



THE  
**Richmond**  
CHARITIES

Almshouse Community Living

# ALMSHOUSE NEWS

The monthly newsletter for The Richmond Charities Almshouses

December 2022

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**



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## Contribute to our Next Issue

If you would like to contribute an article for the next issue, the deadline is:

**Friday 9th December 2022**

Give the article to your Scheme Manager, or email to [c.richards@richmondcharities.org.uk](mailto:c.richards@richmondcharities.org.uk)  
As a guide on word count, a one page article is ideally 340 words.

**Front cover:** 'Christmas Tree at Windsor Castle', from Supplement to the Illustrated London News © British Library Board. Shelf: P.P.7611.

 This magazine is recyclable.

## Competition Winners

Thank you to everyone who submitted competition entries for the Royal Quiz. Picked at random, the winner is:

**Maureen Bliss**  
**Congratulations!**

Answers from last month's competition are on page 27.

## Chapel Schedule: December 2022

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Sunday 4th December<br>2nd Sunday of Advent   | 10.30am Eucharist  |
| Sunday 11th December<br>3rd Sunday of Advent  | 10.30am Eucharist with hymns   |
| Sunday 18th December<br>4th Sunday of Advent  | 10.30am Eucharist  |
| Wednesday 21st<br>December                    | 6pm Christmas Carol Service with music by the choir of St Mary Abbots Church, Kensington |
| Sunday 25th December<br>Feast of the Nativity | 10.30am Eucharist with hymns   |

### Credits:

**Editorial Committee:** Juliet Ames-Lewis, Lorraine Bradley, Debbie Flaherty, Chantal Richards & Mike Townsin.

**Magazine Design:** Chantal Richards

## Letter from Mike Townsin, Trustee



Dear Readers,

Well, here we are at the end of 2022, emerging a bit battered and bruised by the events of the last eleven months. It is hardly possible to switch on the TV or open a newspaper these days without being numbed by the relentless coverage of it all.

So I shall not bore you with a retrospective, but try to talk about some of the more positive stuff in our lives. Hey, it's Christmas!

As a charity we're in good shape despite all the financial and political head winds: that's because we have outstanding people in our management team and first class external professional advisors. In particular Juliet has done an excellent job this year navigating her wide and diverse portfolio of responsibilities, from overseeing our twelve estates, managing new projects, ensuring the well-being of residents and staff, to the vast amount of the day-to-day minutiae – including the editorship of this magazine!

And as a nation, we at last have the prospect of sensible people at the helm whatever your political persuasion, which bodes better for sorting out the challenges facing all of us over the next few years.

In the magazine this month – no surprise! – we feature the Christmas season: a look at Christmas past, a Christmas recipe from Mrs Beeton's famous cook book, residents' Christmastides around

the world, December events, a Christmas book review, the carol service as well as regular features.

Meanwhile, here's something to think about during December: for our 'Good News' January theme we will be asking you for short personal reflections – looking back on 2022 (eg: new grandchild; a good deed by a friend; a lovely experience; something that lifted your spirits), and your hopes for 2023 (eg: for yourself, you family, your friends, the world). Just a couple of lines, that's all.

Happy holidays!

PS: Bye, bye, 2022

*Mike*

# SOS

Switch  
Off  
Something

Did you know: Leaving your TV on standby all year is going to cost you around £11 a year – or 3.2 pence per day.





# Of Christmas Past



by Mike Townsin

The Christmas tree, holly, mistletoe, turkey, cards and presents. And merriment. All these are – secular – symbols of Christmas familiar to us today.



*Mistletoe*

Yet at the time of Queen Victoria’s accession to the throne in 1837, they had fallen out of fashion. For most people December 25th was just another working day.

But people were still nostalgic for the good old days when everyone from the lord of the manor to the humblest serf engaged in celebration and merriment.



*Medieval Christmas*

From ancient times, before Christianity, the gods were placated in winter rituals to ensure the return of the life-giving sun. The Romans celebrated Saturnalia in mid-winter with evergreen decorations and the exchange of presents. And in northern Europe it was called Yuletide with feasting and wassailing around the Yule log fire. When Christianity appropri-

ated the twelve days between the Nativity and Epiphany, many of the pagan customs were adopted.



*Lord of Misrule*

In Tudor times the court and manor houses appointed a ‘Lord of Misrule’ who organised a veritable bender of feasting, dancing, gambling and merriment.

This, of course was anathema to Oliver Cromwell and his puritans who succeeded in abolishing Christmas and any sort of festivity for their twelve years in power.

Upon the Restoration, the laws against Christmas were repealed, but the old ways and customs had taken a blow from which they never completely recovered, exacerbated by a population shift from village to town during which rural Christmas revelry faded from memory.



*Ghost of Christmas Past*

From stage left enter Charles Dickens, who picked up on people’s nostalgia for Christmas past and ‘Merrie England’ in novels like *The Pickwick Papers* and *A Christmas Carol*. In fact the latter was a kind of parable for the charitable



aspirations of well-to-do Victorians who, somewhat guiltily, had noted the massive gap between rich and poor due to industrial prosperity. Our own charity, though already established, grew in Victorian times as a result.

The season of goodwill became a particular focus of these pious Victorians, and from being a rural social occasion where friends, neighbours and communities would gather for general revelry, Christmas became much more centred on home and family, and children in particular.



'Christmas Tree at Windsor Castle', from Supplement to the Illustrated London News © British Library Board. Shelf: P.P.7611.

As a result the decorated fir tree became the emblem of Christmas celebrations, and as the years went by the fashion for Christmas trees spread across Europe and America. In 1854 a giant spruce dominated the Crystal Palace, symbolising the coming of age of the Christmas tree in Britain.



*Crystal Palace*

It is a myth that the Christmas tree was introduced by Albert from his native Germany. In fact long before Albert's day, it had been used by German immigrants as part of their festivities, and it is recorded that Queen Charlotte, wife of George III, set up a Christmas tree at Windsor in 1789. But it didn't really catch on until Victoria and Albert gave it their imprimatur.

Where it originated is open to debate: some believe it is descended from the 'Tree of Life' featured in medieval plays about Adam and Eve; others from the evergreens used in pagan winter festivals to ensure the coming of spring. But the first record of a decorated fir tree is in about 1520, in France, and by 1650 in Germany '...they set up fir trees in the parlours in Strasbourg and hang on them roses cut out of many-coloured papers, apples, wafers, gold foil, sweets...'

