side made short shrift of this total losing just 1 wicket and scoring a match winning 119 runs. Phil Mitchell picked up the 1 wicket to fall.

**Sat 26 June Away v Herriard. Hampshire League.
Won by 12 runs (40 overs per side)**



This was a thoroughly good win against one of the better sides in the league and was achieved with just 10 men. Batting first, Paul Buckingham (55) and John Holder (39) were the stars of the show, putting on 113 for the 4th wicket, Matt Mitchell played another good cameo scoring 11 off 10 balls as Rotherwick ITW finished on 163-8. A couple of oddities in that both Rob Jones and Adam Cordery suffered first ball dismissals in trying to help the score along and we were the recipients of 5 penalty runs when a helmet on the ground behind the wicket-keeper was struck by the ball.

The aforementioned disappointed batsmen Rob (2 for 29) and Adam (3 for 37) were happily amongst the wickets along with Tim Culver (1 for 20) John Holder (2 for 27) and Phil Mitchell (2 for 30). Herriard were never quite up with the chase and holed out with 151.

In the next issue we'll look back at matches played in July. We can be contacted on 07788 722771 (Hon Sec) or by email on chair.ritw@gmail.com and can be found on Facebook and Instagram.

'Twelfth Man'

A message from Rachel Johnson—Parish Councillor

As the Parish Councillor who attends the quarterly policing priorities Meetings, I am keen for Rotherwick residents to inform me of any concerns they have or questions they wish me to ask, on their behalf, at these meetings. It is our opportunity to have a direct link with the Hart Rural Neighbourhood Policing Team.

Email Rachel Johnson on rachel.johnson@rotherwick.org.uk

Please visit www.rotherwick.org.uk
for Rotherwick Parish information and sign up for Parish Alerts.

The PPG facilitated a meeting with the Partners and senior management of Whitewater Health Practice (Hook and Hartley Wintney) on Tuesday 16th November 2021 for local community leaders to address questions raised about the practice.

There were seventeen people in attendance from local Parish and District Councils, Voluntary Organisations, Publications, the local church and PPG representatives.

Question: What is happening at the Practice ?

Dr Andrew Fernando started the meeting by explaining the situation within the NHS nationally. There is a shortage of staff and doctors in the NHS, and since 2015, there has been a sharp reduction in the numbers of GPs in general practice.

Nationally, there is a drop in the number of partners in practice due to increasing pressures and an increase in GPs reducing their hours. These problems are nationwide and are also reflected at Whitewater Health.

There is a considerable lack of investment throughout the NHS.

There are problems in social care, and locally we have seen our fair share of these problems.

Question: Face to Face Appointments

Whitewater Health are currently seeing 62% of patients face-to-face. Hartley Wintney has an older population who want to see their GP face-to-face; whereas Hook has a younger population who are happier with online consultations. In order to continue to provide an excellent service it is important that patients make appropriate use of the health professionals available.

Question: What is happening with the Telephone System ?

On Monday (15th November) there had been 1300 phone calls into the practice, and the average waiting time for the call to be answered was 3 minutes. Inevitably many will wait longer, however there are limitations to any system, with the average call taking four minutes. The practice has a very modern phone system and is continuously looking at methods to improve the patients' experience.

Question: Staff changes at the Practice

Dr Sarah Longstaff said continuity of care remains their top priority. The practice has recruited 2 new partners – Dr Lynne Heathorn and Dr Clair Botting and is actively recruiting for more GPs. They are aware that there is concern amongst patients. The recruitment drive has also included Advanced Nurse Practitioners, a clinical pharmacist, social prescribers, a health and well-being coach and 2 physiotherapists.

The practice will provide details of the roles of these professional health staff. (Watch out on Facebook, publications, PC notice and local posters)

Sarah said that patients ***will be signposted to the best health practitioner for their needs, and the GP should be the last resort rather than the first, and therefore available for more complex cases.***

Question: Location of clinics and appointments is a concern

The practice manager took this on board and will review the process to improve the communication regarding location. There will also be a review looking at texting patients with reminders.

Question: Is the Ambulance Service having difficulties ?

Cllr Dr Anne Crampton stated that there were problems with the Ambulance services and secondary care too [hospitals]. There were backlogs in hospitals trying to discharge patients, but not enough provision in the community so patients were remaining in hospitals longer. The whole system is stretched and of course, all are linked.

Question: Will the surgery in Hartley Wintney be closed?

Dr Andrew Fernando reassured the group that there was no intention to close the Hartley Wintney site and any suggestion was just malicious gossip. In fact, it was more likely that the practice would have to extend the site.

However, during this winter the duty team will be based in Hartley Wintney for operational reasons, so most surgeries will be held in Hook. This is because of the layout of the surgeries with a back entrance in Hartley Wintney. Some routine GP and nurse appointments will continue to be offered in Hartley Wintney, but patients may be asked to travel to Hook.

Question: Is transport available to access the surgeries?

Chris Cornwell said that transportation can be made available for patients via the Hook and Hartley Wintney Care Groups. They are currently transporting patients to hospitals, surgeries and vaccination centres.

Question: How can we improve Practice and PPG communications?

During the Q&A session it became very clear that communication is the key, and we will continue to work on ways to improve that.

Dorothy Harvey (Chair over 55's) suggested that the practice manager should attend their Forum meetings to explain the changes that are happening within the practice.

It was agreed that messages from the Practice and the PPG should be clear and concise.

All the representatives of the groups attending asked to be kept informed of changes so they can then disseminate the information out to the community.

Annette Rushmere (Chair Whitewater Health PPG) closed the meeting with thanks to all attendees.

PPG Contact details see page 34

USEFUL CONTACTS

Hook Surgery		01256 762125
PPG	Whitewaterppg@gmail.com	01256 678671
	https://www.facebook.com/WhitewaterPPG	
Hook Care Group		08450 941549
Whitewater School		01256 762637
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		07518 100314
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Cricket Club	Jon Wheeler, Secretary	07788 722771
Group Scout Leader	Richard Whistler	01256 763118
Tennis Club Membership	Maria Wills	mariajwills@sky.com
Badminton Club	Richard Burke, Secretary	01256 761013
		badminton@rjne.co.uk
Rotherwick Toddler Group	Caroline Brown	carolinebrown1@me.com
HCC Councillor for Rotherwick	Jonathan Glen	jonathan.glen@hants.gov.uk
Hart North Police (based in Aldershot, non urgent)		101
	Hart.North.Police@hampshire.pnn.police.uk	

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Take away sample menu

(please see full menu on Facebook or our website)

Haloumi fries , sweet chilli jam	£5
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BBQ chicken wings, blue cheese dip & celery	£7.5
Beef burger, cheddar & fries <i>add bacon</i>	£10
Crispy chicken burger, chips	£9
Butter Chicken curry with mushroom and garlic rice	£10
Pie of the day with mash or chips, vegetables and gravy	£12
Beer battered cod and chips with tartare sauce and peas	£9.5

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We are working hard to make sure pub is safe for you and us!

**Stay safe and hope to see you all very soon,
Lee and team**



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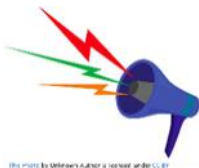
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Let's give a shout to...



Thank you to the village hall committee who have bought seat pads for the hall chairs.

A village survey suggested people felt the chairs were uncomfortable for village events so we now have pads to warm and cushion our derrieres!

The pads were christened on wreath making night and very popular they were too!!!

Thank you

**Ray Beech, Richard Whistler
and Mike Linwood for
adorning our Village Hall
with twinkly lights!**



Thanks to Sarah Deakin for helping with serving the refreshments at the wreathmaking and welcome to the village!

"That would be good to go in the Rotherwick News!"

Thank you.... to the people who have contributed to this month's magazine.

Most of the articles are signed by their author but not all. For those articles that appear to be "anonymouse" the editors would like to give a mention to Lottie Girling, Jenny Gordon and Dan Pearce for their contributions this month.

Please keep your articles and photos coming—they bring the magazine to life and it is so interesting to see and read about people we all know and love.

As always you can send to rotherwicknews@yahoo.co.uk or the Rotherwick News mobile 07849471227 **by 10th of the month.** What could be easier?

Looking Ahead



Upcoming dates

December 19th Between 2pm and 3pm
Santa and Grumpy Elf driving round Rotherwick – see page 28

Christmas Eve at 4 p.m.

Crib service at Heckfield church.

Children please come dressed as a nativity character and take part in the re-telling of the Christmas story.

Christmas Eve at 11.30 p.m.

Midnight Communion at Heckfield church

Christmas Day at 8.30 a.m.

BCP Holy Communion at Mattingley church

Christmas Day at 10.30 a.m.

Family Celebration Holy communion at Rotherwick church

Sunday 26th December at 8.30 a.m.

BCP Holy Communion at Heckfield

AND FINALLY!!!.....

The editors would like to say a huge thank you to you all for supporting the magazine over the last year! It really was heart warm-

ing to see how many of you clearly wanted the magazine to continue so thank you! A huge thank you too, to our writing team whose regular articles help make this magazine, we couldn't do it without you!

2021 has been a challenging year for us all but we hope the magazine highlights how strong community spirit is in our beautiful village. We wish you all a very happy Christmas, Keep Safe and see you in 2022!!

(Sorry about the Christmas cracker jokes—couldn't resist it!)

