

# The PAL Gazette

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## Engage with Age

### Front Page Poems 'Christmas Already?'

by Anne Coulter

Christmas already? Let's make a toast.  
There are charity cards along with the post.

Last night we watched a film set in deep snow,

It was all about Christmas I'll have you know.

Halloween is just over. We made pumpkin pie,

The weather is mild, it feels like July.

Last Christmas is still clear in my mind.

(My wrapping paper will be easy to find)

Hanging up Dad's sock is what I remember,

There were no Santa's Grottos in November.

Now we have a "Secret Santa" and buy the cake,

We are much too busy to stay home and bake.

The world can be tough, with sad news and fights,

But Christmas is a promise that things will come right.



# WE'RE STILL HERE!

## You made it through this year!

Congratulations to all born since the 1930s (or even before). If you are reading this, you made it through this year and much worse. Remember the things that were okay to do years ago which are frowned upon now?

Firstly, you survived being born at a time when it was okay for mums-to-be to smoke and drink. Life was tough – who can blame anyone for wanting a ciggie or a Guinness? And when we were sleeping as babies in our wee cots, remember they were covered in brightly covered lead-based paints! We're still here.

There were no child-proof lids on medicine bottles and no locks on cabinet doors. As children, when you were in the family car, there were no seat belts, no airbags, and usually there was someone who smoked. It was like driving around in a cloud of cigarette smoke!

We ate white bread, real butter, and drank pop with sugar in it. I bet most of us weren't overweight because we were always playing outside. There were no mobile phones to tell our parents when we'd be home! As long as we were there for meals and back, mostly, when the streetlights came on you were fine. And even if you arrived home after the streetlights went on, as long as you had a good excuse (and someone to back it up!!!) it was usually okay.

We spent hours making go carts out of scrap to ride them down the steepest hill only to discover they had no brakes! There were no Play Stations, Nintendo, no Xboxes. If you fell out of a tree and tumbled down a hill and hurt yourself there were no lawsuits, no claims. We made mud pies and some of us may have eaten worms,



either on purpose or by mistake. We're still here! We made up games with sticks and tennis balls. Though, we knew what would happen if we poked anybody's eye out!

Local sports teams had try-outs and not everyone made the team. We learned to live with disappointment, and if we broke the law our parents sided with the law! We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned how to cope with it all. Our generation has produced risk-takers, problem-solvers, inventors and innovators.

Of course, many things back in our day needed changed, and there have been many positive advances since we were young. But for many of us, we didn't do too bad.

So, if you are reading this, well done, you made it through this year, and you made it through much worse. I don't remember being bored. What a wonderful youth we had. So raise a glass to the times we've lived through, and here's to the times to come. We're still here.

by Godfrey W Brock Gadd (Goddars)

## PAL Gazette News

**GET INVOLVED!** Would you like to join the team that helps put the Gazette together? You can help by writing articles, collecting recipes, searching for competitions, even helping with the mail out.

Call Lois on **07595 261253** if you would like to join the PAL Gazette team.

In the meantime, keep sending in your stories! We love your recipes, special stories, and poems.

Call Lois on **07595 261253**. Or if you use email, send them to **info@engagewithage.org.uk**



## Quick-fire Phone Competition!

The 8th person to call **Lois** on **07595 261253** will receive a £10 Tesco voucher. **Calls will be taken 10am-6pm, Monday-Friday.** Competition closes 23rd December 2022.

Winner announced in next edition.

Winner of the November Edition (Edition 31) was **Mary Kelly**.



# HERE TO HELP

To reach the Engage with Age team see numbers below.

We are always happy to receive your phone calls so our mobile numbers are:

- John McCandless** 07729 526576
- Cathy Chambers** 07468 695593
- Sarah Gordon** 07423 702721

- David Jamison** 07436 174793
  - Eamon Quinn** 07710 993036
  - Anna Albrzykowska** 07425 627531
- Our telephones are available during office hours and weekdays.** If you phone and we can't answer, please leave a message and we will return your call.