There we must end our story, even though, for those interested in the origins of Father Christmas, Christmas decorations, Christmas presents, Christmas fare or even pantomime, there is much more to its celebration.





## Christmas Events



by Chantal Richards



### FREE: SING-ALONG Christmas Carols with Paul

Saturday 17th December

8pm - 11pm @The White Swan, Twickenham Riverside.

A festive sing-along. The talented Paul will be on the piano kicking off the night with classic Christmas carols before moving on to some of the Christmas pop favourites. With song sheets handed out upon arrival there is no excuse not to join in on the fun!

### FREE: The Southbank Centre's Winter Market

"Stroll along the Thames under twinkling lights and sample indulgent drinks and scrumptious street food at our Winter Market." And a whole array of entertainment.

For more info: [www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on)

### FREE: Carols by Candlelight

18th December 2022,  
6pm for 1 hour

St Matthias Church  
Friars Stile Road,  
Richmond Hill,  
Richmond.



### FREE: Experience The Ultimate Carol Service



There's nowhere more festive in London on Christmas Eve than St Paul's Cathedral where there's a magical annual Christmas Carol Service which retells the story of the nativity through music and words. **It's FREE and starts at 4pm** but can be very popular so get there early and be ready to queue. It's worth the wait though for all that Christmas cheer.

### Hampton Court Palace Festive Fayre

2nd - 4th December 2022

A festive weekend set in the magnificent palace courtyards and grounds. Discover delicious artisan food and drink and perfect gifts, all whilst soaking up the atmosphere and spirit of the season, with live music from the East Front bandstand.

Concessions (Over 65) £20.90

Save 50% on tickets for the off-peak arrival time at 3.00pm

[www.hrpfestivals.com/festive-fayre](http://www.hrpfestivals.com/festive-fayre)



## The Parkshot Singers Carol Service



by Jo Davison

**Friday 16th December  
3pm at Hickey's Chapel**

The Parkshot Singers will be coming to entertain us again on Friday 16th December at 3pm in the Hickey's Chapel. Please come and join us.

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



## Hickey's Christmas Carol Service



by Juliet Ames-Lewis

**Wednesday 21st December  
6pm at Hickey's Chapel**

Please join us on Wednesday 21st December at 6pm in our Chapel at Hickey's Almshouses for our annual Christmas Carol Service.

All are welcome – please bring your friends and family too! The service will be led by Rev'd Wilma Roest, Rector of St Mary Magdalene, Richmond, and Trustee of The Richmond Charities. Music will be provided by the choir of St Mary Abbots Church, Kensington.

Refreshments will be served after the carol service. We look forward to welcoming you!

## Carols Around the Christmas Tree at Michel's



by Linda Prendergast

**Sunday 11th December at  
3.30pm @Michel's Almshouses**

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

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





# Christmas in New Zealand



by **Debbie Flaherty**

As many of you know I lived and worked in New Zealand with my husband and children for nine years. During that time I missed my family and friends in the UK, I also missed the UK too especially at Christmas.

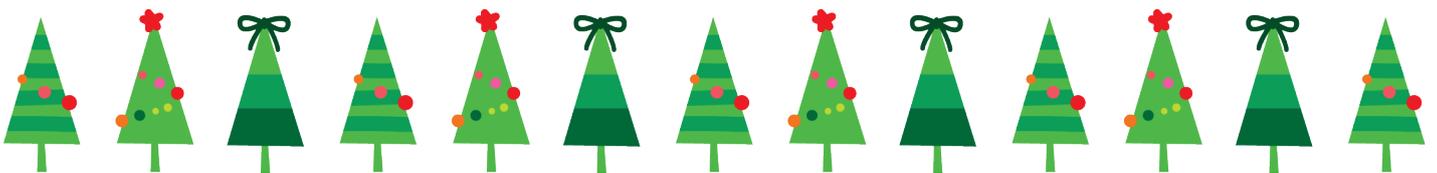
In New Zealand, Christmas music was played in the supermarkets, people shopped in bare feet and summer clothing with some even in their swimwear, the schools break up for the summer holiday and people leave the city to stay in a *Bach* – which is a small holiday home near the beach.

All this seemed very bizarre to me, but was, of course, natural to the Kiwis. Santa was sometimes portrayed surfing on a surfboard and Christmas lunch was usually a barbeque; although I must admit I always did a roast of sorts, so I subjected my family to eating a roast in the warm weather.

The Christmas trees were bushy and didn't last long in the heat. So I felt very homesick at Christmas. On the whole though my time in New Zealand was wonderful and I have great memories and now have really good friends there who I miss dearly.

The photograph (below) is of the Pohutukawa tree which blooms in red around Christmas time so it is known as the New Zealand Christmas tree, and this symbolises New Zealand at Christmas for me.

I know this may sound strange but I am now enjoying the dark, dank UK weather during the winter and at Christmas and I love it !!





# Christmas in California



by Jill Davidson

I went to live in California in November 1967. It was quite a transition from Dublin, Ireland, to San Francisco, California.

What I remember most from that first Christmas was that the sun shone. I remember distinctly that lovely warm sunshine and the lovely warm feeling it gave. There was turkey and ham and stuffing but no plum pudding. Santa Claus came and brought presents. We sang Christmas carols just as we did in Ireland but what I remember was the sunshine and the blue skies.

As time went by, the realisation came that while there were similarities as to how Christmas was celebrated in the USA, a major difference was that Christmas lasted one day and that people returned to work the day after Christmas, and there was no Boxing Day.

As the years passed I returned frequently to Ireland and so enjoyed Christmas in both countries irrespective of sunshine or rain and cold winds, one day or ten day holiday period. I even adjusted to not having turkey as my husband cooked a delicious prime rib roast on Christmas day. Memories, memories, memories!

