

A New Year. A New You?



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The Wellbourn Post

Issue 14 / Winter 2018

The Free quarterly
magazine, from
Wellbourn Care Homes



Winter is coming

As we brace ourselves for the snap of winter, we explore the lengths our team will go, to ensure it's business as usual



Light up a Life

Christmas Celebration

An evening of carols and celebrating memories of loved ones at Christmas

Tuesday 18th December
Doors open 5pm, Event starts 6.30pm

Metro Radio Arena

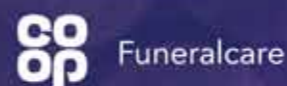
FREE ENTRY, EVERYONE WELCOME

A tree will be unveiled on the night with hundreds of lights shining in memory.
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All money raised in Sunderland and South Tyneside will support our Children and Young Adults Service.
St Oswald's Hospice, Regent Avenue, Gosforth, NE3 1EE. Registered Charity Number 503386.

0191 246 9123 fundraising@stoswaldsuk.org
www.stoswaldsuk.org/light-up-a-life

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Editors Letter

As we enter the festive season and the cold of winter, issue 14 as usual, is packed full of goodies, including news, features, opinions and lots of festive content.

In our Icons series, we take a look at another of the North's most iconic cultural landmarks (pg 4). We also take a look at how the festive season can be a tough time for some, and what we can all do to help those less fortunate. (pg 6). Crafty Christmas is full of creative ideas on how to bring a little sparkle to your Christmas, without it breaking the bank. (pg 8). Our cover feature explores the challenges we face, when maintaining our care homes, when the cold of winter bites (pg 10). Discover more about our new exciting volunteer initiative Work Matters, and how it's already making a huge difference (pg 16).

And of course, we have our regular Life section, full of the latest goings on at Wellburn, and lots more, including book reviews and a festive recipe. (pg 21). Enjoy reading and from all of us, have a very Merry Christmas.

Sophie x

Editor

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www.studiomikey.co.uk

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Rachel Beckett, Simon Beckett, Mike Campling, Davey Dryden

In each issue, we take a look at one of our regions architectural icons. We explore its story, discovering its history and understand what makes it so iconic.

Icons

PENSHAW MONUMENT HOUGHTON LE SPRING

For Wearsiders in particular and many living in Tyneside and Durham, the sight of Penshaw Monument is a sign of home. As with another iconic North East landmark, the Angel of the North, Penshaw Monument stands proudly on raised hills, enabling the structure to be seen for many miles around. Perhaps much of the monuments charm however, isn't in its architectural achievement, although it was built by one of the times most accomplished architectural partnerships, but in the myth and legend, it has attracted over the years.

After all, how a giant replica of a Greek Temple ended up in Houghton Le Spring, is bound to generate some weird and wonderful explanations. In reality, the story of Penshaw Monument and why it was built, is just as fascinating as some of the myths.

The monument was designed by John and Benjamin Green, a father and son architecture partnership, who's other work has left an indelible mark on our region. Their partnership was prolific, with works including Newcastle's Theatre Royal, the column of Grey's Monument and the Literary and Philosophical Society.

It was commissioned and built in 1844, as a memorial to John Lambton, the 1st Earl of Durham. Lambton's work on the Durham report, which was commissioned



by Lord Melbourne in 1838, seeking direction on how best the British Empire should manage its colonies around the globe, gained him the nickname Radical Jack, due to the ideas he set out in his report. Lambtons work became one of the most important documents in the whole of the British Empire, formulating a new relationship between London and the colonies, it was to be his last major contribution, before his death in 1840.

DISCOVER IT FOR YOURSELF

Penshaw Monument and the adjacent Penshaw Wood is owned by The National Trust. The spiral staircase, allowing stunning views of the region, is open to visitors on weekends. You can book your Tour to the Top and find out all you need to know at: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/penshaw-monument

A radical monument for Radical Jack, seems a fitting tribute, and they don't come more radical than a scaled replica of the Temple of Hephaestus in Athens. The true explanation as to why this was chosen as inspiration is unclear, and remains steeped in myth, as does some of the other myths, which we know aren't true that surround Penshaw Monument. One of these is that Lambton was so loved by his workers that they all clubbed together to pay for it. Another is that when he rode past and saw it, he rose everybody's rents to punish them for spending their money on frivolous things.

Whatever the truths and myths, there's no doubt that Penshaw Monument holds a special place in our regions affections, and it's easy to see why it's become a firm favourite and achieved such iconic status. Radical.

In our regular Agenda column, Wellburn's Executive Chairperson Rachel Beckett, offers her views and thoughts from the inside.



Agenda

“We reach out to our local communities to try and help those feeling lonely over the festive period.”

The festive season is always a busy time for us, but it's also an opportunity for reflection. Reflecting back over the last year and looking forward into the next. Not only from a business point of view, but from a human point of view too. For most of us the festive season is a time for celebration, enjoying cherished moments with family and loved ones. For some though, for various reasons it can be a hard time to cope. Every year, we'll always have some residents that will be feeling the loss of a loved one, feeling separated or estranged from their family or just generally struggling to cope with the feeling of loneliness.

Our staff work hard to make each and every one of these situations better, by showing love, understanding and making sure all of our residents feel included. For example, paying extra attention to those who's families are unable to visit over the Christmas period.

We also reach out to our local communities to try and help those who are lonely over the festive period. One way is through our open day initiative with Community Christmas, where we invite the most vulnerable and lonely into our homes to share Christmas dinner, conversation and good company, together with our staff and residents, who all do their bit too. A great example of human spirit and the importance of looking beyond our own circumstances, to help others.



Of course, helping and caring for our residents over the festive period wouldn't be possible without our staff, who sacrifice their own time with their family and loved ones to do this. Often when I'm out and about chatting to other businesses or organisations, I'm always waxing lyrical about our staff. But it's in moments when I visit the homes over Christmas, that just reinforce how committed they all are. When you see each and every home filled with joy and Christmas spirit, the music and dancing, and never once hearing a complaint from staff who naturally feel torn and separated from their own family, I can't help but feel overwhelmed with pride. Not only pride, but a huge sense of debt to every single member of staff for just getting on with it.