## Send your letters to:

**The PAL Gazette,  
Engage with Age,  
East Belfast Network Centre,  
55 Templemore Avenue,  
Belfast BT5 4FP.**  
**Or you can email:  
info@engagewithage.org.uk**



# Christmas Traditions

**From pulling Christmas crackers, leaving biscuits out for Santa or eating too much, we all have our Christmas Traditions. The following have been voted the most popular Traditions in the UK**

### 1. Pantomimes

Pantomimes, or 'pantos', are comical, musical productions, popular in all theatres from late November to the end of January. Often fairy tale inspired, a pantomime includes songs, slapstick comedy and dancing. It has its roots from 16th Century Italian Entertainment. In Northern Ireland pantomime is extremely popular with ticket sales only topped by London and Manchester. It's very much a tradition for tickets to be given in "Christmas Boxes" and for whole families to attend no matter what their age

### 2. Mince Pies and Christmas Pudding

Mince pies are small, sweet pies usually full of dried fruit and wintery spices called 'mincemeat'. With recipes dating back to 13th century English cookbooks, the original mince pies contained meat. Love them or hate them they are the epitome of Christmas time. An age-old folklore recommends that everyone should eat a mince pie on each of the twelve days

of Christmas to bring good luck for the following year.

Many countries around the world have their own traditional, but there's nothing more traditional than a Christmas pudding, the origins of which date back to medieval England. Usually made six weeks (sometimes more) ahead of the big day, the dish itself is made with dried fruit, breadcrumbs, dark sugars and brandy. It is reheated on the day and dressed with warm brandy, which is set alight.

### 3. Stockings

Whilst in most countries you may see Christmas stockings hung by the fireplace, in the past the tradition in the UK was for these to be hung at the end of the bed, ready for Father Christmas to fill while children are sleeping on this magical night. Whilst today they are normally filled with sweets, chocolates and the latest toy, in the past they contained nuts, oranges and maybe a hand carved wooden toy.

### 4. Boxing Day

The day after Christmas is known as Boxing Day, sometimes also known as St. Stephen's Day. Traditionally this was a day when servants received presents from their employees. Nowadays, Boxing Day is a public holiday and families usually spend it together



feasting on the leftovers from the day before and watching films while the children play with their new toys. Boxing Day has also become known as a day for major sporting events to take place and for those feeling brave enough to face the sales in the shops.

### 5. The Monarch's Christmas Message

The Christmas Message is broadcast on Christmas day via radio, TV and the internet. The tradition started in 1932 by King George V, and has since become an important part of the Christmas Day celebrations for many. The message is largely written by the

monarch and reflects on the past year, aiming to bring unity to all before the nation embarks on a new year. This year will be the first year the new King will deliver the Christmas message.

### 6. Christmas Crackers

You will find these novelty cardboard tubes on every Christmas dinner table setting. There is the usual dilemma of who to choose to pull the other end until they 'bang' and their contents spill open. Inside you will usually find a small toy, a joke and a paper crown, which you have to wear.

# The Questionnaire



**Name:** Ellie the Elf

**Position:** Toy Maker, Joiner, Painter, Helper.

**How do you enjoy spending your free time?**

There isn't much free time these days

because we are rushed off our feet. Sometimes the orders for gifts are hard to read as the notes have been burnt in the fire, though with central heating that's now getting fewer and far between. In the new year, when all has quietened down, I like to take winter walks. I also practice mindfulness and meditation.

### Why are these activities important to you?

I like getting out in the fresh air and stretching my legs. The cold weather apparently makes my nose turn red but personally I can't see it. In December the workshop is all hammers banging, noisy machines, and people shouting over the din, so I like to get peace and quiet and some "me time". My mindfulness and meditation also helps

me unwind, even if I only get ten minutes a day.

### What is the best thing about living here?

It's the wee kids and the big kids who live here. Everyone always appreciates a gift, no matter whether it cost a little or a lot. Sometimes a phone call to say hello can be the best present you can give someone. I hope everyone can remember their families and friends this year and give them a little treat.

### Favourite film?

Given the skills I have developed in my line of work I'm quite good at assembling Ikea furniture – I always enjoy that. Sometimes I bring a spare screw from the workshop and leave it out at the end to freak everyone out hahahahaha.

### Favourite Food?

At the moment, because I'm very busy, I

am mainly eating food for fuel to keep me going. I love Alphabeti Spaghetti. But it's not true that I use it to spell out naughty words. It's not like I'm an "Elf on the Shelf!"