*Below: 15th December 1966, Polk Street, San Francisco; all decked out for Christmas. ©Hearst Newspapers*





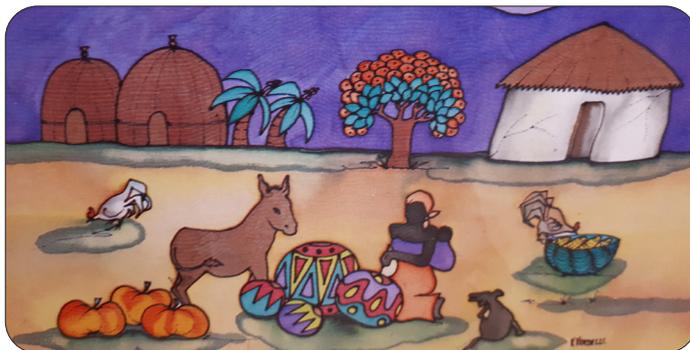
## Christmas in South Africa - Eswatini (Swaziland)



by Heather Shipley

When I was a small child, and for those of us with British heritage, Christmas celebrations in South Africa were the same as in Britain. A Christmas tree with baubles, lights, candles and tinsel, not forgetting the Christmas Star or Christmas fairy at the top of the tree. Presents piled beneath the tree, ready to be opened early on the morning of the 25th, to the squeals of joy from the children in the house. Lunch preparations started early, turkey with trimmings (but not brussel sprouts, being summer in the south and the sprouts don't sprout!), flaming Christmas pudding with brandy butter... I remember the family gathering around the radio with tea and mince pies to listen to the Queen's Christmas message.

Living in Swaziland (now Eswatini) for 29 years, from 1978 until 2007, there were many Christmases in the low-lying sugar cane growing area, between the Lebombo Mountain range and the Great Usutu River. Temperatures in summer can reach 40c and often 25c at midnight. We had a Christmas tree made from a Sisal branch or a small indigenous tree, decorated with flowers or seeds from indigenous plants and bits of tinsel. A small pile of presents under the tree were opened on Christmas Eve, often by candlelight as the lights would go out whenever a storm approached, and there were many of those on hot summer nights. Christmas dinner was a simpler offering, roast chicken and salads, with tropical fruits



and ice-cream. Most of the Swazi people embrace Christianity and it plays a large part in the lives of the people there. Many of the community would sing carols and Siswati hymns and then attend midnight mass celebrated in the small community church by a priest from a mission 25 miles away atop the Lebombo Mountains. Christmas Day was usually spent in the Mhlosinga Game Reserve nearby and on a hot afternoon the children would have a swim in the club swimming pool on the way home.

The tradition of Boxing Day is well ingrained in Africa. Workers have the day off and are given a Christmas box with food and gifts to take home to their families. With the request for *Kisimusiwe* we would hand out Christmas boxes to some of the plantation workers, as well as our household staff.

Wherever one may be at Christmas, and however the history and traditions have evolved, the reminder is that it is a season of goodwill and sharing.

***Umusa ne Nhlanhla nga Khisimusi nange Mnyaka Lomusha***

***With Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year***



# Christmas in Thailand



by Margaret Payler

*Joy to the World and Hark the Herald Angels Sing* blared out from the

big department stores in Bangkok and Chiangmai as the people, mostly Buddhist, made the most of this time for a shopping spree.

However, for the Christians this was a joyful time of celebrating our Saviour's birthday, putting on special nativity events to share the good news of the Gospel.

In Manorum, central Thailand, where I worked for many years, Christmas was a very exciting time.

On Christmas Eve, as the number of Christians grew, we would scramble into any available truck or van and happily go around the villages and members' homes heartily singing traditional carols as well as some new ones written by the Thai people in true Thai style. Then we would return to the church around 2am to enjoy the goodies we had collected!

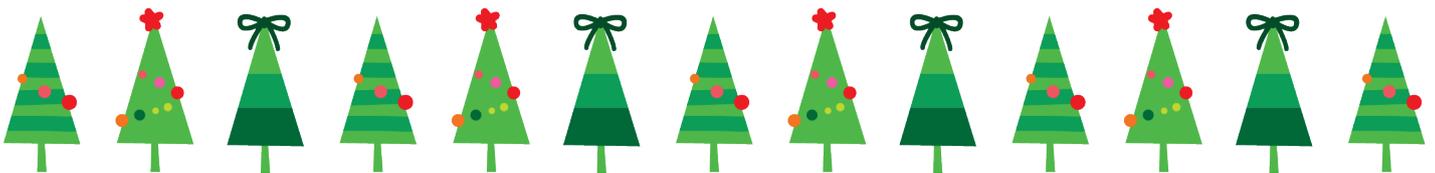
Before the crack of dawn on Christmas morning we would get out of bed and, with bleary eyed excitement, light our candles, gather together and go carol singing around the hospital wards,



waking the patients to the sound of angels singing! After this we would go round to the staff houses waking the children and any who had slept in, before having breakfast together enjoying Thai style croissants and drinking hot sweet tofu.

Manorum Christian Hospital, built in the fifties on paddy fields given by a local dignitary, was the only hospital for miles around, so there were always many patients to sing to. In later years we also went carolling in the local school and Government offices.

***Many Happy memories that bring joy to my heart!***



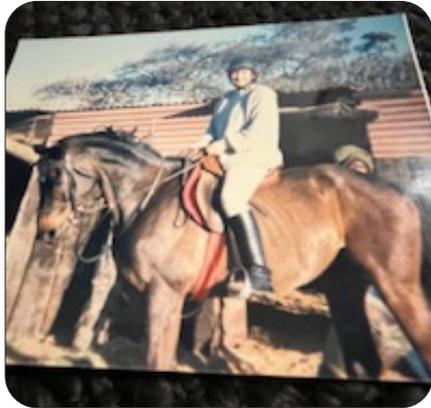


## Christmas in Zimbabwe

by Marilyn Edwards

A new day began early in Zimbabwe when the air was still cool and before the sun beat down on the earth causing a dancing haze to appear. Christmas was in the height of summer and the rainy season, bringing life to the brown, dusty, parched earth.

Christmas day began with saddling the horses and setting out on a ride through the bush following well trodden paths. The flat topped Acacia trees were



a mass of yellow flowers interspersed with their long sharp thorns. The once dry grass was now green and tall.

Once home, and after breakfast supplemented by Buck's Fizz, we opened presents, mostly bought from a trip over the border to neighbouring South



Africa, our nearest shopping haven, which involved a five hour drive to the Beitbridge border post and across the Limpopo river.

Christmas lunch

was usually a cold buffet laid out on long trestle tables in the shade. Fillet of beef, glazed ham, chicken with slices of stuffing together with a variety of salads were the norm. A well laced sherry trifle awaited in the fridge.

The men sat around a thatch covered bar enjoying ice cold Castle beers. One year my grandmother and mother came out for Christmas from Britain. For my eighty two year old grandmother it was her first trip overseas. Armed with a large map of Zimbabwe she marked the places we visited. We took them to Victoria Falls, known locally as *Mosi-Oa-Tunya –the smoke that thunders*.