A conversation I had last week with one of our carers, summed it up for me. When I asked her how she felt about working over Christmas, she replied “For a whole raft of reasons, some residents don't get any

visitors at all over the festive season, which really tugs at your heart strings. So when you see just how much they appreciate your company, it feels more than just a job. In moments like these, it is more than a job.”

So while myself and all of us here at Wellburn, will be doing all we can to make this a fantastic time for all of our residents, it also feels like a time to allow ourselves a little celebration for all the good things we've done over the year. Amongst our achievements, we enjoyed another successful Forever Young Music Festival, raising thousands for charity, we completed a whole phase of refurbishment programmes across multiple homes as well as launching numerous initiatives for our residents, our staff and our local community.

One of which is our volunteering in the community project 'Work Matters', which gives those residents who want to, the opportunity to spend some time volunteering for local businesses and organisations. You can read more about it on page 16, but already the response has been overwhelming and we'll be looking to expand the project in the New Year.

A New Year that gives me cause for so much optimism, and one we're all looking forward to very much. Until then, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year, from myself, the staff and all of our residents here at Wellburn. ■



Illustration: www.studiomike.co.uk

The spirit of Christmas

We'll all feel the Christmas spirit over the festive period. It will fill our homes, workplaces and streets. But we wonder if it's there in all of us, why can't it last more than a month?

Today's current climate is wildly at odds with the spirit of Christmas. The political landscape, not just at home, but abroad, is a reflection of the time we're living in. At home Brexit is creating huge divisions with our European neighbours, and more troubling, within. Divisive and polarising rhetoric is happening the world over, America for example is arguably at its most divided in decades. World leaders normalising negative attitudes towards the free press and consequently free speech, threatens the very fabrics of our democracy.

In such volatile times, such divisional talk promotes the idea that insular behaviour is in some way acceptable. The danger with our so called exemplars, is that their voices feed down into our societies and are in danger of drowning out the voice of reason, basic decency and human kindness. The very fabric that binds friendships, communities and its people.

Christmas time seems to bring with it a sense of relief, a time out from everything. A return to basics. The news seems less important, family values come back to the fore. Something special happens, people just seem to behave kinder towards each other. Wishing strangers who serve us in a shop a Merry Christmas, or offering help to someone we don't know, where otherwise we might not. This is the spirit of Christmas. A time when we collectively seem to improve, become jollier, more forgiving and collectively stronger.

The spirit of Christmas is all about support, friendship and togetherness, it's also a reminder that for the vast majority, it's there inside of us and always within reach. It's also a reminder that it's always within our grasp to use it much more frequently than we probably do.

Here at Wellburn, we see such acts of random kindness and compassion on a daily basis throughout the entire year. The Spirit of Christmas resonates with us, and it's something our staff and residents can identify with. It's something we all feel runs through each of our homes, all year round.

Of course, these acts of kindness don't always have to be big gestures. Often, like at Christmas, it's sometimes the small things that make such a difference. How many times have you found yourself Christmas shopping and feeling that sense of warmth, when you get a simple smile from a fellow shopper or walk into a bar that's playing Christmas music and the barman serves you in a festive spirit.

We'll be opening the doors to our homes this Christmas, to offer food, company and a caring environment for those in our local communities, who would otherwise be feeling lonely. A simple gesture that really does go a long way.

Every day we see the effect small acts of kindness can have. Simple things such as taking a little time to sit and listen to a story, or making a cup of tea for someone. These acts of kindness will fill all of our homes, workplaces and streets over the festive period. We'll all do it, we'll all feel it, but we should also wonder how much better we'd all be, if once the decorations come down, and the New Year starts, if those acts of compassion continue. The Christmas spirit is such a wonderful thing, how wonderful it would be if it lasted more than a month. We can all make a difference, big or small to those around us. So while world leaders lose their way, and physical and metaphorical walls are talked about, we the people can show that human spirit will endure. How will you make a difference to someone else this Christmas, and beyond?

"IT'S ALSO A REMINDER THAT IT'S ALWAYS WITHIN OUR GRASP TO USE IT MUCH MORE FREQUENTLY THAN WE PROBABLY DO"

The festive season can be an expensive time, but fear not, we have some creative ways to save money and add that personal touch to your holidays.

A CRAFTY CHRISTMAS

► RUSTIC SNOWFLAKES

Made with collected twigs and decorated with button stickers, pine needles, berries, and twine, these rustic snowflakes can even be used for festive wall art or hung on your tree as decoration. And they're easy peasy to make too. Simply collect various sizes of twigs and old sticks, and using a glue gun, stick them together and use your creative talents to glue on various items for decoration.



◄ WRAPPING PAPER

Gifting is one of the best parts about the festive season. But how special would it be, to go that extra miles by wrapping your presents in handmade wrapping paper? And it couldn't be easier. All you need is a roll of brown parcel paper, which will be

your creative canvas to create festive patterns or personal messages, using white or black paint pens. You can even adapt each design to personalise your wrapping to the person receiving your gift. A really nice touch and a sure fire way of earning extra brownie points with friends and family.



► TOILET PAPER ROLL WREATH

If there's a more creative way to make use of your discarded toilet rolls over the festive period, we'd love to know what it is. Instead of throwing them into the recycling bin, we have the perfect use for them, with this fantastic homemade Christmas wreath. Just unravel the roll a little to create a spiral effect, then paint them green, before gluing them into place to create the ring. Decorate with glitter and other Christmassy objects, to create your wreath.



► HAND PAINTED BAUBLES

Turn a normal glass bauble into a special Christmas decoration for the tree. By using a gold paint pen, simply add a personalised message. You could write the names of loved ones or add a festive message. Great for your own tree, or as a gift for others.



► YARN CHRISTMAS TREES

These little beautiful yarn Christmas trees are super simple to make, and will add a splash of colour and creativity to your mantelpiece over the festive period. To make them, take a sheet of thick card and roll into a cone shape, gluing it into place. Then cover the



All materials needed to make our crafty Christmas items can be bought online at [amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk) or at any good local art shop. We'd always encourage it, but if you are going to involve children in making these, always supervise when gluing or using paint pens.



WINTER IS COMING

As we brace ourselves for the snap of winter, we explore the lengths our team will go, to ensure it's business as usual across all 14 of our homes



As we enter the winter months, the snow and ice that provide us with such memorable festive imagery, can be as disruptive as they are beautiful. At Wellburn we know just how much joy this season can bring to our residents, and as much as it does to our staff too, it also brings with it many challenges.

Whether it be food deliveries, minibuses heading out for daytrips or maintaining our gardens, ensuring our homes run smoothly over the cold winter months, throws up a completely different set of challenges to that of any other season. We spoke to our staff on the ground to see how winter affects their roles.

At Wellburn HQ, Site Technical Manager Davey Dryden looks at the bigger picture, which means keeping a close eye on weather reports. "It's action stations as soon as we see weather warnings" explains Davey, "As soon as weather temperatures and conditions are predicted to fall below a comfortable level, we set the ball rolling, making

sure things like paths are gritted, access roads for staff, visitors and suppliers are accessible. We also have a dedicated team of handypeople across all of our homes, and they're a great way of getting news from the ground, quickly. They can monitor things, such as water pipes, drainage and general damage due to the freezing temperatures. The sort of things that others might take for granted, until there's a problem, but we work hard and stay focussed to make sure there isn't."

But the adverse weather doesn't just effect our homes logistically. It can also effect moral. Lizzie Hodgson is the Activities Coordinator at our Wellburn House home. "We definitely have to work a little harder in the winter months on our activity programmes. Residents, much like most of us, respond to the cold dark nights for example. Asking our residents to motivate themselves for a yoga class in the summer is easy work, but on a freezing cold and late January afternoon?" Lizzie goes on, "But it's part of the job, and running and maintaining interest in our activities over the winter ►



◀ is vital to the wellbeing of our residents, so it's hugely rewarding to see your hard work paying off when we have full classes."

Another aspect of the winter chill that needs around the clock monitoring is the common winter cold and other cold related viruses. Our residents, like all older people are more prone to picking up winter bugs, but as Mike Campling, Home Manager at our Nightingale Hall home explains, we have a number of things we can do to combat this. "Our home is in a rural area, so we work hard to make sure there's as much back up in the home as possible. Just little things like making sure the temperature is maintained to a comfortable level, reducing our residents exposure to the elements, and when they are heading out for day trips etc, making sure they're wrapped up." Mike goes on, "Of course, because we have visitors coming through our doors every day, we can't ever fully eliminate viruses and colds, but there's a lot we can do to limit them. It's just part of our wider winter strategy to make sure

our residents are safe and comfortable when the cold snap comes.

The challenges are across the board. Our award winning gardens require constant care and protection from the harshest conditions, and our talented team of gardeners never fail to deliver. From the postmen to the milkmen, it's a community effort to keep normal life ticking over.

There's a sense of all pulling together through adversity and when we caught up with Katharine Waters, Team Leader at our Whorlton Grange home, she summed up the attitude and spirit that's within Wellburn and our local communities. For her, as much as the winter months do bring significant challenges, the payback is all worth it, as she explains, "You just have to take and look around at our residents faces. The festive period especially, but when you see how happy they are and you're surrounded by so many smiles, it makes all those early mornings, when you look out of the window and it's dark and snowing and everything is telling you to jump back

in bed, worth it. This is what we do it for. We're all here to make a difference to our residents lives and come rain or shine, hot or cold weather, we're here for them."

So the winter months approach, but with a infrastructure in place to cover all unexpected eventualities, combined with a dedicated and talented team, we're ready for anything the winter weather might throw at us. ■

"WITH AN INFRASTRUCTURE IN PLACE, COMBINED WITH A DEDICATED TEAM, WE'RE READY FOR ANYTHING THE WINTER WEATHER MIGHT THROW AT US."

Our quarterly magazine is for our residents, their families and loved ones, and for all the local communities of our homes.

Get involved

The Wellburn Post



Every issue of The Post is packed full of news, views and features, covering all sorts of different topics. From care home specific content, to our local area and communities. We work hard each issue, to bring you engaging, topical and fun content, covering a wide range of subject matter.

When the idea of creating The Wellburn Post first came about, the premise was to get the local community involved with the content as much as possible.

This issue is our 14th, and over that time, we've had some really amazing contributors. From The Hairy Bikers, to BBC documentary directors. We've also had contributions from writers, photographers and illustrators.

We're looking to continue with this collaborative approach, firmly believing that our local communities are full of talented people, that are looking for a platform to show them off.

We're always on the look out for new contributors and we'd love to hear from you. Your ideas for content can be as big or small as you want them to be. If you have something important to say, or perhaps you're involved in a local project you'd love to tell people about, then we want to hear from you. Perhaps you're a young writer, photographer or illustrator that's just looking to get your work into print?

Whatever you have, please do share and if we can use it, or work with you, then we will. Here's all the ways you can get in touch.

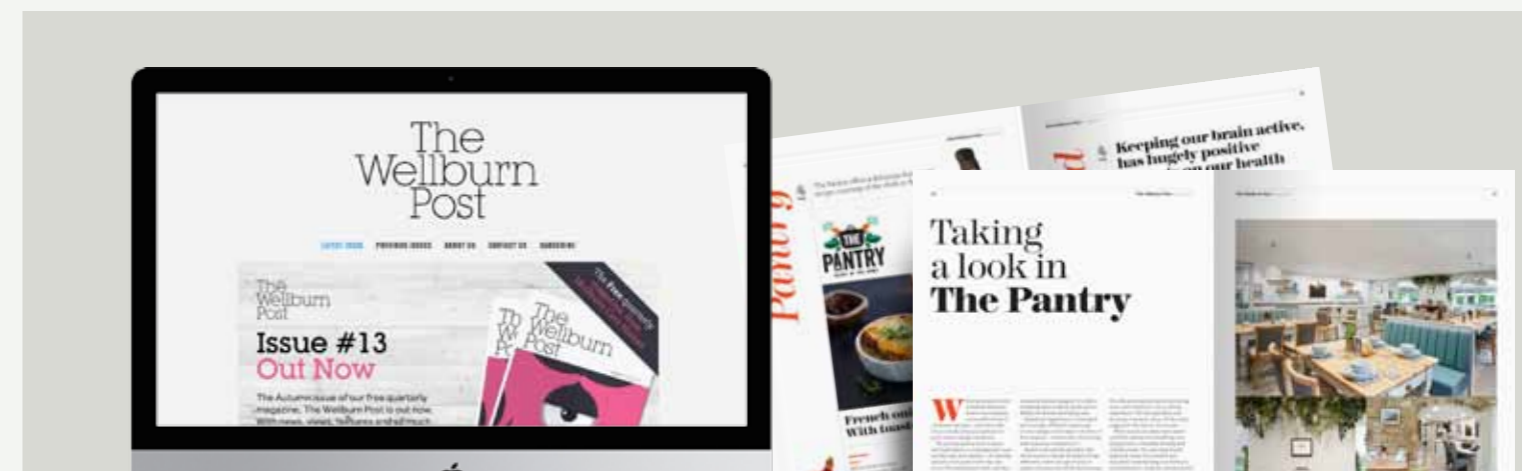
HOW TO GET IN TOUCH WITH US

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Visit us at:
www.thewellburnpost.co.uk

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0191 229 3541

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Find dementia support that is right for you

If you're affected by dementia you are not alone.

Our specialist services will help you to get tailored information and advice, keep your independence and improve your well-being .

Find out how we can support you today

0300 222 11 22
alzheimers.org.uk

Alzheimer's Society operates in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Registered charity no. 296645

Here for
everyone
affected by
dementia



As the North East continues with its aim to create a truly dementia friendly society, we highlight our favourite dementia friendly places to visit.

No.2

**WITH LIGHTS LEFT
ON LOW AND SOUND
LEVELS REDUCED,
IT MAKES SUCH A
DIFFERENCE**

THE MALTINGS CINEMA BERWICK

As we know, the cinema can be a stressful place for people living with dementia, but The Maltings are doing everything they can to make the experience as relaxing and enjoyable as possible.

Earlier this year, they launched monthly dementia friendly screenings, of both old time favourites and new releases. Tailoring the screenings to the needs of those living with dementia, their families, friends and carers, each showing enables those with dementia to enjoy the experience. With lights left on low, sound levels reduced, and allowing customers to move around during the film, makes such a difference.

Residents from our Garden House home, have been going to the screenings, and the feedback has been wonderful. The level of understanding and patience from all of the staff, adds to this being quite a unique experience, and one that we feel ought to be replicated across every cinema in the region.



Work matters

After recently launching Work Matters, our local volunteer initiative, we're already seeing the benefits it's bringing to both our residents and their local community.

Here at Wellburn, our activities programmes are central to life in our homes. We actively try to provide a varied, stimulating programme across all of our homes for our residents, ensuring that we are providing them with person-centred opportunities. As well as activities such as helping our residents achieve their goals and trying to embrace new technologies, we are always looking for ways in which we can improve and help our residents to flourish.

After observing two of our residents engaging in a keen debate, over who got to serve tea from the drinks trolley, our Nightingale Hall Home Manager, Mike Campling, realised that feeling useful and having a job was something that really resonated with our residents. The idea for our local volunteer initiative 'Work Matters' was born. Mike started discussing his idea with residents

and a trend was appearing. Most of them had spent the majority their lives working, doing jobs around the house and helping with bringing up the family, but most said that when they made the move into a care home, suddenly most things are done for them and they felt their sense of purpose diminish.

With some support from our marketing team, the Work Matters brand was brought to life. Work then started on matching residents who were interested in taking part in the initiative, with businesses in Nightingale Hall's local community of Richmond.

The match involved trying to find work that related to their working lives, allowing them to ease into environments and situations that they were already familiar with.

Our first resident to take part in the initiative was Jeanette Williamson, who had previously worked as a pub landlady. Mike partnered her

up with the Talbot Hotel in Richmond. Jeanette loved the pub life and had been missing the hustle and bustle of a busy bar, and it was clear from the get go that the muscle memory of pulling a perfect pint, had never left her.

Jeanette was amazing behind the bar, and the change in her was instant and an absolutely incredible thing to see. Jeanette often feels anxious, but behind the bar and back in an environment where she felt utterly and completely at ease, all the anxiety was swept away and her confidence returned in waves. Such early returns filled Mike with a real sense of promise. As he explains, "There's so much data out there supporting the idea behind what we are trying to achieve, but when you see it in real time, when the results are so immediate, it really is something else."

The second resident to take part in the initiative was Ann Hardy, who spent time at the local food bank in Richmond. Spending time with other volunteers at the Influence Church in Richmond, Ann helped out at StoreHouse, a project created by the church to help meet the needs of their local community. The StoreHouse project is completely run by volunteers, and provides a food bank scheme, as well as offering support where needed in many other ways. Ann was proud to help out and make her own little difference and the team were thrilled by her enthusiasm.

The Work Matters initiative is now well under way, and the goal, to establish it as a viable option for local businesses and organisations to draw on, whenever they have suitable needs for volunteer work is on track.

Research has shown that people who report higher levels of purpose, remain in better

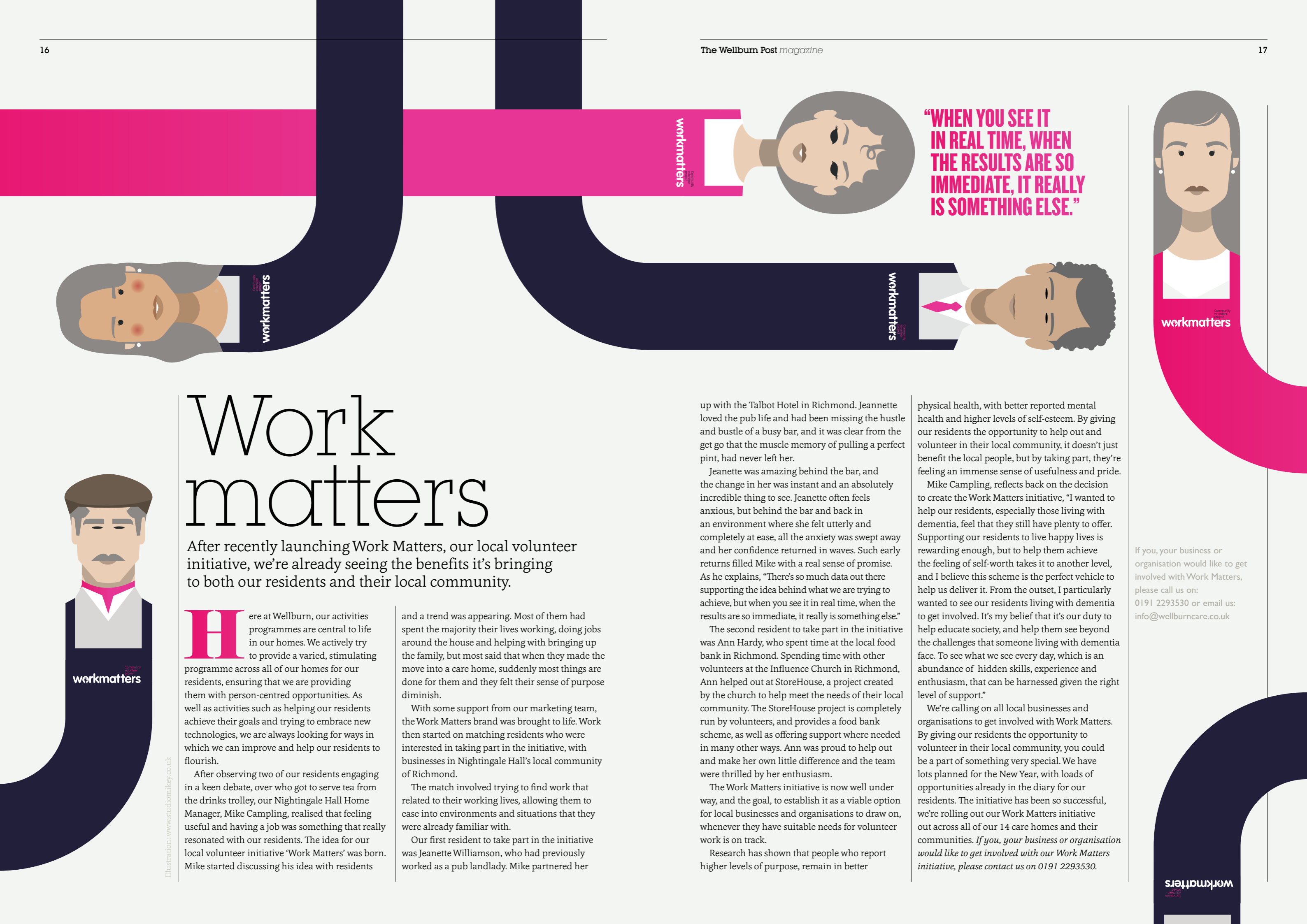
"WHEN YOU SEE IT IN REAL TIME, WHEN THE RESULTS ARE SO IMMEDIATE, IT REALLY IS SOMETHING ELSE."

physical health, with better reported mental health and higher levels of self-esteem. By giving our residents the opportunity to help out and volunteer in their local community, it doesn't just benefit the local people, but by taking part, they're feeling an immense sense of usefulness and pride.

Mike Campling, reflects back on the decision to create the Work Matters initiative, "I wanted to help our residents, especially those living with dementia, feel that they still have plenty to offer. Supporting our residents to live happy lives is rewarding enough, but to help them achieve the feeling of self-worth takes it to another level, and I believe this scheme is the perfect vehicle to help us deliver it. From the outset, I particularly wanted to see our residents living with dementia to get involved. It's my belief that it's our duty to help educate society, and help them see beyond the challenges that someone living with dementia face. To see what we see every day, which is an abundance of hidden skills, experience and enthusiasm, that can be harnessed given the right level of support."

We're calling on all local businesses and organisations to get involved with Work Matters. By giving our residents the opportunity to volunteer in their local community, you could be a part of something very special. We have lots planned for the New Year, with loads of opportunities already in the diary for our residents. The initiative has been so successful, we're rolling out our Work Matters initiative out across all of our 14 care homes and their communities. *If you, your business or organisation would like to get involved with our Work Matters initiative, please contact us on 0191 2293530.*

If you, your business or organisation would like to get involved with Work Matters, please call us on: 0191 2293530 or email us: info@wellburncare.co.uk



For those who want to get out and enjoy the fresh air this Christmas, there's plenty of family food around. We've picked out some of the highlights on offer.

Out & about



Hadrians Tipi

Pilgrim Street, Newcastle
Every day from 10am - 12am

Hadrian's Tipi is a winter pop-up retreat located in the very heart of Newcastle. Situated in the centre of Stack Newcastle, it offers everything the hardened Christmas shopper would want on a cold day. With an indoor winter beer garden with Christmas trees, atmospheric lights and over 40 containers, including local independent retailers and eateries.

For more information, visit:
www.hadriantipi.com/#newcastle

Ice Skating

Travistock Place, Sunderland
29th November - 6 January
12pm - 9pm (10am start over Christmas)

Enjoy outdoor skating at Keel Square, the perfect place for a spot of wintery fun with friends and family. And don't worry about keeping the cold at bay, as the adjoining Hadrian's Tipi, right next door, will be open every day to keep you warm by their log fires over drinks and food.

For more information, visit:
www.sunderlandbid.co.uk



St Nicholas Christmas Fair

Parliament Street, York
15th November- 23rd December
10am-6pm

Take a leisurely stroll along St Nicholas Fair and soak up the festive atmosphere. With a wide selection of stalls in the Yuletide Village. If you're looking for more traditional Christmas gifts, don't forget to wander amongst the many alpine chalets on Parliament Street. You can then head down to Kings Square and experience all the fun of the fair. Once you whipped up a thirst, finish off with drinks and food at the St Sampson's Square rustic Yorkshire Barn.

For more information, visit:
www.visitthecity.org

It's a wonderful life

Tyne Cinema, 10 Pilgrim street, Newcastle
(Check website for screening times)

The essential Christmas film treat for the whole family returns to the Tyneside Cinema this Christmas. James Stewart is George Bailey, a compassionate but frustrated everyman whose life seems to be coming apart. But when Clarence, an angel with one chance to prove his mettle, arrives on earth he teaches George just how much life is worth living. Guaranteed to bring tears to your eyes and a smile to your face.

For more information, visit:
www.tynesidecinema.co.uk

Sewerby Hall Christmas Trail

Sewerby Hall, Church Lane, Sewerby
17 November - 31 December
(Check website for times)

Christmas Trails at Sewerby Hall and Gardens offer Christmas fun for the whole family. Follow the clues to find where the elves have hidden the Partridge from the Pear tree, and there's a chocolatey treat for those who do. You can also enjoy a Christmas trail around the beautiful gardens of the Hall, which always look stunning this time of year. A great way to spend a festive day with the kids.

For more information, visit:
www.sewerbyhall.co.uk

Christmas Market

Alnwick Garden, Denwick Lane, Alnwick
17th November - 23rd December
10am - 5pm

With every stall hand-picked by The Alnwick Garden, the quality of this indoor market is superb. Browse the stalls, whilst enjoying the sound of festive singing and live music, all played in the warmth of the marquee.

For more information, visit:
www.alnwickgarden.com



The festive season is a time for family memories, so we caught up with Wellburn founder **Simon Beckett** and his daughter, now Executive Chairperson, Rachel Beckett, to get the family past and present perspective on Christmas at Wellburn.

CHRISTMAS PAST...

"STAFF WOULD OFTEN VISIT THE RESIDENTS ON THEIR DAYS OFF, EVEN ON CHRISTMAS DAY. THAT FOR ME WAS BEYOND SPECIAL."

Q. Are there any particular festive memories that really stand out for you?

A. When I founded the company, in many ways those first Christmases were a step into the unknown, but ever since that very first year, Christmas time at the homes were always great fun. I would do the rounds on Christmas Day in the early years, and it was always such a pleasure to see everyone enjoying themselves, but what stands out in the memory more than anything, is that some of the staff would come in on their day off, some even on Christmas Day to see the residents. That for me was beyond special.

Q. What were the biggest challenges you faced over the winter months?

A. Of course things are different now, but in the early days, ensuring the homes were fully stocked with provisions, with the additional back up of electric generators to keep the central heating and lighting throughout the homes functioning, especially in the more rural locations. Before we had a more rigid strategy, another big challenge was staffing. I was always extremely grateful and amazed at the dedication of our staff, who would always go above and beyond, sometimes walking to work and in some instances even staying overnight at the homes. One particular memory stands out though. Our Wellburn House home has been completely isolated, with all roads surrounding closed off due to extreme winter flooding. The emergency services were amazing that night. They made it to the home to make sure we were all safe and warm, and the home manager and



staff, who were also stranded there, made them all a bacon sandwich and a cup of tea.

Q. Do you have a Christmas message for the residents and their loved ones?

A. I would like to personally wish all our residents and their loved ones a very Merry Christmas and for a happy, healthy and prosperous 2019. Visits from all families and loved ones, especially over the festive period, is much needed for our residents and if you can make it down, we'll be waiting to welcome you.

Q. If you had one Christmas wish for Wellburn in the New Year, what would it be?

A. My daughter is doing such a fantastic job, since taking over from me, my wish is that it continues. My only other wish as always, is that our residents feel happy, safe and comfortable. I can rest easy with that one, knowing with my daughter at the helm, they're in good hands.

Simon Beckett founded Wellburn Care homes in 1987, with one original home, Wellburn House. He built the company up to a portfolio of 14 homes. Even though he's now retired, still takes a keen interest in the homes and the residents.

The festive season is a time for family memories, so we caught up with Wellburn founder Simon Beckett and his daughter, now Executive Chairperson, **Rachel Beckett**, to get the family past and present perspective on Christmas at Wellburn.

...CHRISTMAS PRESENT



“THAT FIRST CHRISTMAS GAVE ME THE FIRST REAL OPPORTUNITY TO BOND WITH MY ENTIRE TEAM.”

Q. Are there any particular festive memories that really stand out for you?

A. We introduced our 'Deck the Halls' competition the first year I took over, and it was fantastic to see so much team spirit throughout the homes, and if I'm honest, it was a huge surprise. I was still quite new to the job, but going around all the homes, with everyone in high festive spirits, allowed me the first real opportunity to bond with my entire team and our residents from across all fourteen of our homes. For me, that first Christmas will always be the one that meant so much to me.

Q. What is the biggest challenge you face over the winter months?

A. Although we use the line 'business as usual', when the real heavy snow starts, to run as usual takes a huge amount of effort and dedication, from all of the staff. It never ceases to astound me, just how many staff will get to work by hook, or by crook. Last year we had staff ditching their cars and making the last leg of the trip into work on foot, and we were driving around and helping staff who are more remote to make the trip. It's really quite incredible, and only possible because we just all pull together.

Q. Do you have a Christmas message for the residents and their loved ones?

A. I'd just really like to thank everyone for all their tremendous support this year, and wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and hope they're looking forward to the New Year as much as we are. 2019 promises to be a very special year for us, with lots of events,

initiatives and activities planned, to make the year even better for all of our residents and loved ones, and I can't wait to share them with you all.

Q. If you had one Christmas wish for Wellburn in the New Year, what would it be?

A. I'm so proud of what our homes have achieved this year. Every single one of them now has a QCQ rating of 'Good'. Of course we never sit on our laurels and if I could have one wish, it would be to turn some of those 'Good' ratings into 'Outstanding'. I'm sure that if we maintain the amazing work and the progress we've made over the last few years, my wish has every chance of coming true, and for my staff, that would make me very happy indeed.

You can read more about the challenges we face in our homes, during the winter months in our 'Winter is Coming' feature on [page 10](#).

Rachel Beckett took over the company from her father in 2015. Since taking over the helm, Rachel has introduced a whole raft of new initiatives, and with it, a fresh approach.



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NEWS

We catch up on all the latest news and goings on from all fourteen of our care homes.

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THE PANTRY

Looking for some cosy food this winter? We bring you a delicious recipe from *Apetito*.

25

THE MIND

Keeping your brain active, is great for your wellbeing, as we give it a work out, in the mind.

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BOOKS

We review four of the hottest books to hit the shelves this winter.



SUCH ‘GOOD’ NEWS

Home news

After our Wellburn House care home received an overall ‘Good’ rating from the Care Quality Commission (CQC), it now means that all 14 of our homes have a ‘Good’ rating. Like our other homes, Wellburn House received a glowing report from CQC. Paying particular tribute to our staff, which the report described as ‘lovely’, it also made special mention to the

homes welcoming atmosphere. During the inspection, the CQC took time to speak at length to some of our relatives and staff, who praised the home, saying it just felt like one big family. The report also complimented the home on its extensive community links, which is something we work hard to develop and maintain. We’re thrilled for all of our team at Wellburn House, and its huge recognition for their relentless passion and commitment. *SM*



TABLE SERVICE

Wellbeing

We’re always looking for ways to embrace new technology within our activities programmes. Our latest project involves a collaboration with Midshire and their Interactive Table. A giant tablet which can be adjusted and safely moved around the home, gives all of our residents the opportunity to get involved. We recently

trialled it at our Craghall home, and it proved hugely popular. The Interactive Table allows our staff to download games, watch movies on Netflix, have karaoke singalongs on YouTube and even create our own, person centred puzzles and activities for our residents. The trial was so successful that we decided to invest in our very own, to the delight of our residents. It’s proven a hugely popular addition to the home. *SM*

In Short

TRUE DEDICATION

Staff news

We’re only too aware that our success is a team effort, and we couldn’t do any of what we do without a talented and dedicated team of amazing people. We go to great lengths to make sure each and every one feels appreciated. But on occasion, a member of the team needs an extra special mention. October this year, marked a very special anniversary for Cathy Smith. Cathy started working at our Whorlton Grange home 25 years ago, and we couldn’t let this fact pass by without making a little fuss over her. we presented Cathy with a special certificate and a bottle of champagne as a thank you for all of her hard work and dedication across the years. A huge thank you for your exceptional commitment to our residents and the company Cathy. *SM*



POPPY POWER

Resident news

Avid knitter and Glenholme House resident Mary, created 72 beautiful poppies for Newcastle City Council’s Old Eldon Square War Memorial. Of course, she hand delivered her poppies in person and they were gratefully received, before being added to the touching display. We’re so proud of you Mary. *CB*

GIVING THANKS

In the community

We threw a thanksgiving feast, complete with all the trimmings and live music, to celebrate the launch of our recent refurbishment project, The Pantry, at our Ryton Towers home. The Deputy Mayor and Mayoress of Gateshead officially opened proceedings, on what was a fantastic night of celebration. A big thank you to everyone who came along. *SM*



CHEQUE THIS OUT

In the community

Wellburn’s Executive Chairperson, Rachel Beckett, joined Annie Keogh from St Leonard’s Hospice and Jan Hunter from Age UK York, to present their cheques, from money raised at our annual Forever Young Music festival. A phenomenal £6500 was raised and we’d like to thank everyone who made the day so special. *CB*



LEST WE FORGET

In the community

Residents at our Ryton Towers home worked alongside local volunteers, to create their remembrance day memorial. Residents in our knitting club spent hours knitting beautiful poppies that formed the centre piece of the memorial. The memorial also featured handwritten notes from our residents, detailing their own personal memories of the

war. An extremely touching and fitting addition. One of our handy-people, Davey Harrison, created memorial crosses, which were laid out on the lawn, with the rest of our display. One volunteer also came into the home to help our residents create 100 clay poppies, to represent the 100th year of remembrance. All of which we hope was a fitting tribute to the brave men and women, who sacrificed so much for us all. *SM*

NEW MEMORIES

Resident news

Following on from a story we ran in the last issue, we ask all of our residents to complete ‘goal’ cards, to help us plan our activities schedule. Wellburn House residents John and Pat, who are also husband and wife, mentioned that one of their main goals was to go back to a place that they have very special memories of. St Abbs on the East coast of Scotland, is where they holidayed when they were raising their family. Staff were so touched when listening to their stories, recounting fond memories, they decided to make it happen. They organised the trip and even invited son and granddaughter too. John and Pat had a fantastic time, and it thrills us to be able to make things like this happen for our residents. *CB*

REAL CONNEXIONS

In the community

Children and staff from a variety of local nursery and primary schools have been visiting all fourteen of our homes again, as part of our ongoing partnership with Sensory Connexions. The visits have been part of a series of interactive workshops with our residents. Watching the interaction is proof alone of just how much difference they can make to our residents. It really is magical to see the age gap being bridged with enthusiasm from both sides. It’s often humbling to see the children from such a young age, helping our residents who may not be able to physically get involved with the activities. We have lots more workshops planned over the festive season, and you can follow them on our website and social media channels. *SM*

In Focus

WHAT A GOAL

Wellbeing

Here at Wellburn, we’re always looking for different ways to get our staff and residents, involved in the content we put out across our website and social media. This Christmas, we have something very special planned, and residents and staff have been enthusiastically helping out. We’ve taken the traditional 12 days of Christmas classic, and rewritten it, to reflect life at in our homes over the festive period. Filming short clips, that will be posted starting from the 12th of December, every day leading up to Christmas Eve. The clips are all based around having fun, and together with our residents and staff, we’ve had a lot of fun making them. The hardest part was often trying to keep a straight face long enough to get it all done in one take. The project will culminate in a full length version which we’ll release on Christmas Eve. *CB*

7	8	7	6	2	9	3	5	4	1
1	9	3	4	5	8	6	9	2	7
4	2	7	5	8	9	1	3	6	4
5	3	1	2	4	7	6	8	1	8
1	8	7	6	3	2	4	5	3	6
3	6	8	4	7	9	1	5	2	7
6	2	1	5	8	6	4	3	9	7
9	5	4	2	3	1	8	7	6	1



Pantry

Life

The Pantry offers a delicious Winter recipe, courtesy of the chefs at Apetito



SERVES
4-6 People

MINCEMEAT INGREDIENTS

- 225g Currants
- 225g Raisins
- 225g Sultanas
- 340g Suet or vegetable suet
- 225g Soft dark brown sugar
- 225g Grated bramley apple
- Zest of 1 lemon
- Zest of 2 oranges
- 65g Brandy
- 65g Dark rum
- 225g Glazed cherries (chopped)
- 225g Mixed peel
- 1 Tablespoon of mixed spices

PASTRY INGREDIENTS

- 450g Plain flour
- 225g Butter
- 110g Icing sugar
- 2 Eggs
- Zest of 2 lemons

Delicious festive sweet mince pies

PASTRY METHOD

- Step 1**
Cream the butter and sugar.
- Step 2**
Beat in the eggs and zest.
- Step 3**
Gently fold in the flour.
- Step 4**
Wrap in cling film and chill for 45 mins.

MINCEMEAT METHOD

- Step 1**
Simply mix all of the ingredients together.

MAKING THE PIES

- Step 1**
Line foil mince pie cases with a disk of pastry.
- Step 2**
Fill with mincemeat mixture.
- Step 3**
Place another disc of pastry.

over the mincemeat and pinch together. You can cut festive shapes into the tops if you're feeling creative.

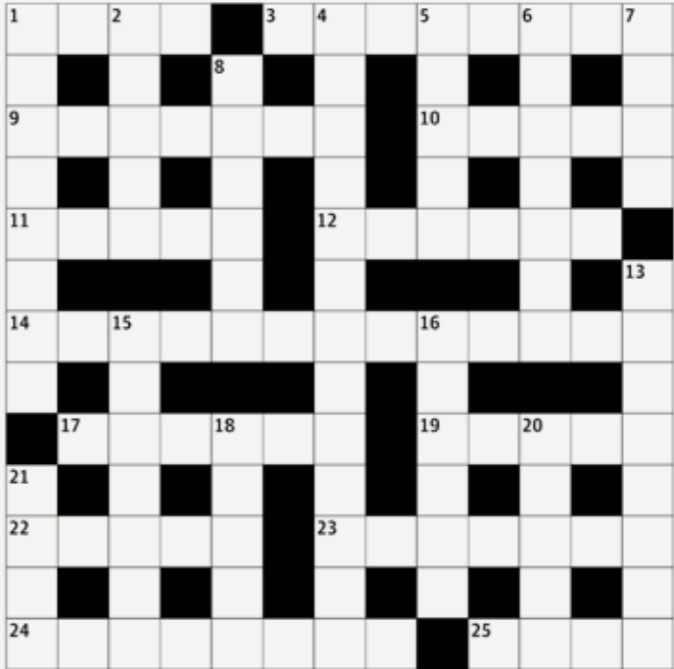
Step 4
Brush the tops with egg wash and sprinkle with caster sugar.

Step 5
Bake in a preheated oven at 170°C for 20 mins, until the pastry is nice and golden.

Mind

Life

Keeping our brain active, has hugely positive impacts on our health and wellbeing.
All answers on page 23.



ACROSS

- 1 Conduit for a fluid (4)
- 3 Stiff (ened) (8)
- 9 One who hesitates fearfully (7)
- 10 Dressing served with food (5)
- 11 Fabric (originally from New York and London) (5)
- 12 Legislative assembly (6)
- 14 Opposition front benchers (6, 7)
- 17 Woody tropical grass (6)
- 19 Royal (5)
- 22 Unsoiled (5)
- 23 Apparent (7)
- 24 So-so (8)
- 25 Male protagonist (4)

DOWN

- 1 Moisture from the air at night — new sides (anag) (8)
- 2 Polite (5)
- 4 Relating to dancing (13)
- 5 Gone up (5)
- 6 Texas city (7)
- 7 Source of venison (4)
- 8 Promptly (6)
- 13 Long dagger (8)
- 15 Finished (2, 2, 3)
- 16 European capital (6)
- 18 Hackneyed (5)
- 20 Birds in a gaggle (5)
- 21 Fraudulent scheme (4)



SUDOKU
Puzzle

Fill the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9. You'll find the solution to this on page 19.

ANAGRAMS

CHRISTMAS	FESTIVE FILM
Miss chatterer	Dab satan
Wolf snakes	Oh ale omen
Yeti dual	His warmest Itch
Totems lie	File is at underflow
Coordinates	She pats explorers
Station pie	Ye local vault
Starfish rematch	Hired ad
Tossing eagerness	Charcoal its arms
Boot gang	Sore cog
Ole ugly	Two stony freshman

Christmas: Christmas tree, Snowflakes, Mistletoe, Decorations, Poinsettia, Father Christmas, Season's greetings, Toboggan, Yule log, Festive Film: Bad Santa, Home alone, White Christmas, It's a wonderful life, The Polar Express, Love actually, Die Hard, Christmas Carol, Scrooge, Frosty the Snowman

Books

Life

Sit back, relax and enjoy a good book this winter. We take a look at four of the best.

All books are available to order online at amazon.co.uk. Also, if you've read a book that you'd like to recommend for the next issue, please let us know. All ways to contact us here at The Post can be found on the page 13.



◀ LESS

by Andrew Sean Greer

Greer's *Less* won this year's Pulitzer Prize For Fiction, and once into the novel, it soon becomes clear why. Fast paced, and utterly endearing from the first to the last page, *Less* follows the life of a failed novelist Arthur Less. The story begins with a wedding invitation from an ex-boyfriend, and things start to unfold for him, when faced with the accept or decline dilemma. Things swiftly descend into a series of hilarious mishaps, misunderstandings, and takes you on a journey that explores the depths of the human heart. You will sob little tears of joy throughout every chapter. MC



▲ MILKMAN

by Anna Burns

Another winner, Burns' *Milkman* claiming this year's much-coveted Man Booker Prize. Set in Ireland in the time of the troubles, this incredibly original piece of work is told through the eyes of a young girl. It's extraordinary, frightening, hilarious and joyous all at the same time. A profound novel that will live long in the memory. MC

▼ THE SEVEN DEATHS OF EVELYN HARDCASTLE

by Stuart Turton

Turton's novel will absolutely blow your mind. The twists and turns in this highly original novel just keep coming and coming. The main character will be killed - again. Murdered hundreds of times, each day, Aiden Bishop is always too late to save her. A groundhog day that will completely absorb you. Surrender and enjoy the ride. MC



▲ A LONG WAY FROM HOME

by Peter Carey

Considered by many to be Australia's greatest living novelist, it's hard to disagree when he creates novels of this class. Carey's *A Long Way From Home*, is a remarkable achievement. A wild, strange magical ride, through the eyes of a married couple, as they embark on a brutal car race around Australia. A startling must read. MC

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