### What advice would you give to younger people?

Sometimes making something worthwhile takes time. Stick with it, and do a little often every day, and you will be surprised how much you can achieve.

## Can You Read This Paper Clearly?

If you need a magnifying glass  
**phone or text Eamon on 07710 993 036.**  
We will send you one through the post for FREE.



# WHAT'S ON

## WALKS

There will be walks in South Belfast. If you are interested in taking part contact David Jamison for more details via phone on **07436 174793** or via email on [palproject@engagewithage.org.uk](mailto:palproject@engagewithage.org.uk)

## KIT GROUP

Every Thursday 2pm - The Keeping In Touch Group (KIT Group)  
Dee Street Community Centre, 12-16 Dee Street, Belfast BT4 1FT.

## T'AI CHI

Every Friday 11am at Inverary Community Centre, Inverary Avenue, Belfast BT4 1RN.

## DANCE GROUP

Every Friday at 2pm. Contact David for details on this fun dance group.

## FAMILY TREE GROUP

Please contact David for details. Next meeting 14th December 2022.

## DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COFFEE MORNING

Every fortnight, Café Refresh, Skainos Centre. For people living with dementia and their carers. Next coffee morning: 11am Monday 12th December 2022.

In all instances above, please call/ email David to let us know you're coming.  
Call David on **07436 174793** or email [palproject@engagewithage.org.uk](mailto:palproject@engagewithage.org.uk)

## THE CHRISTMASSY SLIPPED DISCO

Monday 12th December 2022 at 7.30pm, The Oh Yeah Music Centre.  
Booking essential. Tel: 028 9073 5696 or book online at <https://thechristmassyslippeddisco2022.eventbrite.co.uk>

# ONLINE EVENTS

## Chocolate Bingo

7.30pm Thursday 8th and Thursday 22nd December 2022.  
For zoom link email [eamon.quinn@engagewithage.org.uk](mailto:eamon.quinn@engagewithage.org.uk)

## The Pub Quiz Without a Pub

Via Zoom, 7.00pm Thursday 15th December 2022.  
For zoom link email [eamon.quinn@engagewithage.org.uk](mailto:eamon.quinn@engagewithage.org.uk)

## Free IT Training

Engage with Age has a limited number of places for "over the phone" IT training. If you are over the age of 60, live in Belfast, and have a computer, laptop, tablet or smart phone, you are eligible.

The training is provided by Ignite IT and can help you with your email, getting online, online safety etc.

To avail of this, call Eamon on **07710 993036**.

## Have Your Say with the Greater Belfast Seniors Forum



Our friends at Age Friendly Belfast have worked with Community Centres across Belfast to produce a list of warm spaces for older people to spend time during the day, to stay warm and avoid having to put heating on in their homes.

### A warm welcome in your community centre

Belfast's community centres are opening their doors this winter to support older people in the community. Our Warm Spaces Warm Welcome campaign will see each community centre dedicate time each week for older people to drop into their local community centre, where they can enjoy a chat over a hot cuooa, some light refreshments and catch up with other people in their community.

