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website is live...

...so get the kettle on, sit back,  
relax and explore. With all the  
information you could need, plus  
more, our new responsive site is  
waiting for you to discover it.

[wellburncare.co.uk](http://wellburncare.co.uk)



*Merry*  
CHRISTMAS  
*and happy*  
NEW YEAR

# The WellburnPost

WELLBURNFRIENDS

Issue 6 • Winter 2016

FREE

*Festive  
special*

## THE CHANGING FACE

*The North East is  
changing, and it's  
never looked better.  
We look into why*

*Merry*  
CHRISTMAS  
*and happy*  
NEW YEAR

### THE HAIRY BIKERS

*A delicious festive  
recipe, from our  
favourite TV chef's*

### STOCKING FILLERS

*Need some inspiration?  
We have just the thing  
in My Basket*

THE MAGAZINE FROM

  
WELLBURN  
CARE HOMES





# ★ wanted ★

## We need your little knitted hats.

Back in 2003 we had an idea. We asked some older people, and some younger people, to knit little woolly hats. We put those hats on our smoothies, and, for each one sold, we made a donation to Age UK.

This year, we're hoping to put more hats on our bottles than ever before. Which is why we need you.



We're calling all knitters, crafters and creators to help us make this year's Big Knit the biggest Big Knit yet.

For more information on how to get involved and plenty of easy-to-follow designs, please visit [www.thebigknit.co.uk](http://www.thebigknit.co.uk)



## WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

### 4 NEWS

As we head into the thick of winter, we take a look around our homes at all the latest goings on.

### 8 WELLBURN FRIENDS

We've been making new friends out and about, with local communities and organisations.

### 9 AGENDA

Our Managing Director offers some insight from the inside, in her regular opinion piece.



### 10 COVER STORY

We explore how the North East has become a hot bed for new, bold, modern architectural projects. And why now, we don't mind it.



### 14 NOW & THEN

We get a unique view of one of our region's most iconic locations

### 16 BOOK CORNER

It's the perfect weather to grab a book and blanket, and get all cosy in front of the fire. We review 3 brilliant books perfect for the job.



### 17 MY BASKET

In our festive edition, we offer up some alternative ideas for this year's stocking fillers.

### 18 LOCAL TALENT

We spotlight the wonderful talent of local photographer, Paul Stevenson.



### 21 HAIRY BIKERS

Our favourite TV Chef's bring us a real festive recipe, with their new regular 'Cooking with' piece.

## EDITOR'S LETTER



Welcome to our winter edition of The Post. Our festive issue is packed with lots of interesting stuff, with news from around our homes, our communities and our region.

We have some stocking filler alternatives for you in our first edition of 'My Basket' (pg17).

As usual, we've reviewed some of our favourite literary offerings, and have three brilliant books for you to get cosy with, in front of the fire. And of course, some brain teasers to keep the cogs turning, all can be found on (pg16).

We also explore the changing landscape of our region. Charting the rise and rise of modern architecture in the region, in our feature 'The changing face' (pg10).

We also welcome TV chef's, the Hairy Bikers to The Post. They bring us a real festive recipe in their first regular piece 'Cooking with' (pg21).

But for now, sit back, relax, and enjoy reading. And remember, if you like what you read, or want to contribute something to the next issue, please get in touch with us.

Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year, from me and all the team here at Wellburn.

Rachel x

SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS OR IDEAS TO: [THEWELLBURNPOST@WELLBURNPCARE.CO.UK](mailto:THEWELLBURNPOST@WELLBURNPCARE.CO.UK)





The Wellburn Post

EDITOR: Rachel Beckett

DEPUTY EDITOR: Lauren Cassidy  
laurencassidy@wellburncare.co.uk

ART DIRECTION: www.studiomikey.co.uk

CONTRIBUTORS: The Hairy Bikers, Helen Lawson, Ian Donaghy, Paul Stevenson, Pete Robinson, Andrea Grant

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ONGOING INVESTMENT Since 2012, we've invested more than £4 million in building work and refurbishment, throughout

our 14 homes. Investment in this area is something we pride ourselves on and is pivotal to our continued success.

4

HARVEST FESTIVAL In the community

Earswick Primary school welcomed residents from Rosevale, along to their harvest festival this year.

Residents and staff made their way across, to enjoy the festivities. The children made everyone feel so welcome and couldn't have been more friendly, polite and engaging.

As one resident, Betty Jessop said, "It's an absolute thrill to see children at their very best. They were all so kind, warm and welcoming. They really made our day."

The festival took place on Thursday 20th October, and lasted the entire afternoon. The residents thoroughly enjoyed watching the children dance and sing. They sang a range of songs they'd been rehearsing, for weeks.

They then went on to share Harvest themed stories and finished off the festival with a respectful prayer. All in all, a fantastic day out, and the children and staff at Earswick said we were welcome back any time we'd like to. Brilliant. LC



A SIMPLY MAGIC TIME Entertainment

Entertainer and magician, Josh Benson has been making some spectacular visits to our homes. He performed at Nightingale Hall, for their Halloween Party. Our home in Grimston Court was also treated to some magic, and Josh was also on the bill, for our grand open night at Wellburn House. Residents and staff across all three homes, were left speechless after his routine, with the word 'how' being used a lot. He is currently performing in Gary Barlow's West End show, 'The Girls' and we wish him all the success he deserves. LC



FEELING THE CHILL Maintenance

At Wellburn, we know how much joy the festive season can bring to our residents, but we always spare a thought for our team of gardeners.

The winter weather brings an annual challenge to our award winning gardens, and it's a busy time of the year for our team of gardeners to prepare to handle whatever the weather throws at them.

"The first thing we look at is winter planting," says gardener Lee Brown, who is responsible for four of our homes. "It's a major operation as it's important for the gardens to look as good - if not better - in the winter than in the summer. We want

to see nice colours and a wide range of seasonal plants, like primulas, holly and ivy." But it's not only the planting that we have to think about. The North-East is prone to some of England's harshest winter weather and it takes military-like operation and a lot of planning to be ready for it. "We've had to get a JCB digger in previous years to clear the snow, so it can get pretty hard core if there's really bad snow. But we have years of experience across our dedicated team of gardeners, so we have all eventualities covered."

So, while we plan our festive entertainment for our residents, all cosy and warm indoors, we always spare a thought for our gardeners. Our own heroes of winter. LC

5



INVESTMENT IN STAFF We're proud of our dedicated team and recognise the importance of job satisfaction.

We constantly invest in specialist training, to make sure our staff are happy and able to provide care that's second to none.



THE SEASON OF GOODWILL Wellbeing

According to Age UK, an estimated 200,000 elderly people in Britain, have not had a conversation with friends or family for a month. A shocking statistic, and the Christmas period can be a particularly hard time for older people, who may not have friends or family around.

The TV will be splashed with Christmas adverts, portraying a wonderful time, surrounded by close family and loved ones. Not everyone will be as fortunate this Christmas.

Charities, such as Age UK and Contact the Elderly, work towards combatting loneliness in the elderly, by offering befriending services, tea parties with other local people and friendship centres.

Many local churches and smaller charities run similar services, which can be found easily online or by contacting your local council.

Here at Wellburn, we have our own initiatives to help the most vulnerable. For example, this year many of our homes have invited local elderly



people, who would otherwise be home alone, to join them for Christmas lunch. It gives them an opportunity to enjoy the day, surrounded by caring staff and welcoming residents.

We can all make a difference to someone who deserves it this year. Charities such as Age UK do a remarkable job, but we all, as individuals have the power to make a difference. This Christmas, let's all reach out and help the most needed. LC



TRICK OR 'JUST LOTS OF' TREATS? Halloween fun at Eighton Lodge

Once again, the team at our Eighton Lodge home show that they take their job very seriously, but not themselves, as they threw themselves into the Halloween spirit.

The make-up was applied and costumes adorned, ensuring that things went all a little bit spooky for residents, staff and visiting family and friends. The lounge was alive with halloween themed dancing and music, with everyone getting involved and feeling part of the fun. Generations danced together in circles, with grandchildren, staff and residents singing along. There was lots of laughing and happy spooky faces, and the smiles grew even wider when lashings of hot witch's brew broth was served with hot dogs. The lounge was alive with joy and togetherness.

As the sun set, everyone enjoyed an evening fireworks display in the gardens. And who said Halloween is just for kids... ID

CHARITY BEGINS, IN OUR HOMES Fundraising for Children In Need

This year, like every year, all of our homes played their part in raising money, for the brilliant charity Children In Need. We had indoor Olympics, involving staff, residents and families all taking part in a number of events. One of our resident's grandsons, completed a sponsored swim, and Riverhead Hall's home manager, Martin Yeates, even took part in a sponsored shave, losing his hair and his beloved beard, all for a good cause.

We've had fancy dress events, bad hair days, singalongs and cake stalls. The effort our homes went to, is incredible and we're extremely proud of every single person that helped out. RB

HOME FARM HOME Animal visits

We had some smelly, but rather adorable guests at Rosevale for the day recently. They were visited by the Purple Pig Company. A mobile farm, that brings animals to the people. They brought cows, goats, pigs and a very large fluffy rabbit. Some of the children visiting were able to feed the animals, and along with the residents handle some of them too. Mobile pens were set up in the garden, so the animals could relax. Such a lovely afternoon! The residents always enjoy their visits and are already looking forward to their next visit. LC

IN FOCUS



A HAIRY ADDITION Contributors

When we launched our first issue, we started off with minimal content and pretty much generated every bit of it ourselves. But since those small beginnings, we're now onto issue 6 and we've had some fantastic contributions.

From BBC TV Directors, to Match Of The Day commentators. We're now super excited to welcome on board our favourite tv chef's, The Hairy Bikers.

In our regular 'Cooking with the Hairy Bikers' feature, we'll be bringing some of their favourite dishes to you every issue.

With the recipe and instructions, you'll be able to follow their lead and create their dishes for yourself.

A heartfelt thank you to the Hairy Bikers (aka Si King and Dave Myers), for agreeing to contribute.

They're a favourite amongst our residents and we're sure, most of you readers too. Turn to page 21, to discover their very first 'cooking with' recipe. MC



SEND YOUR NEWS STORIES TO: THEWELLBURNPOST@WELLBURNCARE.CO.UK





## ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

We invest over £200,000 a year on social activities and events, across all of our homes. Ranging

from bingo nights to summer fairs. We actively encourage family members and the local community to get involved too.

# IN SHORT



## ILLUMINATING NIGHT

*Out and about*

Residents from both our St George's and Glenholme House Homes, have enjoyed a night out, to see this year's Sunderland illuminations at Roker. This year's illuminations were pirate themed and all our residents had a brilliant time on their visit. And with Glenholme House in such close proximity, some of the residents have been again and again. The illuminations are a long standing tradition for Sunderland, and one we hope will continue for many years. LC



## SHOWING OFF

*School visit*

Wellburn House, recently enjoyed a visit from the children of Ovingham First School. They came and fearlessly put on a superb singing performance, that was pitch perfect. Both the residents and children all had such a lovely time. We enjoy a very special relationship with Ovingham First School, and their pupils are a real credit to the teachers and staff. LC

## TWO REASONS TO BE PROUD

*Charity donation*

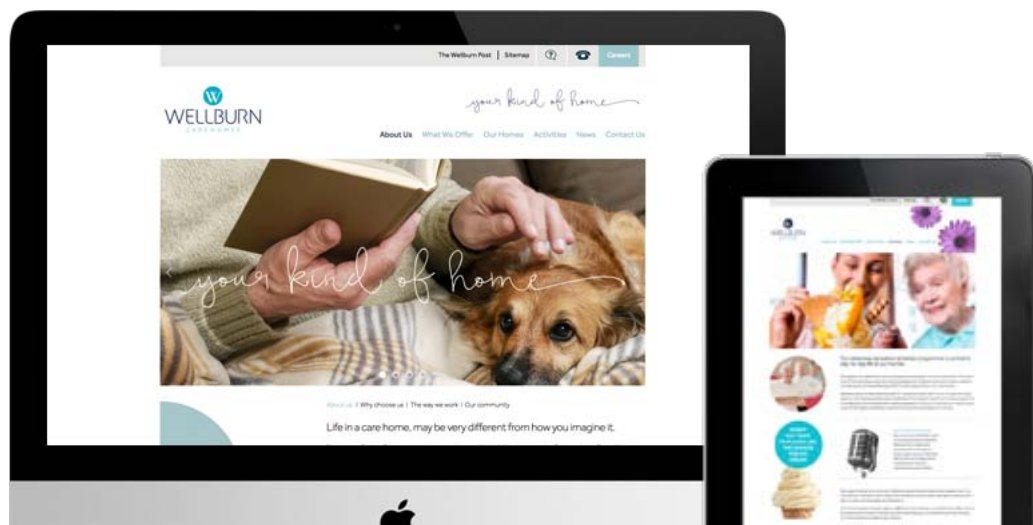
In our last issue, we brought you pics and news from The Forever Young festival. Organised to raise money for two very special charities. The day long festival was a huge success, with a fantastic turnout, and we managed to raise a whopping £3000. The two chosen charities were St Leonard's Hospice in York and Age UK York. The money was split equally between the two. Managing Director Rachel Beckett recently visited St Leonard's to present them with their cheque. LC



## NEXT STATION, CREATIVITY

*Creative classes*

Creation Station have been holding creative classes for our residents at Riverhead Hall, in Driffeld. They run creative classes for both children and adults. Their sessions aren't so much about learning how to paint, model or collage, but simply more about encouraging people to develop their own ideas and running with them. The classes proved so successful with our residents, that we've invested in new art equipment to carry on the good work they started. RB



## A NEW EXCITING LOOK

[www.wellburncare.co.uk](http://www.wellburncare.co.uk)

Last summer marked an important time for us here at Wellburn. New incoming Managing Director, Rachel Beckett decided to overhaul the company's brand. The rebranding programme has been steadily and carefully rolled out across all corners of the business, and continues. Central to Rachel's new vision, was the website.

"The website we had when I came into the business was ok", says Rachel. "But ok wasn't good enough. The journey was confusing and as someone new to the business and industry, I just felt it could be so much better."

London based creative Mikey, who has been responsible for the rebranding programme, started planning out the new site with Rachel in Spring of this year. Drafting in UX (user experience) expert, Neal Bryant, was important. "I didn't want it to just look pretty. I wanted something much more sophisticated". explains Rachel. "To understand what our users want when they visit our website, and how they would like to navigate through, was something that really interested me, and Neal just got it, straight away".

The new fully responsive website launched in November. "We now have a website that works for us and our users. I'm just super excited to see how it's received." says Rachel. LC



## RESIDENTS FUND

We have many initiatives throughout the year, to raise money for our resident's

fund. Our not for profit tote bags, for example, are available to purchase from all our Homes. Every penny raised is used to enrich the lives of our residents.

## REMEMBERING IN STYLE

*Remembrance tribute*

Across all of our homes, we've been paying a respectful remembrance to our fallen heroes, in many different ways. The residents and staff at Ryton Towers, put together the most beautiful and touching remembrance display in the home.

Using two mannequins as a base, they dressed one in full RAF uniform and the other in a dress.

A dress with a difference though. Formed purely out of poppies, which were individually made, with the help of the residents and staff members.

The idea was the brainchild of both Joanne Stewart, our activity co-ordinator at Ryton Towers and our home manager Donna McKenna.

The final work was displayed in the main entrance, so that every visitor would get the chance to see it. A massive well done everyone at Ryton Towers and to all involved in the projects across all of our homes. They all did a fantastic job in marking such an important day, with respect expressed in their own individual ways. LC



## HAT'S AMAZING

*Charity campaign*

Staff and residents at all of our homes are taking part this winter, in Innocent drinks 'Big Knit' 2017 campaign.

The Big Knit campaign has been running since 2003 and has raised a whopping £1.7 million for Age UK. Equally important, it has helped raise awareness of the fantastic work Age UK do.

As many as 25,000 older people's lives are at risk during the winter months, which led Innocent to come up with this very simple, but very clever campaign. The basic idea is to make little knitted hats for innocent smoothie bottles, and for every one sold 25p goes to Age UK.

We'll be doing a bit and sending our collection of small woolly hats off in January, and of course we'll be sharing some of the best in our next issue. In the meantime, why not get involved in the campaign yourself. For more information and how to get involved, visit [www.thebigknit.co.uk](http://www.thebigknit.co.uk) LC

## A DAY OUT IN DURHAM

*Out and about*

We have an extensive activities programme running across all of our homes, and residents from Ryton Towers, enjoyed our latest day trip.

After setting off bright and early, they visited the beautiful city of Durham for the day, with the Cathedral as the first stop. As well as exploring the Cathedral, they all took a moment of reflection. Lighting candles in remembrance of loved ones, who are no longer with us.

After soaking in the magnificence of the building, they followed it up with a good old fashioned pub lunch. The chat was lively and an opportunity to recall memories of Durham. LC

## DECK THE HALLS, AGAIN

*Seasonal activities*

Last year we introduced our very first 'Deck the Halls' competition, across all of our homes. With each home being asked to festively decorate their home, with the best entrants winning a range of prizes. The competition proved such a success with residents and staff, we've decided to hold the competition again. So this year, naturally, we're hoping for even bigger and better entries, and we can't wait to see what our homes have in store. Of course there can only be one overall winner, but which home will it be this year? RB

# IN FOCUS



## IN WITH THE NEW

*Refurbishment*

In our last issue we covered news of our refurbishment programme.

Superb progress is being made on both and the results are looking fantastic, with rave reviews from our residents and visitors.

Phases one and two have now been completed at Wellburn House, which includes the main entrance, main lounge, dining room and bathroom. Next on the list is the office and main ground floor hallway.



Work at Eighton Lodge is a little further forward, with phase one, two and three completed. This includes the main entrance, hallway and dining room, as well as adding two new bedrooms and a small office space.

Next up is a complete refurbishment of the two main lounges and main office. All work is part of our ongoing refurbishment programme, with more work planned across our other homes in the new year. RB





## MAKING FRIENDS

— In our community

*We've been out and about with our Wellburn friends, working together with our local communities. Here's just the pick of what's been going on....*

### A CENTRE FOR LIFE

*Teams Community Centre*

Eighton Lodge are regulars for dance afternoons at the fantastic, Teams Community Centre.

The centre, run by Trevor Coulson, has a life of its own, from the moment you walk into the place. Trevor and his dedicated team, embody everything that represents community spirit.

It's all things to all men, and women of course. Wearing multiple hats throughout the week. One minute, it's a drop in café, the next, it's a sanctuary for the lonely, to a meeting place for walking groups. In short, it's a wonderful venue that brings older people together to sing, dance or simply to be together.

"We are all about the community. To make things better," Trevor says. "We are passionate about making a difference on our doorstep."

The centre boasts a remarkable team of 15 dedicated volunteers. As Trevor said "They are part of the centre and the centre has become part of them." There's no greater heartwarming



example of community, than when you see people giving up their valuable time, for free, to help out people around them.

Community buildings are bricks and mortar, but the people are what make a place special. We see on our visits, the way Trevor and his team, respect, listen and act upon the needs of the local community. Whether single mothers, people living with mental health problems, disabled or people with learning disabilities, the Teams Centre will do everything it can to support them.

Many centres have the word 'community' on the sign outside. At Teams 'community' is written through it like a stick of blackpool rock. ID



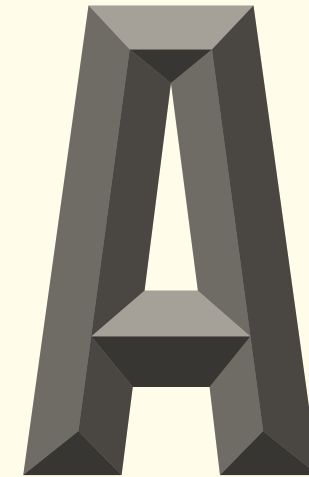
### LET'S DANCE

*Wellbeing*

**Care to Dance** is Dance City's major new initiative, run in partnership with Equal Arts. Its aim is to bring dance to senior people, and in particular, older people in care homes, around the North East. The project goal is as simple as it is admirable. To just get older people moving and dancing. The project was piloted two years ago and the results were spectacular. The sessions have proven to improve motor functions, co-ordination, mobility, balance, mental wellbeing and overall happiness, as well as encouraging the residents to socialise.

We've been really proud to get involved in the programme, and the brilliant team at Dance City, have been delivering movement sessions at our Craghall home. Both the residents and care staff have thoroughly enjoyed and benefitted from the sessions. The response has been overwhelmingly positive. We'll be working to develop our relationship with Dance City in the coming months and hope to introduce the initiative to more of our residents in our other homes.

Dance City is the leading dance organisation in the North East, ([www.dancecity.co.uk](http://www.dancecity.co.uk)) Equal Arts is a leading creative ageing charity, supporting older people and those living with Dementia across the UK. ([www.equalarts.org.uk](http://www.equalarts.org.uk)) LC



## "OUR COMPETITOR'S EXCELLENCE AND SUCCESS, SHOULD BE CELEBRATED, NOT FEARED"

Fast forward 18 months and the answer unequivocally, is yes. Things are going well. There's much work to be done, both the company and staff, are going through a sea change. But they're reacting to the challenges I'm setting admirably.

One of the first things I noticed when I moved up to the North East, was that there seemed to be a culture, within our company and others across the sector too, of an inherent fear of competition. Again, another one of those life and career overlaps occurred. For years, I was schooled to appreciate and embrace competition. To admire those that were successful.

In an industry where the primary objective is to provide first class service to the elderly and sometimes vulnerable, surely it makes sense to have as many companies as possible doing it well. So, a shift in culture is taking place at Wellburn. We're open and honest about where we are.

There's a lot of work ahead of us, and things we will do better and better as time goes on. I want to go from doing things well, to doing things with excellence. But the encouraging thing is that the ship is heading in the right direction. Residents and staff are noticing differences.

From refurbishment programmes, to extra investment in specialist dementia care and understanding. We're introducing new practices and a new culture.

And I'll be using this page in future issues to talk open and honestly about the industry, and the challenges we face in it, as we continue to implement change.

Having been appointed the new Managing Director a little over a year ago, replacing my father who retired, to some, I will appear to be new to the care home sector. In truth, although on the face of it I am, having grown up as a child and having watched my father build up Wellburn from scratch, it became obvious to me very quickly, that it was in my blood.

After being born and raised in the North East, I moved to London when I was 19 years old, to study textiles at the fashionable London College of Print. I then went on to enjoy a long successful career as an interior designer in London, working with clients all over the world.

A world away from my fathers business and certainly a world away from the North East. But was it really?

It's not until you mature and become more reflective that you realise certain aspects of your personal and working life have a funny way of overlapping. For example, one of my main attributes, that had served me so well with my clients in the interior design industry was my relationships with them, my ability to connect to the person, rather than to the account or the balance sheets.

Undoubtedly, now, reflecting back, that empathy and understanding was educated into me from a very early age. Unlike most children, who would spend a lot of their spare time playing in parks or outside with friends, I would often be found following my father as he made his regular visits to his care homes.

Watching him interact with staff and residents, getting the best out of both and raising spirits was his niche. He would instil in me the need for compassion. It was never about the bottom line for him. It was about making a real, tangeable difference to people who deserved it.

So, when at the age of 42 my father asked me to take over the reigns of a company he'd spent his whole life building and nurturing, I wondered if it was a challenge I wanted.



## AGENDA

*Wellburn's Managing Director Rachel Beckett, offers her views, from the inside.*





*As we enter a New Year, with yet more planned new buildings, we explore how the **North East** has become a hot bed for new, bold, architectural projects.*

Once perceived as the forgotten region, with its neglected seaside towns and mining villages, the North East is enjoying a renaissance. And it's in large part, due to a very unlikely source. Architecture.

The furore that surrounded the unveiling of the Angel of the North, seems a lifetime away now. But the polarising opinions the Anthony Gormley sculpture created in 1998, paved the way for the North East, as a region to soften its stance on cultural change.

North East Architecture had long been rooted in past glory. Ranging from the Georgian landscape of Newcastle City Centre, to the Medieval offerings at York.

Beautiful places, but the Angel of the North offered something new. Something different. It was derided by a large percentage of people, some calling it ugly, some going as far as to say it was a regional embarrassment.

However, it has since been considered to be a landmark for the North East and is now firmly established in the regions affections, often used in film and television to iconically represent the area.

Perhaps the lesson learnt, was that new cultural landmarks, whether that be in Angelic form or a functional building space, could bring real tangible benefits to the region.

The Sage in Gateshead opened a few years later in 2004, and almost single handedly transformed an entire City. Designed by the famous London Architect, Norman Foster, the Sage seemed to open the floodgates to a

cultural acceptance that new, bold and challenging architecture was not only acceptable, but valuable.

Looking back at images of that particular area, before the huge development, is startling. The Baltic Gallery, rejuvenating the same stretch of riverbank, not only challenged opinion architecturally, but provided a world class venue for modern art. The snowball effect was now in full swing. Ironically, the much derided Angel of the North creator, Gormley, went on to exhibit his work in the Baltic, to record visitors.

It seemed the North East's love affair for modern architecture was blossoming into a special relationship. To follow, would be a sustained burst of creative projects and national recognition, as the architectural world started to pay attention. ➡

# THE CHANGING FACE



**Top:** Gateshead Sage casts an imposing figure on the banks of the River Tyne. **Far right:** The Baltic has become a global name in modern art **Right:** Anthony Gormley's The Angel of the North







Projects such as the National Glass Centre in Sunderland, suddenly put that area on the map too. And more would subsequently follow. Spreading across the North East, the change in attitude was like a breath of fresh air. Resistance to modern architectural projects waned and the benefits to championing new projects was there for all to see.

Recent projects have drawn unanimous praise from RIBA, (Royal Institute of British Architects).

Ted Cullinan's designed, Maggie's Centre at Newcastle's Freeman Hospital recently picked up multiple awards.

The idea behind the specialist cancer care centre, was to create a beautiful, calming space in which people affected by the illness could find support and consolation.

Modern architectural spaces, often go beyond simple aesthetics. "the spirit of the thing infected the builders. They wanted to be involved." Cullinan explains. "Maggie's, as an institution and as a building, involves people and that involvement is of priceless value".

So, it's not always about grandeur, big statements. A balancing act, the North East as a region seems to have solved. Peter Buchan, chair of RIBA in the North

**"OFTEN, EXCELLENCE CAN BE FOUND IN THE PASSIONATE EXECUTION OF THE MODEST AND THE DAY TO DAY, IN WAYS WHICH TOUCH UPON AND ENHANCE THE LIVES OF MANY"**

East, explains. "For half a century RIBA awards have provided a benchmark for excellence in architecture.

"Sometimes this excellence is demonstrated in big landmark buildings, but often it is in the passionate execution of the modest and the day to day, in ways which touch upon and enhance the lives of many. This year's North East Regional awards are no exception, as can be seen from the variety and quality of our winning buildings."

There's no doubt that the influx of modern architectural projects throughout the North East is improving the landscape, but well thought out projects, such as the new library and community sports facility, in Hebburn,

South Tyneside, can make a fundamental difference to an area. The library marks the first phase of an ambitious regeneration project led by South Tyneside Council. An initiative that puts education, recreation and community at the heart of the project.

The result is multiple pockets of projects popping up throughout our region. Curious additions to a once ailing area. Some big, bold and ambitious, some smaller, more modest projects. All have one thing in common. Every one of these buildings adds to the fabric of a new, burgeoning region. They're a celebration of the new. And with a New Year upon us, let's hope 2017 brings us more modern architectural surprises. ■



**Top left:** Maggie's cancer support centre, at Newcastle's Freeman Hospital. **Above:** The new Hebburn library and community sports centre, in South Tyneside **Left:** Sunderland's National Glass Centre

## DAYTRIPPING

Day trips are a vital part of our residents activities and we try to get out and about as much as possible. We've already enjoyed days out to the National Glass Centre in Sunderland and the Sage Gateshead.

We're planning on adding some of the other locations in this feature to our calendar. Our residents are always interested in discovering new things, so it looks like it'll be next stop, Modern Architecture!



# NOW & THEN

A unique look at one of the regions most iconic locations.

Newcastle's Central Station as you've never seen it before. Thanks to North East photographer Pete Robinson's 'Time Travel' collection, we get to see some amazing now and then pics.

To see more of his 'time travel' collection, or to buy limited edition prints, visit his website:

[www.eyeofthetynephotography.co.uk](http://www.eyeofthetynephotography.co.uk)

SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS OR IDEAS TO: [THEWELLBURNPOST@WELLBURN.CARE.CO.UK](mailto:THEWELLBURNPOST@WELLBURN.CARE.CO.UK)



# Readers CORNER

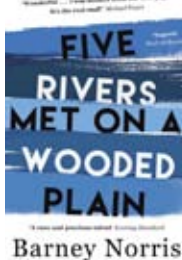
Sit back, take a quiet moment and discover what your next jolly good read could be, or why not try one of our brain teasers.



## HOW TO BE A PUBLIC AUTHOR by Paul Ewen

★★★★★

If there's been a recent novel as rip roaringly hilarious, outrageous and chaotic Paul Ewen's offering, then it's one of the best kept secret's. This novel is nothing short of brilliant. Francis Plug, is a troubled and often drunk misfit, who causes chaos and confusion wherever he goes. And where he most likes to go is to real author events. A brilliant slapstick comedy, blurring fact, fiction, and absurdity to astonishing effect. A must read. MC



## FIVE RIVERS MET ON A WOODED PLAIN by Barney Norris

★★★★★

This book will have you hooked from the first page. A novel from one of the most exciting young writers out there. Norris, still in

his mid-twenties, has completed a novel, as accomplished as if he'd been writing for years. This epic story follows on from a car crash, which causes five lives to collide. Throwing them into a web of love, grief, disenchantment and hope. A truly remarkable novel. MC



## THE DISAPPEARANCE OF SIGNORA GIULIA by Piero Chiara

★★★★★

In terms of the genre. Crime mystery is owned by the likes of Agatha Christie and P.D. James. However, this novel by Chiara is a credible addition. A hugely enjoyable novel, bordering on short story. Set in Milan, Signora Giulia takes the train every week, to visit her daughter. Suddenly, she disappears. The case becomes more tangled and darker the more you read. And you'll want to... MC

## Interested?

All books are available to order online at [Amazon.co.uk](http://Amazon.co.uk). If you've read a book that you'd like to recommend for book corner, please let us know: [thewellburnpost@wellburncare.co.uk](mailto:thewellburnpost@wellburncare.co.uk)

16

Crossword  
and Sudoku  
answers  
on page 4

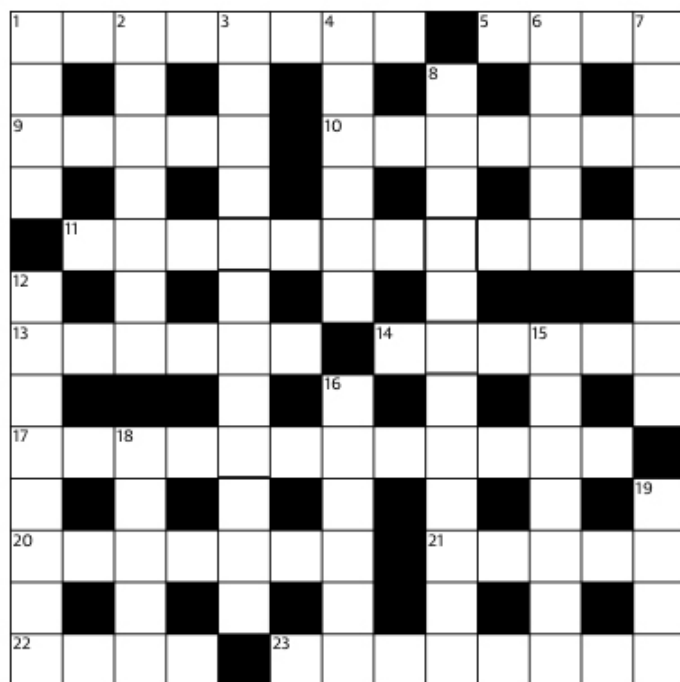
# CROSSWORD

## ACROSS

- 1 Sumptuous and spacious (8)
- 5 Informal body of friends (4)
- 9 Professorship (5)
- 10 Limb of a seal (7)
- 11 Heard very distinctly (5,2,1,4)
- 13 High regard (6)
- 14 Succulent plant of arid regions (6)
- 17 Not enough (12)
- 20 Fashion show platform (7)
- 21 Turbulent emotional episode (5)
- 22 Greek god of love (4)
- 23 Protector (8)

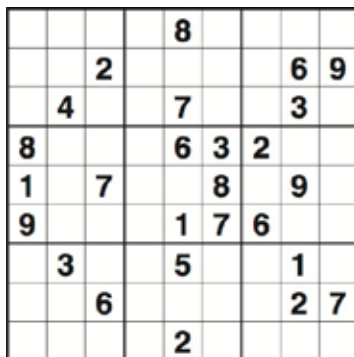
## DOWN

- 1 Brownish-purple (4)
- 2 Circular — flat eel (anag) (7)
- 3 Pretend not to have heard (4,1,4,3)
- 4 Breach of the peace (6)
- 6 Copious (5)
- 7 Lacking initiative (informal) (8)
- 8 In very good health (3,2,1,6)
- 12 Commonplace (8)
- 15 Manx parliament (7)
- 16 Reaping hook (6)
- 18 Argument (3-2)
- 19 Wild animal's den (4)



# SUDOKU

Keeping your brain active, has all sorts of positive impact on your health and wellbeing. Try our crossword or why not give our Sudoku puzzle a try. Answers to both puzzles on page 4



17



## £9.95 Chocolate Brussels Sprouts Quirky Gift Library

Brussels sprouts are the Christmas vegetable we love to hate. These super-realistic chocolate sprouts are made entirely from chocolate, so we can finally say we've eaten all of our sprouts. Woohoo!  
available at: [www.notonthehighstreet.com](http://www.notonthehighstreet.com)

## £5.00 Batman egg cup and toast cutter The Great Gift Company

For Super Heroes of all ages. Start the day off, the way all Caped Crusaders should - with an egg and Batman Logo shaped pieces of toast!  
available at:  
[www.thegreatgiftcompany.co.uk](http://www.thegreatgiftcompany.co.uk)



## £12.99 Twelve Days of Christmas book V&A Museum shop

This well-loved traditional Christmas carol has been charmingly illustrated by Liz Catchpole, drawing on works by William Morris in the V&A collections.  
available at: [www.vam.ac.uk/shop](http://www.vam.ac.uk/shop)

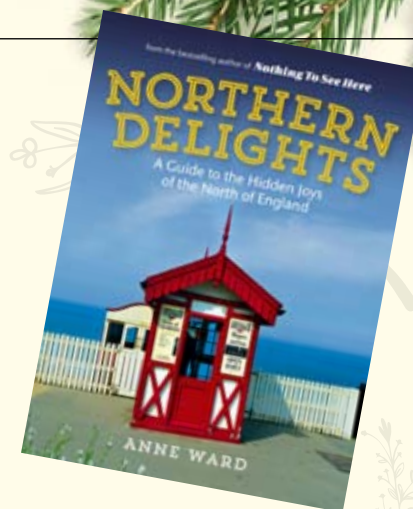


## £2.99 Have a proper lush Christmas Hanny Geordie Gifts

Handmade Geordie Christmas cards, with lot's of Geordie themed seasonal messages. A lighthearted alternative to your regular card.  
available at: [www.geordiegifts.co.uk](http://www.geordiegifts.co.uk)

# MY BASKET Festive special

THE BEST OF GIFTING Nº1  
Things we've seen out and about,  
that might give you stocking  
filler ideas



## £6.99 Northern Delights by Anne Ward The Baltic

For the person who feels they know everywhere they need to know in the North and have visited everywhere where they need to visit, it could be time to spring this little guide on them. The book by Anne Ward is full of curious places not on the main tourist path, but each fascinating and special in their own way.  
available at: [www.shop.balticmill.com](http://www.shop.balticmill.com)



## £30.00 Limited Edition Cycling Prints Hitting The Wall

These limited edition, hand numbered, cycling prints are the perfect gift for fans of cycling. With a whole collection of different prints to choose from, there's something for everyone.  
available at: [www.hittingthewall.co.uk](http://www.hittingthewall.co.uk)



The collection:

- 01 Self portrait
- 02 Lindisfarne Castle, in Northumberland
- 03 Tree's in Ancroft Village, Northumberland
- 04 Fisherman's Bothy, next to the Tweed, Northumberland
- 05 Portrait of Paul's son, Harvey
- 06 Alone. Pier at Berwick upon Tweed, Northumberland.



01 02

# LOCAL TALENT

## PAUL STEVENSON

*Photographer*

### Preface

Paul Stevenson is an award-winning photographer from Northumberland. At the age of 46 Paul developed late onset, full-blown Tourette's syndrome. Due to his severe tics, Paul found it difficult to leave the house. For Paul, photography is a means of expressing his creativity and provides important respite from Tourette's.

Photography was a hobby Paul picked up after he was diagnosed with Tourette's syndrome. It was his wife Carol who suggested he take up the hobby and he now spends his time capturing beautiful images, ranging from the Northumberland landscape, to wildlife and pictures of his children.

Father of four children, Paul left school with no qualifications and his previous jobs include, gardener, nightclub doorman and window cleaner.

It was his wife Carol, who was to change his world though. After being diagnosed with Tourette's, Carol, who works in special educational needs at a local school, suggested to Paul he should take up photography, as a way of getting him out of the house and building his confidence.

Paul explains how photography helps, "I get so much pleasure from taking photographs. When I walk outside with a camera, it really helps with my anxiety."

Paul has hosted several exhibitions of his work in Berwick. He's also had success in competitions, winning the North East heat of the Sony World Photography Awards, and coming second in the UK event. As a result, his work formed part of an exhibition in London. He's also won a competition run by a national newspaper, while a shot of his son earned him first place in a competition organised by an American magazine.

He's always keen to help fellow sufferers, who he meets at regular support group meetings, and runs a photography workshop for people with the condition.

Paul works hard to raise awareness of the condition, even seeking to educate those who laugh at him on the street. He regularly gives talks on Tourette's, and his overarching message, is that it doesn't have to rule your life.

When you look at Paul's work, and hear his story, you can't help but admire, not only his talent, but his bravery. An inspiration.



03



04



05 06





When did you first notice your talent for singing? Is music in your family?

I started singing when I was 5. I loved singing and dancing in the living room to my mum's records. I don't think I felt I had a talent for it, I just knew I really enjoyed it.

Who were your musical idols growing up?

Growing up, my idol was Whitney Houston and then later on, Mariah Carey.

What was your first big break?

I signed my first record deal at the age of 19, with BMG. They're a massive label, so I was unbelievably excited and felt very proud.

What are the best things about singing on Strictly?

It's hard work but I love it. I try not to think too much about the millions of people watching. When I get home after a show, I have to watch it straight away on catch up to see how it went.

On Strictly you cover a huge variety of musical styles. What have been your favourite tunes to sing?

I love singing the big ballads. Some are easier to sing than others. As much as I love Whitney, I'd love to drop all the keys of her songs to make them easier to sing but Dave Arch rarely makes things easy. My favourite tune to sing this series has been 'Run to you' from the Bodyguard.

You have performed with many great names around the world. Have you ever been starstruck?

I was really starstruck when I worked with James Brown. He was such a legend.

Who have you sung backing vocals for?

I have been fortunate enough to have worked with some amazing artists. Robbie Williams, James Brown, Lisa Stansfield, Tony Hadley, Will Young and many more. This week, I'm working with Take That, Rick Astley and Olly Murs for a Children in Need show at the Royal Albert Hall.



Wellburn catch up with BBC's Strictly Come Dancing, singer **Andrea Grant**

“SINGING BACKING VOCALS FOR ARETHA FRANKLIN, ALICIA KEYS AND STEVIE WONDER, WAS PRETTY AMAZING”

What does the timetable look like for a singer on Strictly?

Strictly takes up 6 months of the year for me. It starts properly at the end of September.

We usually start learning a batch of songs on a Monday at home on our own, once we know who is singing which lead vocals. Tommy Blaize and Dave Arch are responsible for allocating, which singer, sings which songs.

On Friday evening we have a three hour band rehearsal, with just the rhythm section

of the band. On Saturday it's a 15 hour day for us. We're usually singing on the stand by 8am. By the time we get to the live shows, we would normally have rehearsed each song about 6 times.

Last week, I was singing I Will Always Love You, by Whitney, at 8am which isn't easy to do. After the live show we pre-record the results show which goes out on the Sunday.

The series lasts for 14 weeks, and once the series finishes, just before Christmas, we have the whole of the Christmas holidays off, before we start rehearsing for the Strictly Tour.

We rehearse a few days into the new year then the tour lasts for 6 weeks. There are 9 shows a week and only three days off on the whole tour. By February I'm exhausted and ready for a well earned rest.

What do you miss about home when you're on tour?

I miss my own bed. No matter how lavish the hotel, living out of a suitcase is overrated.

What do you do to take care of your voice?

I take vitamins, try to drink lots of water, ginger shots in the morning and if I'm ill, honey lemon and ginger tea.

What is your favourite gig you've played?

I was once in the house band for a show for Nelson Mandela in New York Radio City Hall. I sang backing vocals for Aretha Franklin, Gloria Gaynor, Alicia Keys, Stevie Wonder and a whole host of South African acts. It was amazing. I loved every second.

What hobbies do you have outside of music?

I love a good boxset and I love my soaps. I've been bitten by the running bug, so regularly hit the road.

Do you have any ambitions still on your to do list?

I'd love to carry on doing what I'm doing. I have a solo album to finish in the new year and hopefully do some gigs in my own right, singing songs from my album.

Cooking with THE HAIRY BIKERS



INGREDIENTS

PASTRY

- 450g plain flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 60g cold butter, cut into cubes
- 60g cold lard, cut into cubes
- Cranberry topping
- 500g fresh cranberries
- 250g kumquats, sliced thinly
- 250g caster sugar
- 6 allspice berries
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 3 tbsp port
- 2 gelatine leaves

FILLING

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 leek, chopped
- 2 small sticks of celery, chopped
- 1 dsrtsp flour
- 100ml chicken stock
- 350g cooked gammon, cut into chunks
- 500g cooked turkey, dark and light meat, in large pieces
- 3 tbsp double cream
- 1½ tsp English mustard powder
- good handful of curly parsley, chopped
- black pepper and sea salt to taste



12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

This delicious recipe, appears in the Hairy Bikers festive cookbook, 12 Days of Christmas.

It's available now in all good book shops. If you'd like to know more about the Hairy Bikers visit [www.hairybikers.com](http://www.hairybikers.com)



Festive special

COLD TURKEY AND HAM PIE WITH A CRANBERRY TOPPING SERVES 4-6

We use a 23cm spring form cake tin for this pie and it works really well. This is a well-packed solid pie for eating cold with some salad and crisps.

METHOD

First make the pastry. Put the flour in a food processor with the baking powder and salt. Add the butter and lard and blitz to crumbs. Add about 140ml of water a little at a time and process until a ball of pastry forms. Wrap the pastry in clingfilm and chill in the fridge.

Next make the cranberry topping. Bring 150ml of water to the boil. Add the cranberries and kumquats and simmer for 10 minutes until they have broken down. Add the sugar, allspice and the cinnamon stick. Stir until the sugar has dissolved and simmer for a further 10 minutes. Add the port and bring back to the boil for a couple of minutes, then remove from the heat. Place the gelatine in a bowl of cold water for about 3 minutes to swell and soften. Drain and stir the softened gelatine into the cranberry sauce. Leave to cool then place in the fridge to set.

Next bake the pastry case blind. Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas 3. Line a 23cm springform cake tin with silicone baking paper. Roll the pastry out and line the tin, leaving the pastry hanging over the edge for trimming later. Cover the pastry with a piece of baking parchment, and fill with baking

beans. Bake in the preheated oven for 15–20 minutes until cooked, then remove the beans and paper and trim the pastry neatly. Set the pastry case aside to cool.

Now make the filling. Put the olive oil and butter in a large frying pan, add the onion, leek and celery and sweat for about 5 minutes. Stir in the flour, add the stock and cook until thickened. Add the cream, mustard powder and parsley, then fold in the ham and turkey. Season to taste – use lots of pepper but go carefully with the salt, as your gammon may be salty. Pack the filling into the pastry case and return to the oven for 15 minutes at 170°C/ Gas 3 for the flavours to bake together. Remove and leave to cool for a while, then spread on the cranberry topping. The heat from the pie will melt the jelly slightly, which helps it settle into the pie. Leave the pie to cool completely and serve cold.



# MY STORY

**Ezra Drake**, resident at Ryton Towers, discovered a formula that would not only change his life, but force a national institution to change its rules



Long before people dreamed of winning big on the lottery, Littlewoods Pools was the nation's hope of striking it rich. Usually it was pure guesswork, but long before supercomputers and algorithms, an unknown brewery worker, gifted with numbers began spotting certain traits in the results. He noticed that when some matches were cancelled due to poor weather, the odds were so much shorter, like a six sided dice suddenly becoming 4 sided.

He realised that the smaller prizes just below the jackpot were strangely achievable, but that very few people went for them, choosing to focus on winning the jackpot. With his formula, Ezra initially won £50, which he invested in another round of results. Again, more success, this time returning £110, which was a considerable sum in 1964.

It was time to up the stakes. Whenever he saw 'Game void', he would pounce. He just couldn't believe others couldn't see it, he even checked the rules, to make sure he was playing within the guidelines. Which of course he was.

More noticeable windfalls followed. He once put on a single stake of £1000, back then, the equivalent of a year's wages for him. "I just thought it's not my money. It was my previous winnings, but still, it was enough to put me on edge." His worry soon turned to joy, another win, but this time the winnings were a significant £4000. Over the next 8 years, Ezra went on to win more than £8000. With his winnings, he bought a big house and enjoyed holidays, as well as setting him up for later life.

Then, one day, out of the blue, a letter arrived from Littlewoods. The letter declared that they felt Ezra had an unfair advantage. Though they admitted he was acting within the rules, they decided to appoint a group of experts and former players called 'The Pools Panel', who would decide what the score would have been, if a game was called off. Which in turn, lengthened the odds and closed the loophole Ezra had discovered. His gambling days were over, but to this day, Ezra smiles to think how his simple, yet unique winning formula, panicked such a big company into action, and changed the game. ■



## The man behind the story

Ezra Drake was born in 1925 and raised in High Spen, Gateshead. He endured a tough start to life, losing his father when he was only 5 years old. The loss hit his family hard, leaving his mother to raise four children single handedly. At the age of 15, Ezra went to work in a hotel in Catterick where his talent for maths, a solid work ethic and a gift with people, proved invaluable. "I was a little lad, mothered by six women in the hotel. I loved it," recalls Ezra. In 1941, he started his 48 year tenure at the Federation Brewery, interrupted only, by a call up to the Navy in 1943. In 1951 Ezra was married, but has been widowed since the early 1980's. Ezra's happiest times were being a trade union secretary. Enjoying the cut and thrust of each day. After that, Ezra moved into management where life became more relaxed. Which meant he had more time to play his beloved game of golf. Ezra has a youthful energy about him, and he attributes this to having a youthful outlook on life. Working hard, but also playing hard. At 91, few could argue that his approach is perfect.

# DARREN KENNY

WEALTH MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT



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I provide an experienced wealth management service and offer specialist advice in a wide range of areas including:

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