Armed with macs we walked through the rain forest, wet with spray from the falls, saw the statue of David Livingstone who discovered them in 1855.



Late afternoon we went on a cruise down the mighty Zambezi river accompanied by swimming hippos and crocodiles basking on the distant banks waiting for unsuspecting prey.

Once back on dry land, sitting on the hotel veranda, we witnessed the President's herd, comprising about fifty elephants, appear in view as if from nowhere. Huge bulls, cows with calves made their way to the nearby watering



## ..continued..



hole. A sight I'll never forget!

Africans in Zimbabwe celebrate Christmas or *Kimusi* as it's known, by attending a special church service and the children dressed in their best clothes sing songs. After church the whole family gathers together to start a celebration and feast. People go from house to house visiting friends.

Only the main room in the house is decorated with plants like ivy and sometimes a Christmas tree. The special food is chicken or goat and rice with sadza, made from maize meal and relish, and onion and tomato gravy. Stereo speakers were put outside to play the favourite music ...very loudly!

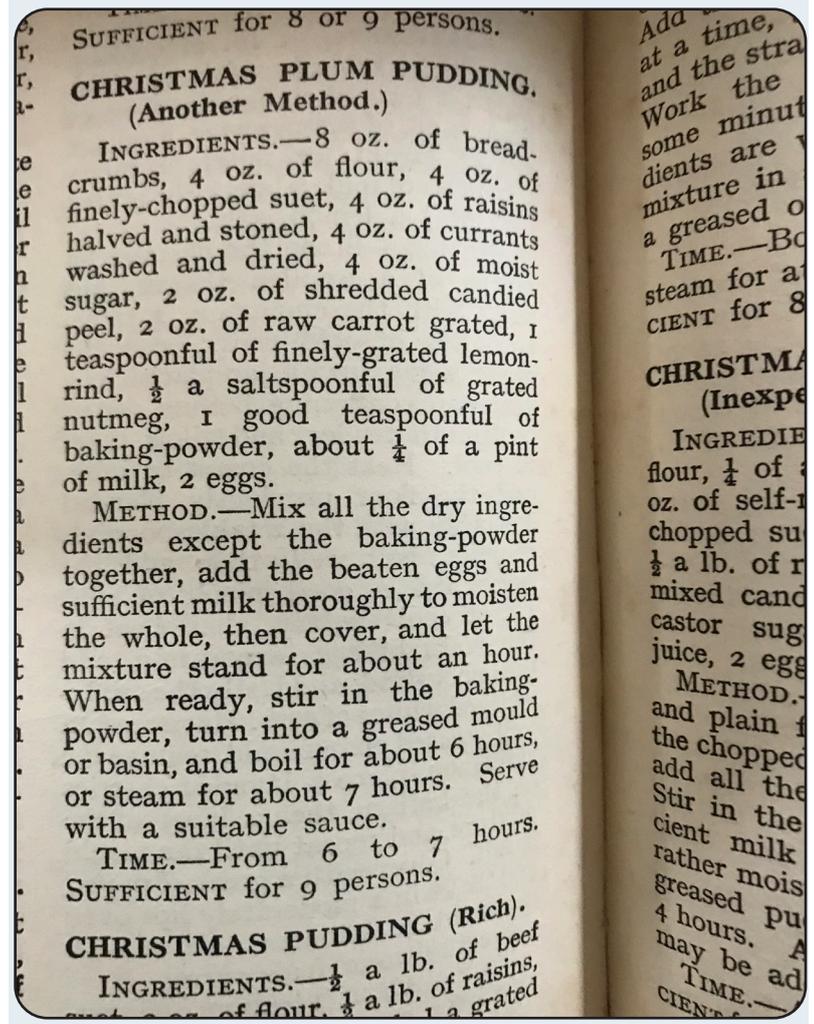
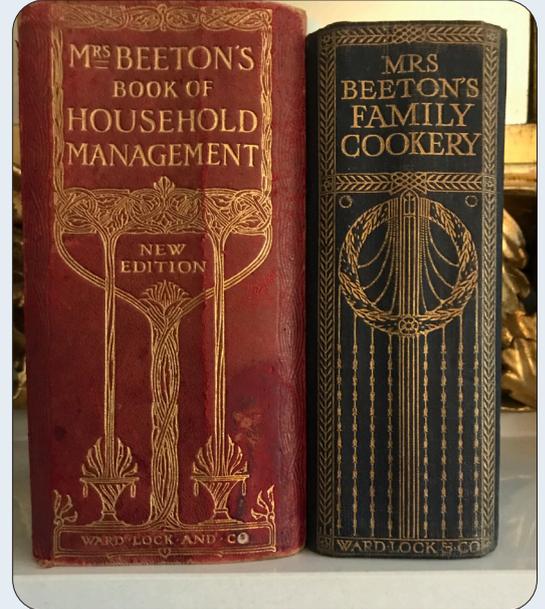
At the end of Christmas day, we'd sit on the veranda watching the beautiful African sunset and, as it disappeared, the sky went dark and would fill with stars. The dogs lay at our feet enjoying their Christmas treat of biltong.

It had been a lovely day. Little did we know how life would change.

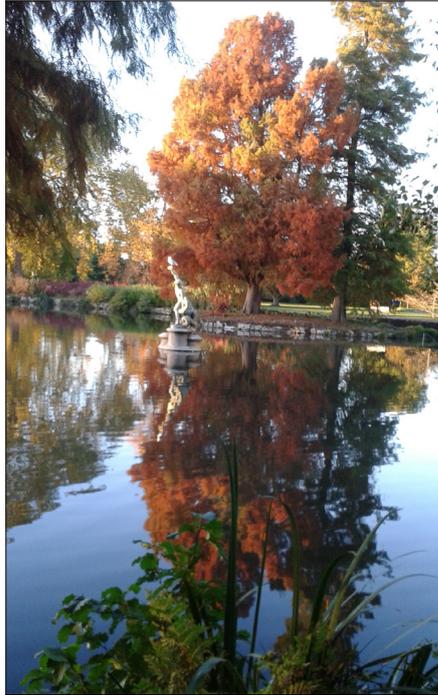
## Mrs Beeton's Plum Pudding



Courtesy of Mike Townsin, here is the original *Plum Pudding* recipe taken from ***Mrs Beeton's Family Cookery*** book. (1928)



## Seasonal Photo Competition Winner



This month's seasonal photo competition has been won by the very talented **Lesley Cizek**. I think you'll agree that they really capture the colours of autumn

and the amazing variety of wild mushrooms and fungi. Thank you Lesley for sharing all your photos with Almshouse News.





## Grants to Help with Fuel Bills

by Juliet Ames-Lewis

Residents asked at one of our recent forums for a reminder of the sources of funding which are available in the Richmond borough to help with fuel bills.

Richmond Council will be opening its 2023 fuel grants scheme in January. All residents will be able to apply for a grant of £170. If you google Richmond Council Fuel Grants you can apply online in January. If you don't have internet access, please ask your Scheme Manager to download the form for you.

For residents in Twickenham, you can apply every year to the Hampton Fund ([hamptonfund.co.uk](http://hamptonfund.co.uk)) for a fuel grant, and for residents in Richmond and Mortlake you can apply to Richmond Parish Lands Charity ([rplc.org.uk](http://rplc.org.uk)) for a crisis grant of up to £300 per annum. With the Hampton Fund, you can apply direct using their online form or your Scheme Manager can download and print the form for you. To apply to RPLC, you have to apply through a third party such as Age UK, Citizens Advice or Richmond AID.

The Richmond Charities gives funding each year to other organisations in the borough to distribute in grants to those in need, and residents can apply for a grant of up to £250. You have to apply through one of the organisations, for example Age UK or Citizens Advice. At Age UK, you can contact [Rohit Dara on 020 8878 3073](mailto:Rohit.Dara@ageuk.org.uk) to ask if you could apply for a grant from The Richmond Charities funding.

## New Member of Staff

Hello. I'm Samantha (everyone calls me Sam) and I will be joining The Richmond Charities Head Office Team in January 2023 as Head of Finance, Policy and Governance.



You may see me cycling up and down the Upper Richmond Road, as I am really excited to be able to travel into work on my bike from my home nearby in Putney.

I have spent the last 12 months commuting into central London working in a finance role at a marketing company. Any spare time I have (which is increasing now my two daughters are teenagers) is spent planning holidays, cooking new recipes, going to sporting events / concerts. I have also recently started running 5k as part of Park Run on a Saturday morning. I am really looking forward to meeting you all. I will be coming to the Christmas Lunch on 15th December so I will see you there!

## Our Community Activities



by Juliet Ames-Lewis

I am thrilled that our community life here at The Richmond Charities is so strong, active and varied and that we have so many different activities and events on a regular basis.

Recently there has been some confusion about whether the activities that take place within our community are exclusively for residents or whether others can join in. I therefore wanted to clarify that friends and family of residents are absolutely welcome to come to our events and activities – the more the merrier!

If residents' friends and family take part in activities and events, they too will get to see our community in action and be part of the wider Richmond Charities' family.

We have often had residents bringing family and friends to our Quiz Nights for example, or on our summer outing, and I very much welcome friends and family also coming with residents to other activities that we run.

The only exceptions may be events such as our Christmas Lunch which is just for residents, staff and trustees, and perhaps if there are ever events and activities that are so oversubscribed (such as our summer parties) that we have to give priority to residents.

## IT Sessions, Progress So Far



by Linda Prendergast

The Age UK IT sessions are going really well and once again the second session was fully booked. On this occasion the training session helped residents set up a spreadsheet on how to open an account for online shopping, as well as being helped on how to delete things from their phones to free up memory.

Here's just some of the feedback.



Richard Yardley said:

"I found the session very useful. I was shown how to set up a group

email in order to keep in touch with the Out and About Group. I'm very satisfied and have already booked for the next session in December".

The hope is that we continue to work with AGE UK in the long term to host many more training sessions for our residents. The more residents who book the more sessions we can hold. The December session is already fully booked.

If you want to book your slot for **Wednesday 11th January 2023**, please speak to your Scheme Manager.

### Taster Exercise Sessions with Chrissie Donovan



by Jo Davison

We will be holding 2 taster 'exercise' sessions in January with Chrissie

Donovan (pictured right), a highly experienced and qualified dance, exercise and fitness teacher. The taster sessions are open to all no matter your ability.



You can come and take part or just come along and see what its all about. The sessions will be held on **Tuesday 10th January and Tuesday 17th January at 6pm in Hickey's Chapel.**

On Tuesday 10th January the taster session will be all about Core, Stretch and Flexibility. This will be a low impact, mobility warm up including simple core conditioning, balance work, stretch and flexibility training. The focus is on body posture, alignment and aims to improve muscle flexibility and core strength. A great stress reliever too!

On Tuesday 17th January the taster session will be a 'Total Body Workout'. This will be a low impact, fun and invigorating class which combines a variety of exercise routines, body conditioning and strength work – much needed for our physical health and well-being. Come and join the fun ...bring water, wear comfortable clothing and footwear. A small towel would be good for some final stretches but mainly bring yourselves and get that feel good factor!

### Coffee Morning for Arts and Crafters



by Jo Davison

We will be holding a coffee morning on **Wednesday 18th January between**

**11am and 12 noon** in the garden room and would like to invite any of our residents that have arts and crafts that they would like to exhibit.

The idea is that at the coffee morning we can discuss the possibility of having an **Arts and Crafts Exhibition in March** where you can display your artwork and have the possibility of selling it.

We will also be doing an Arts and Crafts themed Almshouse News edition in March which will tie in with the exhibition.

If you would be interested in attending the coffee morning please let your Scheme Manager know.



## Out & About Group

by Richard Yardley

Michael Hobbs has done a brilliant job of running the Out & About Group for the last few years and is now handing the reins over to me! For newer residents who aren't aware of the group, we meet once a month at Richmond station with our freedom passes and go up to London for the day.

The idea behind the group is to spend the day for free – we all have free travel and there are so many things to do for free in London. It's great fun and a lovely way to see less well-known sights in London in each other's company.

If you are interested, please let your Scheme Manager know and they can pass on a message to me.

Out & About had a good trip to Canary Wharf to see the ice sculptures in Jubilee Park, coming home on the Elizabeth line and the 65 bus (see our photos right).

### Upcoming outings:

**2nd December 2022 – Kew Sparkle.**  
Meet at Richmond Station at 5pm (warm coat and freedom pass essential)

**24th January 2023 – Winter Lights, Canary Wharf.**



### Warm Spaces

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**Warm Spaces** is a new webpage and initiative launched by Richmond Council

As part of their response to the cost of living crisis and aiming to provide practical support to residents, Richmond Council is working with local partners to create a network of Warm Spaces.

The initiative is bringing together information on accessible indoor venues where Richmond residents can take shelter from the cold this winter. Their new online Directory has been launched, initially listing libraries and children's centres across the borough. Organisations with suitable access and facilities, or which already provide such spaces, are also invited to register if they would like to participate and be included in the listings. The new webpage is in addition to their Cost of Living Hub and also includes links to the above and details of their Cost of Living Fund.

Visit the Warm Spaces website page:  
[www.richmond.gov.uk/services/cost\\_of\\_living\\_hub/warm\\_spaces](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/cost_of_living_hub/warm_spaces)

**Some venues will also offer hot drinks, activities and access to other services.**

### Warm Spaces Near YOU:

- **Twickenham Library** - Garfield Road, TW1 3JT
- **Richmond Information and Reference Library and the Museum of Richmond:**  
Old Town Hall, Whittaker Avenue, TW9 1TP
- **Richmond and Putney Unitarian Church**  
Ormond Road, Richmond, TW10 6TH
- **Richmond Lending Library**  
Little Green, Richmond, TW9 1QL

### LIDL Launch Country Wide Christmas 'Toy Bank'

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Lidl's new toy donation drive was launched in over 940 stores nationwide on 3rd November.

The idea comes from different charities with which Lidl works where 8 in 10 asked for donations of toys and games for local children to receive around Christmas. Donations can be anything – from a small stocking filler to something bigger. You can donate items up to 16th December and, of course, customers can donate food all year round as usual.

#### On This Day:

24th December 1818

The first performance of Silent Night was given. This has since been a favourite Christmas carol all around the world.

#### On This Day:

25th December 1223

St Francis of Assisi set up the first nativity scene which is now an annual tradition among many Christians.

## Join Off The Record's Christmas Carol Concert

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Get your tickets for OTR's traditional **Christmas Carol Concert at St Mary's Church on Tuesday 13th December.**

OTR Twickenham will be celebrating the festive season with readings and musical performances featuring local young people. Doors open from 6pm and the concert starts at 6.30pm, to be followed by light refreshments and a raffle. Tickets cost £12 in advance and £15 on the door. Under 15s are free.

(Off The Record is a Twickenham charity giving free and confidential counselling, walk-in info and sexual health clinic for young people).

## Older residents encouraged to take part in Walking Rugby

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**Date: Every Thursday**

**Time: 10 to 11.30am**

**Location: Richmond Athletic Ground, The Athletic Ground, Kew Foot Rd, Richmond TW9 2SS**

Over 55s can participate in free walking rugby organised by Richmond Rugby every week. Running is forbidden as is passing the ball higher than shoulder height and there are no tackles, making it perfect for all abilities.

Sessions are open to everyone with free refreshments (tea, coffee and biscuits) available. **To register your place please contact the Head of community, Ed Roberts on 07947990857 or email the community department at [communitydept@richmondrc.co.uk](mailto:communitydept@richmondrc.co.uk)**

## The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

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has been recognised as one of 123 cities and boroughs across the globe for taking bold leadership on environmental action and transparency, despite the pressures of a challenging global economic situation.

## A New Festive Shopping Experience at York House

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**Date: Thursday 15 December 2022**

**Time: 5.30 to 9pm**

**Location: Clarendon Hall, York House, Richmond Road, Twickenham, TW1 3AA**

The Fair Symposium brings a brand-new festive shopping event to Twickenham – a perfect way to warm-up for The Big Day, and tick lots of presents off your gift list.

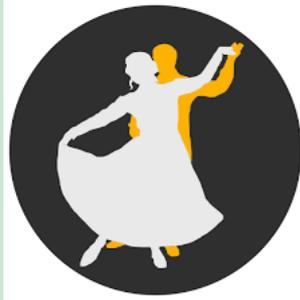
Every stallholder has been hand-selected to offer you a lovely eclectic mix of products. We have aromatherapy, silver jewellery, soy wax candles, crystals, art cards and prints, coasters, keyrings, home accessories... and plenty more beside that little lot.

Supporting independent traders is an infinitely more relaxed experience – plus you get to chat with the artisans and hear all about how everything was made, which is always fascinating.

The evening will be super-festive with carol singers, mulled wine and twinkly lights aplenty. Plus there is a charity raffle, with prizes to win donated by the stallholders and local businesses.

## Ballroom & Latin American Dancing

at Whitton Community Centre, classes are on Monday evenings 7pm - 9pm.



Tea Dances – twice a month 1.30pm - 3.30pm.

Contact: Beryl Lywood  
email: [beryllywood@hotmail.com](mailto:beryllywood@hotmail.com)  
call: 020 8894 4482

## Indoor Rowing Classes

at Twickenham Rowing Club, Eel Pie Island, Twickenham. Low impact, full body workout, carefully paced, chatty and fun! First class FREE then £5 each class. SilverFit classes by Fluid Fitness. To book, go to [www.fluidfitness.fit](http://www.fluidfitness.fit) or call Su on 0779 4689146



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ANY OF THE ABOVE ARTICLES, GOOGLE: [www.richmond.gov.uk](http://www.richmond.gov.uk)**

## Christmas Shopping Weekend at Orleans House Gallery

The hugely popular Christmas Shopping Weekend is returning to Orleans House Gallery on Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 December. Over 40 independent makers, designers, artists and artisans will be showcasing their unique and exciting products at this year's event.

The Christmas Shopping Weekend is FREE and there is no need to book, but please note there will be no onsite parking available.



## Upcoming talks from RSPB Richmond and Twickenham



A number of interesting walks and talks are being hosted by RSPB Richmond and Twickenham

next month, giving residents a chance to learn more about birds and the importance of Wetlands. Learn about the birds of France with John Strachan and enjoy their Christmas Social on **7th December at 7.30pm in the Hyde Room of York House. Non-members are able to attend for a fee of £5.**



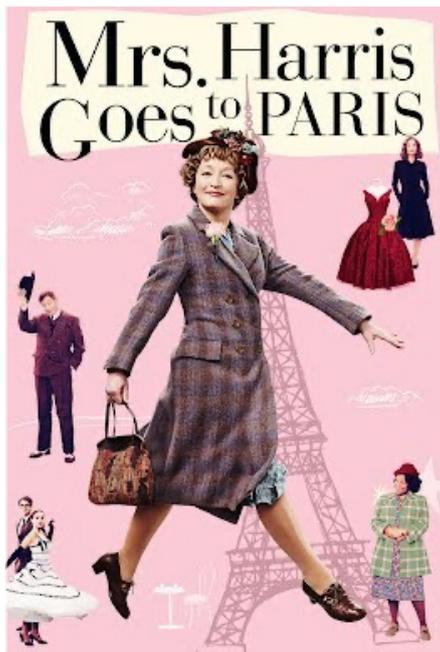
'Christmas Tree at Windsor Castle', from Supplement to the Illustrated London News. © British Library Board. Shelf: P.P.7611.

Answers in next month's issue.



**Your chance to win a £10 M&S Voucher! Circle the 10 differences ON THIS PAGE.** Give this whole page to your Scheme Manager, or place in the suggestion box **before Friday 9th December 2022.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



**Film Review**  
by Alison  
McAlear

### ***Mrs Harris Goes to Paris***

Directed  
by Anthony  
Fabian,  
all-star cast  
led by Lesley  
Manville and

Isabelle Huppert.

This is a touching film with the lead role of Ada Harris played by Lesley Manville whose performance is so endearing and authentic. The film is set in the 1950s and Ada is a cleaning lady who realises a big dream very early on in the movie. After seeing a beautiful Christian Dior dress in one of her wealthy client's bedroom wardrobe, Ada sets the wheels in motion to go to Paris to buy a Dior dress. Upon arriving at the House of Dior, Ada soon realises that the snooty world of fashion does not take too kindly to this plucky working-class lady from England! But with Ada's charm she manages to weave her magic and the fun begins as she sets out to achieve her great dream.

This is such a good-feel factor movie and, if you love fashion, the scenes that show the 1950s Christian Dior dresses are unbelievably beautiful. The movie is based on a short novel by Paul Gallico

released in 1958 called *Mrs 'Arris Goes to Paris*. The supporting cast is wonderful, with a stellar performance given by Jason Issacs as Archie, a cheeky Irishman with a real twinkle in his eye! This is a joyful film to watch and it is the first time I have ever been to a movie where the people around me applauded as the credits were rolling; I too clapped away as I felt so uplifted after the film ended!

Definitely one for the movie club!

**Book Review**  
by Kate O'Brien

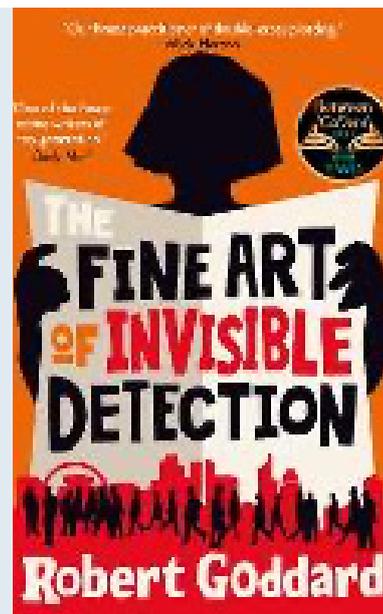
### ***The Fine Art of Invisible Detection***

By Robert  
Goddard

I do like a good  
thriller and this  
book did not  
disappoint.

We begin  
in a detective agency in Tokyo, but  
we quickly travel to various parts of  
England with a trip to Iceland thrown in  
for good measure before ending up in  
Cornwall via Cambridge.

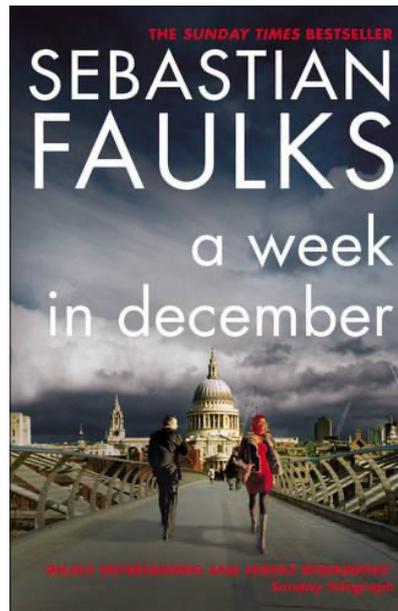
The root of the story is a group of  
university students who get involved



in anti-nuclear protests in the 1970s but it also covers the sarin attack on the Tokyo subway which (eventually, after ten years) kills the husband of the main character, Umika Wada; a British peer with secrets; a man who finds the truth about his father after his mother's death and dodgy real estate deals in Iceland; a Cambridge professor whose work is "edited" to enable said dodgy deals ... we have a hit and run, murders, kidnappings, car chases – in fact, all the requirements of a page-turning thriller, and more.

The main character, Wada, starts off as the middle-aged secretary in the detective agency, but then takes on the role of detective. Her ability to blend into the background makes her very good at the job – the invisible detection in the title. You wonder how effective this will be once she leaves Japan, but it turns out there are Japanese tourists everywhere – who knew?!

A real page turner with a number of 'how are they going to get out of this?' moments which keeps you guessing right up to the final chapter.



**Book Review by Mike Townsin**

### ***A Week in December***

By Sebastian Faulks

I'll wager that somewhere in this novel something will resonate with your own experience of life. Because it touches on themes that we encounter every day.

Sofie, the wife of a newly elected MP is wrestling with the seating plan of her dinner party a week before Christmas. Several of the protagonists are present, and we follow their lives over seven days: there's a ruthless hedge fund trader trying to clinch the deal of his life; an unsuccessful barrister about to represent a young female tube driver; a student led astray by Islamist theory; a hack book-reviewer (familiar?); a Polish footballer trying to adapt to life in the Premier League; his model Russian girlfriend coping with life in London; the trader's wife dealing with the isolation of moving from town to country; one of her friends dying to get back to London, and away from her alcoholic husband. Life eh!

The author not only probes the self-deceptions of this group but their hopes and loves as well, piecing together the patterns of modern urban life – including themes such as greed, the effects of technology and the fragmentation of society.

Not a jolly Christmas read but a very skilful, humanistic, and occasionally wickedly humorous, take on the complex, challenging world we live in.

## December Awareness Days

### **Christmas Jumper Day. 8th December**

Christmas Jumper Day is an annual charity event, with 100% of proceeds going to the charity Save the Children. For more info: [www.christmasjumperday.org/](http://www.christmasjumperday.org/)

### **Festival of Winter Walks.**

**20th Dec 2022 - 5th Jan 2023**

The Ramblers annual Festival of Winter Walks is held over the Christmas and New Year period. There are lots of lovely walks organised throughout the country. For more info: [www.ramblers.org.uk](http://www.ramblers.org.uk)

### **Tree Dressing Day. 1st December 2022**

Tree dressing is based on many old customs from all over the world. The twenty-first century trend of yarn bombing in Europe and North America transforms the local landscape with bright fabrics and yarns, like the Buddhist tradition of tying ribbons around the trunk of the Bodhi tree in homage to Buddha, or the annual Hindu festival of Raksha Bandhan when coloured strings are tied onto trees and plants to call upon the power of nature to protect loved ones. For more info: [www.commonground.org.uk/tree-dressing-day/](http://www.commonground.org.uk/tree-dressing-day/)

### **Illumination Street Week.**

**5th to 11th December**

Celebrating the passion, flair and effort that people across Britain undertake to brighten up their streets in the build-up to Christmas. For more info: [www.illuminationstreet.com](http://www.illuminationstreet.com)

## Wit and Wisdom:

***No nice men are good at getting taxis.***

Katherine Whitehorn, in The Observer.

***One of the secrets of a happy life is continuous small treats.***

Iris Murdoch

***The real hero of Jaws is the mayor, a wonderful politician. A gigantic fish is eating all your constituents and he decides to keep the beaches open!***

Boris Johnson

***Mistakes are part of the dues one pays for a full life.*** Sophia Loren

***A difference in taste in jokes is a great strain on the affections.***

George Eliot

***That is the best – to laugh with someone because you both think the same things are funny.***

Gloria Vanderbilt

***We can do no great things – only small things with great love.***

Mother Teresa

***Being right half the time beats being half-right all the time.***

Malcolm Forbes, American entrepreneur

***If there's not something wrong with you, there's something wrong with you.***

Lionel Shriver, author

***Judge not, that ye be not judged.***

Matthew 7:1

## Getting to Know YOU

### Daisy Maseyk

**What is your most valuable possession?** Gold charm bracelet

**What is your greatest achievement?**  
Having four lovely children

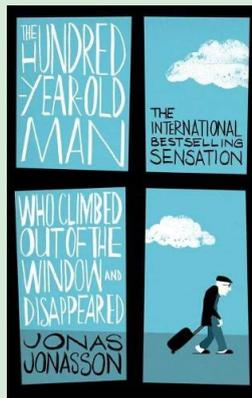
**What make you angry?**  
Liars

**What is your favourite word?**  
Love

**What do you never leave the house without?** Handbag

**What is the worst pain you have ever experienced?**  
Back pain

**What book do you currently have on the go?**  
*The Hundred-Year-Old Man* by Jonas Jonasson



## Natural Remedies



by Debbie Flaherty

### DRY SKIN

Skin tends to get worse in the winter as the colder climate plays havoc with the skin's natural oils. Good fats provide the foundation of keeping your skin hydrated and supple.

### Good things to eat & drink

Apples, apricots, avocados, berries, broccoli, brown rice, cabbage, celery juice, pears, spinach, radishes, Romaine lettuce, turnips.

For moisture and softer skin – salmon, tuna, flax seeds, olive oil and almonds.

Filtered or mineral water (not ice cold) will keep you hydrated and will flush countless toxins from your body.

**Take exercise as it improves the blood circulation.**

**Protect your skin in the winter so cover up as much as you can with scarves, gloves and hats.**

**Avoid:** tea, coffee, alcohol, salt, spices, sugar, red meat

**Avoid:** taking long hot showers or baths and applying moisturiser to damp skin.

### November Royal Quiz Answers.

1. Queen Elizabeth's personal flag
2. The Royal Standard
3. Margaret Thatcher
4. 9th September 2022
5. Prince George of Wales
6. Airplanes
7. 142
8. Buckingham Palace Gardens, Highgrove House and Clarence House,
9. Meghan, Duchess of Sussex
10. The Queen was not required to have a driving licence
11. 2,000
12. Lord Chamberlain, (former MI5 chief Baron Parker),
13. Claire Foy, Olivia Colman and Imelda Staunton
14. Charlotte
15. 1947



**by Nigel  
Davis**

I am not myself a vegetarian – I enjoy a good, juicy steak for instance. And I have eaten turkey for Christmas for over 65 years. Still, I personally find the case for vegetarianism a strong one, even if I have not let myself be persuaded.

This poem, in the context of Christmas, by Benjamin Zephaniah, is on that theme. Note how the gently humorous use of West Indian dialect and of half-rhyme and the softly teasing irony make the case, in my view, far more effectively than any strident, screeching diatribe.

A thought, though – if we all stopped eating turkey for Christmas, would turkeys become extinct?

**Poetry Corner wishes everyone in the Almshouse community a very Happy Christmas and New Year!**

### **Talking Turkeys by Benjamin Zephaniah**

Be nice to yu turkeys dis christmas  
Cos turkeys just wanna have fun  
Turkeys are cool, turkeys are wicked  
An every turkey has a Mum.  
Be nice to yu turkeys dis christmas,  
Don't eat it, keep it alive,  
It could be you mate, an not on your plate  
Say, Yo! Turkey I'm on your side.  
I got lots of friends who are turkeys  
An all of dem fear christmas time,  
Dey wanna enjoy it, dey say humans destroyed it  
An humans are out of dere mind.  
Yeah, I got lots of friends who are turkeys  
Dey all hev a right to a life,  
Not to be caged up an genetically made up  
By any farmer an his wife.  
Turkeys just wanna play reggae  
Turkeys just wanna hip-hop  
Can you imagine a nice young turkey saying  
"I cannot wait for de chop."  
Turkeys like getting presents,  
Dey wanna watch christmas TV,  
Turkeys have brains an turkeys feel pain  
In many ways like yu and me.  
I once knew a turkey called....Turkey  
He said "Benji, explain to me please,  
Who put de turkey in christmas  
An what happens to christmas trees?"  
I said "I am not too sure, Turkey  
But it's nothing to do with Christ Mass,  
Humans got greedy an waste more dan need be  
An businessmen mek loadsa cash".  
Be nice to yu turkeys dis christmas  
Invite dem indoors for some greens  
Let dem eat cake and let dem partake  
In a plate of organic beans.  
Be nice to yu turkeys dis christmas  
An spare dem de cut of de knife,  
Join Turkeys United and dey'll be delighted  
An yu will mek new friends FOR LIFE!