Community Centres	Days	Time	Phone
<b>Ardoyne</b>	Wednesday & Thursday	2.00pm - 4.00pm	028 9074 8523
<b>Braniel</b>	Wednesday & Thursday	9.30am - 1.30pm	028 9040 1444
<b>Clonduff</b>	Friday	9.30am - 12.30pm	028 9040 1444
<b>Concorde</b>	Monday & Wednesday	1.00pm - 4.00pm	028 9071 2450
<b>Cregagh</b>	Monday Tuesday & Wednesday	9.30am - 12.30pm 1.00pm - 4.00pm	028 9040 1444
<b>Dee Street</b>	Wednesday & Friday	1.00pm - 4.00pm	028 9045 8113
<b>Divis</b>	Monday & Tuesday	11.00am - 2.00pm	028 9024 2551
<b>Donegall Pass</b>	Wednesday & Friday	9.30am - 12.30pm	028 9032 7661
<b>Duncairn</b>	Tuesday	9.30am - 12.30pm	028 9074 0212
<b>Finaghy</b>	Monday & Friday	6.30pm - 9.30pm	028 9062 0474
<b>Glen Road</b>	Monday Wednesday	10.00am - 12noon 1.00pm - 4.00pm	028 9062 7189
<b>Hammer</b>	Wednesday	1.30pm - 4.30pm	028 9033 2860
<b>Highfield</b>	Tuesday & Wednesday Friday	2.00pm - 4.00pm 10.00am - 1.00pm	028 9039 1009
<b>Horn Drive</b>	Monday & Wednesday	1.00pm - 4.00pm	028 9060 4860
<b>Inverary</b>	Monday Tuesday	1.00pm - 4.00pm 9.30am - 12.30pm	028 9047 1456
<b>Knocknagoney</b>	Friday	9.30am - 12.30pm	028 9076 1432
<b>Ligoniel</b>	Monday, Tuesday & Thursday	10.00am - 1.00pm	028 9071 9337
<b>Markets</b>	Wednesday	1.00pm - 4.00pm	028 9023 5969
<b>Morton</b>	Tuesday & Thursday	9.30am - 12.30pm	028 9068 1874
<b>North Queen Street</b>	Monday, Wednesday & Friday	10.00am - 1.00pm	028 9032 3945
<b>Sandy Row</b>	Tuesday & Wednesday	1.00pm - 4.00pm	028 9032 5403
<b>Suffolk</b>	Monday & Friday	9.30am - 12noon	028 9060 2564
<b>Tullycarnet</b>	Wednesday & Friday	2.00pm - 4.00pm	028 9048 1816
<b>White City</b>	Monday & Thursday Tuesday	2.00pm - 4.00pm 10.00am - 12noon	028 9058 6180
<b>Whiterock</b>	Monday & Wednesday	2.00pm - 4.30pm	028 9032 8623
<b>Woodvale</b>	Monday & Wednesday	1.00pm - 4.00pm	028 9035 1548

## Crafty Corner

### How to make quick and easy Christmas gift bags

#### You will need :

- Red and White patterned fabric – This is only a suggestion, lots of haberdashery are selling lovely Christmas themed/patterned material or you could recycle some old material you have
- Hemming tape • Ribbon/twine or pipe cleaners • Scissors • Iron

**Step 1** - Cut your fabric into a two rectangles the same size, 18 inches by 16 inches, but you could make any size you want depending the gift you want to put inside it. Note that this will not hold very heavy items!

**Step 2** - Place one rectangle on the ironing board with the pattern face down. Cut and place hemming tape along the three edges, as you will need to leave one end open to place the gift inside.

**Step 3** - Place the other rectangle on top of the other rectangle with the hemming tape on it, the pattern should be face up.

**Step 4** - Turn iron on and when hot press down on the fabric leaving it long enough for hemming tape to stick (handy hint is to put grease proof paper between the fabric and the iron as this will prevent the material from burning). Leave to cool down for five minutes.

**Step 5** - Place your gift inside and tie back together with twine or ribbon.

You could get evening more creative by using beads on the twine or putting glitter patterns on your bag.



# Merry Christmas WORD SEARCH

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

Enter our Word Search competition for a chance to win a £10 Tesco voucher.

Find the following 15 words hidden in the word square above:

- MERRY • FRIENDS • CANDY • HOLIDAY • CAROL • CHRISTMAS
- GIFTS • GIVING • MUSIC • VACATION • DECORATIONS
- ORNAMENTS • LIGHTS • FAMILY • SHOPPING • SANTA

To enter, phone Lois Kennedy on **07595 261 253 on weekdays, 10am-6pm**. Please note due to the popularity of competitions all correct entries are placed in a draw and the winner chosen at random.

The winner will be announced in the next edition of The PAL Gazette.

**Entries for this edition's quiz need to be in by 23rd December 2022.**

## Recipe Festive Fruit Bannock

### Ingredients:

- 6 ounces Caster Sugar
- 1/4 pint Milk
- 6 ounces Sultanas
- 2 ounces chopped Glace Cherries
- 4 ounces Margarine/Butter
- 8 ounces Self-raising Flour
- 1 large Egg
- Icing Sugar for dusting

### Method:

Put the sugar, milk, and butter/margarine into a saucepan and bring slowly to the boil, stirring well. Allow to cool slightly then add the flour and beaten egg. Roll the sultanas and glace cherries in a little flour then add to the Bannock mix (this will prevent them from falling to the bottom during baking). Pour into a well-greased loaf or cake tin. Bake for one hour at 350°F/ 180°C or Gas no 4, but check after 45 minutes. When cooked, dust with icing sugar. This is delicious spread with butter for afternoon tea.

(Photo, editor's mother testing this month's recipe)



## WORDS ALIVE - "Winter" by Margaret Wilson

I remember, I remember - it started last December;

The snow and ice descended - and we were quite offended.

"It's far too early," we all cried - "We like Christmas more mild."

We slithered and we slipped... some even fractured hips!

The pavement was like glass... the roads like Glenshane Pass.

Clearing same; AGAINST THE LAW - so we prayed fervently for thaw.

Water flowed and gushed unheeded - but what we really, really needed

Was a little cup of tea - and to flush when we went for a wee.

We queued for hours for our supplies... but it came as no surprise

The Water Service NOT TO BLAME - the local councils: MUCH THE SAME

After all, who would have guessed - snow in winter? I fear you jest!

Come this December, hibernate - either that or emigrate!

### OLD JOKES HOME!

Submitted by our Anonymous Phone Caller who loves a joke.

**What did the icy road say to the car?** Want to go for a spin?

**What is the best breakfast cereal to eat in winter?** Frosted flakes

**Why doesn't Santa go to the hospital?** He has private Elf Care

# Tea Time Quiz

Answer each of these five questions correctly for your chance to win a £10 Tesco voucher.

1. In the song **Twelve Days of Christmas**, what is given on the 7th day?
2. In what country did the custom of putting up a **Christmas tree** originate?
3. What is traditionally hidden in a **Christmas Pudding**?
4. How many ghosts show up in a **Christmas Carol**?
5. In which year was the **Queens Speech** first Broadcast 1952, 1965 or 1957?

To enter, phone **Lois Kennedy on 07595 261253 on weekdays, 10am-6pm**. Please note due to the popularity of competitions all correct entries are placed in a draw and the winner chosen at random.

**Entries for this edition's quiz need to be in by 23rd December 2022.**

Winner of November's Edition (Edition 31) is Doreen Jones

**The answers to November's quiz were:**

1. Basketball 2. Tank 3. Pink Floyd. 4. M\*A\*S\*H 5. Come Fly With Me

## Night Blessing

Submitted by Audrey Lynas

May you be thankful for friendship and may you have the wisdom to tell those who have helped you or supported you what they mean to you. Whether it be a card, a smile, a coffee or moments spent together, may you appreciate the gift of those who are in your life #Niteblessing

## New Volunteers Call Out

Engage With Age's PAL Befriending project is seeking new volunteers to provide support over the telephone to help address the impact of isolation and loneliness with older people. Full training is provided. To find out more please email Sarah on [befriending@engagewithage.org](mailto:befriending@engagewithage.org) or call her on **07423 702721**.



## If you can spot a scam, you can stop a scam

**You do not need to apply for the payment**

**You will never be contacted by SMS for personal details**

**If you are unsure, check [gov.uk/costoflivingpayments](http://gov.uk/costoflivingpayments)**



scamwiseNI

## Cost Effective Cooking

With increases in the cost of fuel, what are the cheapest ways to cook?

Here is a run-down of the most expensive to the cheapest appliances to use in the kitchen to help you plan how you make your meals.

The electric oven is the most expensive appliance. It costs an average of 61p for 43 minutes on average daily use. If you are using your oven, fill it and cook a number of dishes at the same time

Next most expensive is cooking in pots on the hob. To save energy, use the lid of your pot and cook at a simmer rather than a boil.

Slow cookers are next on the list, which are very trendy! 3.5 hours of slow cooker use will cost you 12p.

Air Fryers come in well too. 20 minutes average use will cost 10p. It uses less electricity to heat up and cooks in a fraction of the time.

The microwave cooker is the real star of the kitchen. It comes in at 6p for 20 minutes use and it excels at heating up meals you've cooked earlier. It means you do not need to use your oven or your hob every day.

On average, it is cheaper to heat a pot of water on the hob than to boil an electric kettle.

These figures come from Jamie Oliver's Channel 4 television programme "Jamie's £1 Wonders" programme. To watch the series and get lots of low cost/ high flavour recipes watch on Channel 4 On Demand.

Engage with Age thanks its supporters and funders:

