

Includes
Barrow Focus

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Barrow Voice

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BOG's Autumn Watch



Hairspray



Ann's farewell

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Editorial

In the last edition, Ginnie Willcocks highlighted the problems faced by people using mobility scooters on paths and jitties in the village. Now the Parish Council is trying to organise a voluntary group of residents to keep them looking their best and stay accessible. What a great initiative! Read all about it on page 17 in Barrow Focus. Another consequence of this article is that there are a few Co-op trolleys at the front of the shop these days. Formerly they were all in the carpark; most inconveniently placed for mobility scooter users. One article two positive consequences - the power of the press!

In this edition we have a topical emphasis as there is much about Festive Fayre available from the excellent range of pubs and restaurants in Barrow and neighbouring Burton. Plus an innovation – a page devoted to gluten free Christmas recipes. Our Christmas Quiz is there to test your memories of past pop tunes and an article on Christmas trees. If you would like to sail on a Santa Sleigh boat with Santa and his elves then don't miss reading about the Peter le Marchant Trust.

Other articles, will sweep you away to Grenada in the Caribbean with Frances Acton and the Girl Guides or closer to home to the Soar's river banks where author Ian Buckingham found the quietness to write 'Legend of the Lost'.

And there's more as we look back to the autumn months with a review of October's horrible Humphrey Perkins death in the Murder Mystery - this time by electrocution – and the creativity of Barrow Open Gardens Autumnwatch with its array of plants, scarecrows, river scene, cakes, apples and cider.

In this edition we come to the end of our short story competition's winning entries with Tia Pedrola's 'Becoming an Author'. Tia won the under 11s category and with such remarkable fluency and storytelling ability I confidently expect her to be writing for BV in a few years' time if she's not already been snapped up by The Times!

Gaynor Barton, Editor

Front Cover: *Christmas High Street*

Britain In Bloom with the RHS, Judges Award 2018



Members of Barrow upon Soar Gardening Club were delighted to have achieved a Judges Award for the beautiful way the village roundabout, Jerusalem Island, is maintained. Pictured with the award are three Gardening Club members - from left to right, Catherine, Val, and Veronica but wish to add that Rose and Jeanette work on the island too.



Catherine, Val & Veronica

BARROW PANTO GROUP

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Peter Pan

The Panto

Friday 8th March - 7.00pm
Saturday 9th March - 2.00pm & 7.00pm
Humphrey Perkins Community Centre

Humphrey Perkins School and the Lionheart Academy Trust

Your readers may already be aware that Humphrey Perkins School has recently joined the Lionheart Academy Trust which is a small family of local Leicester City and Leicestershire primary and secondary schools, headed up by the Ofsted-rated 'Outstanding' school, Beauchamp Academy in Oadby. Humphrey Perkins is delighted to have joined such an ambitious and collaborative Trust, and has already started to benefit from the many advantages this brings. Not only does it have very knowledgeable and experienced leadership from the new Principals, Mrs Jenny Piper-Gale and Mrs Della Bartram, the Senior and Middle Leadership staff are supported by Directors in subject faculties and from Senior Leaders at other Trust schools.

Most recently though, Humphrey Perkins has seen a complete overhaul of its IT systems, both in and out of the classrooms. Students are benefiting from enhanced visual and sound technology. As the school moves forward, it hopes to gain funding for new English, Maths and Science blocks!

In the past term, staff from a variety of faculties have been able to visit other schools within the Trust to hone their practice and share strategies that were praised by the recent Ofsted and Lionheart Academy Trust inspections, which recognised the significant steps forward that the school has made.

Opportunities for Humphrey Perkins' students to succeed and excel are also increasing. There are student leadership opportunities in every subject and many of the students

are part of the Junior and Senior Leadership teams who meet regularly with the Principals and Team Leaders to form the vision of the school moving forwards. Our newly appointed Anti-Bullying Student Leaders are looking forward to hosting a regional training event for The Diana Award in November. Students are also raising their profile in the Barrow community, attending the Barrow Remembers wreath-laying service, along with Hall Orchard, and planning a performance at the Christmas Lights Switch On this year. We have also relaunched our PTFA – now called 'Friends of Humphrey Perkins'. Do contact the school if you are interested in joining.

The Drama department is also excited to announce that this year's school production will be 'High School Musical'. Rehearsals are well underway and the performance



promises to be a fun-filled and energetic experience! Members of the community are warmly invited to attend one of the performances planned for the 6th, 7th and 8th February 2019. Tickets are available from the reception or on the door on the night. Last year's tickets for 'Grease' sold out, so be sure to get your tickets for this year's performance in good time. Finally, do look out for the first edition of the school newspaper, which will be distributed with the Principal's Christmas newsletter.

You can keep up-to-date with all events and opportunities by following Humphrey Perkins on Facebook and Twitter - www.facebook.com/humphreyperkinsschoolbarrow or www.twitter.com/humphreyperkins as well as their own website.

Frances Acton

Barrow Library helping build confidence and find employment

Since becoming a community library three years ago, Barrow relies on its workforce of volunteers to keep the show on the road. It's more of a social centre these days too – not just about borrowing books but also a place to log-on to computers, have a coffee and a chat.

All the volunteers I have talked to and worked alongside believe passionately in safeguarding the future of the library. But there is another side to volunteering that is providing experience both for young people and those wanting to get into or return to employment.



Abi Jones

Abi Jones, a student at Humphrey Perkins, saw the sign in the library asking for help and dropped in. She was thrilled to discover that at 15 she was able to get involved in the running of the library. "Most places I'd been to had turned me down as I was not yet 16".

Barrow Library has a young volunteers' scheme for 14-18 year olds where they are paired up with an existing volunteer and mentor. They are trained on day-to-day library duties but can also help with displays, events and fundraising. Abi puts her computer skills to good use helping library members using the free-of-charge computers.

Edward Thomas from Wymeswold is 19 and in his second year at Durham University studying Maths. He's been helping out for a couple of years during school and university holidays. Like Abi, Edward finds the

environment welcoming and says, "I enjoy working alongside people I wouldn't otherwise get to know."

Both Abi and Edward point to the life skills they have gained: problem solving, working in a team and serving members of the public. They know they are more self-confident now than when they joined the library team and both are happy to juggle shifts around exams and academic pressures.

Angeline Kazianis, the library's volunteer co-ordinator, points to the more tangible benefits for job-seekers. "I have seen how people rise to the challenge of adapting to a new team and working environment. They thrive and this has been reflected in references I have given them and their success in securing jobs."

Frances Thompson

Peter le Marchant Trust

For nearly forty years the Peter Le Marchant Trust, based in Loughborough, has provided day outings and holidays, on their boats, for people of all ages with serious illnesses or disabilities. Lady Clare Le Marchant's brother, Peter, died prematurely in the seventies, leaving a legacy. Lady Clare used this legacy to set up the Peter Le Marchant Trust and although she is in her early 80s now, the trust is still very much her baby.

Their aim is to deliver a happy and memorable experience to all who spend time on their boats, many of whom would not be able to have a holiday without this amazing trust and its willing volunteers. The trust own three boats: the Symphony,

the Serenade and the Melody. The first two can carry 26 passengers for one-day outings, and the Serenade can also offer three to four days skippered holidays for up to ten people. The Melody, an eight-berth narrow boat is available for family hire. The boats are fully equipped to cater for a wide range of disabilities as each one has an hydraulic lift to allow easy access from the deck area to the cabins.

Around four thousand visitors use the boats each year, including disabled people from Barrow. On one occasion there were fourteen disabled children on board. One boy who had never reacted to anything started to respond for the first time when he was on the boat. What a rewarding experience that must have been for the carers and also the volunteers of the trust. Like everything else the cost of running the boats continues to rise. Fundraising brings in much needed revenue and if you have any novel ideas how to raise funds, the trust would love to hear from you.

Seasonal fundraisers are the Santa Sleighboat trips where children can meet Santa and his elves. Starting on



the 8th December and continuing on each Saturday and Sunday of the month, the Santa Sleighboat journey lasts 45 minutes, refreshments are included and each child gets a present. Pre-booking is essential. An added bonus for the Mums and Dads is that free parking is available. If you would like to help the trust to continue in their valuable work, you can become a member of the Peter le Marchant Trust Friends' Association for a little as £3 per month, and if you are a taxpayer the Trust can claim Gift Aid. You can also donate to leave a lasting gift and therefore enable this wonderful charity to carry on bringing joy into the lives of those who are less able.

Val Gillings

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T & C's: All children must be accompanied by a responsible adult at all times. Boats will leave promptly at the designated times. Peter Le Marchant Trust reserve the right to cancel tickets with 60p refund and a full refund given.

Bye Ann!

See you around, but sadly no longer around the table at Judith's for editorial meetings. You'd sit there quietly, a friendly presence just chipping in now and again when a subject was of interest or you had something special to contribute. Ann Higgins, we'll miss you!

We're sorry you've decided to give up being the magazine's Subscriptions' Secretary as you have done it so well for so long. Keeping former Barrow residents in touch with their beloved village was much appreciated by those who wanted to read a paper copy. One such person was Heather Leader, a name many residents will remember as she lived on Breadcroft Lane, took an active part in village life then moved to Wales. And she's still there, and has never missed an edition thanks to you.

I spoke to Ann recently to find out more about her association with the magazine and learnt that when she took over, twenty years ago, posting a copy, second class, in Barrow, cost 34p and now it's £1.26 from Quorn. So

postage has gone up, but those using the service have gone down as the web-version has increased in popularity. In 1998 there were twelve users, now only five, as many have died. Another part of Ann's job was to post free copies to the advertisers. Man-handling large numbers of Barrow Voice came with the territory, as Ann used to deliver the boxes to people who then delivered them to households, as well as having a delivery round herself.

Although not born and bred here, Ann comes from Barrow in Furness, she arrived in 1963 and so knows the village extremely well. She has her favourite spots and memories - the walk to Pigs Close and back was a favourite when her children were small and she'll never



Ann Higgins, front row centre, surrounded by members of the editorial team

forget seeing the canal completely dry after the old stone bridge over the weir collapsed in March 1971. Another great memory is the fun the village had celebrating the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977 - especially the parade down the High Street. Ahhh memories and we'll have great memories of you Ann. Thanks very much for all you've done for Barrow Voice.

Gaynor Barton

Martin Page

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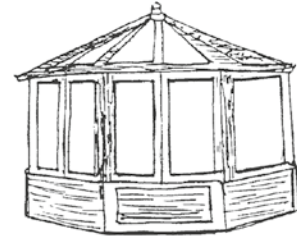
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Michael Gilbert



I was very sad to hear the news that Michael had passed away and I feel that I was particularly lucky to have known him as he was such an interesting person and a gentleman. I spent a number of hours chatting with Michael about his boyhood in Barrow, his work, the jobs he'd had and about his many leisure activities, I'm certain he wouldn't mind me sharing this information with the readers of Barrow Voice. He died on September 30th aged 91.

Michael was born in Barnsley, but moved to Seagrave (into the accommodation at the Quorn Hunt Kennels on Paudy Lane to be precise) as a child: his father had secured a position with the Quorn. After his father's untimely death he moved to a house in Melton Road with his mother, brother, sister and maternal grandparents. In fact, Michael continued to live there until a couple of years ago.

He attended the village primary school and moved on to The College School at Loughborough at the age of eleven. He cycled to school in Loughborough and received a grant of a guinea (£1.05) per year to cover maintenance costs for his bike! The boys who attended this school at this time were nicknamed "Plum and Custard" because the school colours were maroon and yellow.

Michael left school, aged 16, and applied to the War Office for employment. They were advertising for electronics and maintenance engineers and offering training. His application was successful, his first job being at Beaumanor Hall, which at that time was a WW2 "Y", or listening station, where information was gathered and passed on to Bletchley Park for decoding. He worked on the aerial amplifiers, checking current measurements and servicing receivers. On Saturdays he worked for Harry Graham in his electrical shop, servicing

and repairing radios and other devices.

After the war Michael continued to work at Beaumanor but was then faced with doing a period of service in Cyprus, which he declined, so began working full-time for Harry Graham. At that time there was a high demand for televisions, radios and record players. He spent ten years in this job, installing TVs, assisting with aerial erection, repairing other electronic equipment and studying for his City and Guilds qualifications. He had many amusing stories about some of the hazards he, and others, encountered when positioning an aerial on a chimney or roof - no health and safety guidelines in those days! Thankfully no-one was seriously hurt. Michael moved to Brush Electrical Engineering Company in the 1970s where he worked until his retirement.

Michael had many leisure interests including bee keeping, photography, local history, walking and mountaineering. In fact he was a member of Barnsley Mountaineering Club for most of his adult life. We never talked about his bee keeping activities but I know he once tried to use the mechanism from an old tumble dryer to make a spinning device to separate honey from the honeycomb!

He had a fantastic collection of slides, particularly of Barrow during the 1960s and

70s before the Ribble Drive, Beaumont Road and Thirlmere Road estates were built. Many of these photos were taken from the top of Holy Trinity Church tower. He was a member of the local history group in the village which later became the Heritage Group, where his amazing memory for people and place names was valued immensely. Michael also belonged to the group that planned the programme of summer walks. His favourite was the one across the fields from The Beacon Field on Cotes Road to Cotes Mill. Well, almost to Cotes Mill! He was forever disappointed that the footpath finished one field before you reached the mill.

Finally, as I mentioned earlier, Michael was extremely proud to be a member of the Barnsley Mountaineering Club. He went on many expeditions with them to the Derbyshire peaks, Scotland, especially the Cairngorms and Skye, and to north Wales, he belonged to the Snowdonia Society, and to the Swiss Alps.

It was always a pleasure talking to Michael because he had so many interests and such a good memory. I'm glad I had the opportunity to record a number of his stories and events from such an interesting life and was able to thank him for taking the time to share these with me. A gentle man remembered.

Ginnie Willcocks

Charnwood Orchestra

The Charnwood Orchestra celebrates the New Year in style with the music of Vienna and beyond. Throw off those post-Christmas blues, with an evening of toe-tapping polkas and waltzes along with other classical favourites.

Amongst performances of Viennese favourites from the Strauss family, the orchestra will also perform that exciting curtain-raiser Mendelssohn's Overture Ruy Blas, the well-known and much loved Dance of the Sylphs and Rakoczy March from Berlioz's comic opera The Damnation of Faust, Brahms' Hungarian Dance No.5 and Smetana's Vltava.

The orchestra will be conducted by its musical director Nic Fallowfield, who will also play solo violin for Tchaikovsky's Serenade Melancolique.

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Barrow Voice

Skidaddles: a new Soft Play facility in Barrow

A new business opened up on the Hayhill Industrial Estate this September. It is a soft play facility called Skidaddles and when I went to chat to John Derry, the owner, two weeks after it had opened, it was already full of pre-school children, toddlers and their mums having a really lovely time.

John is very well placed to run Skidaddles. After a career as a refrigerator repairer for major supermarkets, he became very fed up with long hours and travelling. He wanted to be able to spend more time with his family of four girls. He took the radical step of joining his wife's home-based child-minding business. That worked fine. He then went on to create Glenfield Kids' Club which was an immediate success. His wife Natalie now runs the kids' club, freeing John to start the two-year research needed into setting up a soft play facility.

He bought soft play equipment from the Hobby Horse in Syston as it had closed. Two years later he found Unit 36 on the Hayhill Estate. It took months of sorting out: all the planning, rules and regulations, safety checking, fire testing, food hygiene, etc. etc. but eventually, this September, he was able to open his doors to the public.

His philosophy has been to provide an experience which reflects what his own family would enjoy. It is clean, colourful, fresh and very inviting. The children are immediately attracted to all the tunnels, slides, balls, boxes and climbing netting. Adults go free (unlike many of his competitors). You can indulge in a range of hot and cold drinks, luscious homemade cakes and snacks. There's also free Wi-Fi so the adults get a good experience too. This is an important consideration when John is offering an unlimited stay for children from 0 years to 11 years (10 – 11 year olds) either as a family visit or as part of a children's party. Everyone needs to be happy! In fact John is especially pleased that delighted customers are already returning for more. Barrow Voice sends good wishes to John and Skidaddles.

Judith Rodgers



John Derry

Exciting new life breathed into Ultimate Pizza by new management

After a worrying period of closures in Barrow, winter has seen some return of trade to businesses that had closed earlier in the year. In the case of Ultimate Pizza, we needn't have worried. The business was transferred to new management partners – Habib and Alex – in August and remained open for a short time before shutting for a full and comprehensive refurbishment. It reopened on 28th October, still called Ultimate Pizza, but now transformed inside into a pleasant, modern and hygienic take-away shop. It will take longer to upgrade the outside because of bureaucratic delays in getting a gas supply to the property.

I asked Habib why they had decided to stick to the name Ultimate Pizza. He explained that his 16 years' experience in the catering industry told him that when it comes to food, people choose what they know; what they are confident about. So he will continue to sell pizzas; high quality Italian pizzas cooked to authentic recipes using the correct equipment and ingredients. It's the same with his burgers and fries. As soon as he gets a gas supply he can start to provide doner kebabs and shish (means skewered) with the traditional fresh salads, sauces and bread.

He aims to open between 4 and 11pm on each day of the week and provide Barrow with really nice food.

I asked Habib why he chose to come to Barrow. He told me that he came to live in Leicester from Iran about 16 years ago and has worked in catering in Leicester for most of that time. But he feels that Leicester, like most big cities, has too many different cuisines and people get very confused. They don't know what to expect when ordering, often ending-up disappointed. Instead he wants to develop more of a family atmosphere, where he knows his customers and they get what they want and expect. He thinks he can do this in Barrow where there is a smaller and more intimate population. He already likes the feel of the village and is looking forward to making Ultimate Pizza a successful takeaway business. Barrow Voice extends its Good Wishes to Habib and Alex.

Judith Rodgers



Alex on left, Habib on right



Storyboard and River Soar view

How the Soar fuelled an author's passion for writing

Long car journeys with children are often experiences that parents would rather forget. But for Ian Buckingham, trips to the family home in Cornwall ignited a spark that led him to switch from writing books on brand management to a trilogy of children's books – which he completed in Barrow.

Last year, Ian, a management consultant based in the East Midlands, was looking to take a retreat where he could write with minimal interruptions and commitments (every writer's dream). He found an annex to let, off Cotes Road, on the banks of the River Soar. It proved to be the perfect spot to unleash creativity.

"I didn't know Barrow, but I was working on a consultancy project nearby, ironically in the mining industry, so it worked well for me," he says. "It was last winter and, as people will recall, we had a proper winter so I felt as though I was in the middle of nowhere, while surrounded by nature, perhaps a little too surrounded at times, given the Arctic conditions and floods."

So, how did those conversations with little ones in the back seat of the car translate into a trilogy of novels?

To keep his young daughters entertained, he would create scenes – "There's a wolf in the forest, what happens next?" – and the family would dip into their imaginations to create exciting scenarios and characters in a type of storytelling relay.

One day, Ian and his elder daughter discussed capturing the stories they had created together. They worked through the scraps of notes they had made and sketched out the story on an A3 sheet of paper.

Years later, he took it out of a drawer and it formed the basis for his trilogy, Legend of the Lost.

The series is about an ancient changeling family and their struggle to reconnect after being torn apart under mysterious and tragic circumstances. The tale begins with two sisters, Holly and Lucy, on holiday in an idyllic Cornish fishing village. The chance discovery of a magical moonstone leads to encounters with enchanted friends and mortal enemies and they soon discover that their past, and their family, are not what they have come to believe. During an epic adventure, the children uncover unique powers, qualities, alter egos and magical artifacts that help them solve the mystery of their family's past and transport them into a world where fairy folk, humans, changelings and other enchanted creatures overlap. Their journey takes them from Cornwall to mines in the heart of England, the deserts of Namibia and islands of Canada.

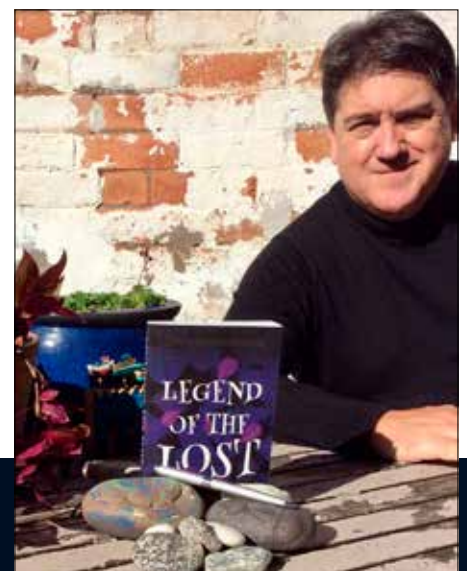
The writing process for Ian involves sketching his ideas on a storyboard then "joining the dots in the journey" - he likes to have a visual plan or chart. He decided not to illustrate the books, except for the cover illustration by Jack Wedgbury of the Book Guild, a publisher in Leicester.

"When people read fantasy books, they have a picture of the character in their minds and I don't want to change that. I connect with readers on social media instead, encouraging them to send in pictures which I share on Instagram, Twitter and the website."

The first book is available on most online platforms like Amazon for £7.99 or £2.99 on Kindle – two more will be published next year – and has had good reviews all round. One reviewer wrote: "A magical masterpiece and you will not be able to put it down. The last time I had this feeling about a book was after reading the first Harry Potter."

Says Ian, who has written several business books: "Writing books on business consultancy is far from easy. But that's nothing compared to the pressure of getting these stories right. I found the writing experience really fulfilling and it's heartening that a growing number of readers seem to be enjoying reading the series as much as the children and I enjoyed writing it."

Lindsay Ord



*For more information see: www.legend-of-the-lost.com

Twitter: @ConnectLOL • **Facebook:** Legend of the Lost • **Instagram:** connectwithlotl

Barrow Guides go to Grenada

When we agreed to host an overseas group of leaders and girls at the Charnwood International Guide and Scout Camp in 2016, little did we know what adventures were in store for us as a Guide unit.

Two years later, five leaders and seven girls boarded a BA flight in October 2018 to the Caribbean island of Grenada for a trip of a lifetime.

As we emerged with our luggage from Customs, we were greeted by the Chief Commissioner and members of Grenada Girlguiding, and many of our Grenada friends from Charnwood 2016. Our taxi took us to our accommodation, which was ideally located ten minutes walk from Grand Anse beach and a short bus ride into the capital, St George's. The following day we started the trip with beach games and a BBQ hosted by Grenada Guides and we finished the week with a visit to a Guide meeting at St Joseph's school, led by our friend and Guide leader, Cleon St Paul, where the girls joined in with a patrol-wide game. Our two youngest guides made their Promise in front of the gathering and we surprised our friends by singing the Grenada national anthem, which we had learnt during the week.

Our other adventures included an island tour to a herb and spice garden, a nutmeg and chocolate processing station and a chocolate factory where, of course, we sampled all the products. We also visited several waterfalls, one of which involved a hike through the rainforest and across some raging rivers of Grand Etang National Park. We went snorkelling in Flamingo bay and the Underwater Sculpture Park, we visited the National Museum and climbed up to Fort Frederick and Fort George for amazing views across the island and the coast. We went shopping in the craft and spice markets and swam in the beautiful clear blue sea most days. We experienced blazing sunshine, exhausting heat, torrential rain and spectacular sunsets. We also sampled traditional foods at the Street Food Fair and entertained our Grenada friends at our apartments, playing games and doing crafts together in exchange for having our hair braided Caribbean style.



The week flew by and it was with tired bodies and heavy hearts that we said farewell to friends old and new before catching our flight home. But the good news is that they are planning to send a group to Charnwood 2019, so we hope to see them again soon. Long may our very special friendship continue!

Frances Acton


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The Three Crowns is a beautiful 17th-century building situated in the heart of the vibrant village of Barrow upon Soar. We are open daily at the following times:
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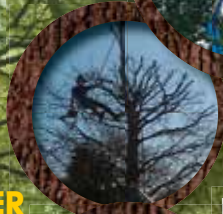


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Sounds interesting, but what exactly do you do?

Barrow resident Julie Tyler talks about career switching, being an independent celebrant and love.

I don't mind writing in the village magazine that I turned 49 this year, as long as you promise to look surprised when you see me! It was a turning point for me. I loved what I did but I hadn't chosen it, it had chosen me, and I wanted to make a big change and see what I could do. The first step to career shifting is working out what you want. In my case: to make a real difference that I could see and feel; to feel confident I could do it well; enjoy what I do and to do something that grows me.

I had known in the back of my mind that being a celebrant might be just the thing for a couple of years. Having worked with



feedback from funeral service clients, I knew that the small, personal touches meant the world. When I tell people I have become a celebrant, they generally say, "Oh ok...what's one of those?"

I provide celebrations: personally written funeral services for those who would like to celebrate the life of their loved one with a bespoke service. It has been a transformational experience for me. I can see every day the difference I make to families at the most difficult of times. A service that captures the essence of your loved one and celebrates and honours them can be a great comfort.

The role requires very specific skills. I had a background in HR and knew I could chat and can keep detailed notes at the same time (this is essential). I have a deep love of literature and poetry so writing services is a privilege, finding the most perfect words and sentiments an inspiration. With a background in public speaking, all my colleagues had suggested that I could work as a professional speaker. What better way to use a skill like this than to bring comfort to others?

Many people are still not aware that they can have the funeral service they want, however they would like it. Many people never speak with their families about what they might like, it's an important conversation we all put off.

People have asked me what it's like doing what I do.

It is rewarding every day, and it is all about love.

I help families to remember and articulate love

when it is so hard

for them to find the words. It's an honour.

I've lived in Barrow for 16 years, and am still completely in love with this village. I believe in supporting my village, and have been club leader of the Tuesday pack for four years. If you are a member of a local charity, or group, and you would like me to speak at a meeting, please let me know. Or if you are a member of a charity which needs support with advice on public speaking, I'm happy to help. If you need advice on writing a eulogy, choosing poems or readings, or finding a wedding or baby-naming celebrant, please drop me a line.

I can be contacted at

Julie@celebratelifestories.co.uk via the website **www.celebratelifestories.co.uk** or on Facebook at Life Stories Ltd. (Please mention to your funeral director if you would like me to create a service for you. Celebrant charges vary but examples are available online.)

Julie Tyler



Becoming an Author

How do I begin? What do I say? When should it start? Wait I thought, it had suddenly struck me like a lightning bolt hitting an electricity cable, I had remembered the amazing J.K. Rowling (who in my opinion is the greatest author the world has ever seen) and what she had quoted 'A book is like a mirror: if a fool looks in, you cannot expect a genius to look out.' That's it! I need to think logically I thought, digging deep within my brain to find something that would fit. Any word, any sentence, just something. Eventually, (after many minutes) I found it. The perfect idea that would make an intriguing story - which nobody would ever be able to put down. I had an immediate urge to write; I needed to get down everything that was rapidly flooding into my mind. Words bled out of my pen, taking the form of a masterpiece that someday I hoped would be available for the world to love too. What could I expect? How far could my dreams go? I was just a young girl that had a strong passion for writing. It didn't mean that a few years later I would miraculously see this story sitting on the shelves of every bookshop and library in England. Anyway, I wrote for enjoyment and that's all that mattered. Writing lead me to different places and each and every time it would be an unforgettable adventure. The feeling of freedom whenever I launched myself into another book was heavenly.

Happily, I wrote to my heart's content. Each day after school, each time I needed to run away from the real world and each time I just wanted to write, I would sit at my desk and let my mind expand. It took weeks and weeks for it all to drain out from my brain until finally one day it was complete. I was immensely relieved when I had finished this enormously large task, but I realised that sadly I could no longer immerse myself in the placid world of pixies and fairy folk, which is what the story was about. It was an exquisite place to visit, so that kept me determined and hard-working whilst I

created this story. I was a budding author eager to share my writing with others. I had already attended many young authors days at various libraries and read lots of books (probably enough to fill my bedroom, top to bottom, no gaps).

Luckily, my father is the editor of our local newspaper, so he was able to slot my story amongst the other news; I was overwhelmed with joy. This paper was delivered to all of the city and fortunately for me a publisher was visiting the area.

A letter came through the postbox addressed to me (Poppy Meadows) about

arranging a date to meet the publisher and possibly publishing the book. This all went through without disruption, leaving me now as a famous author adored by all.

As I sit here looking back I realise how grateful I am. How fabulous it is to have an inspiration that leads you to success!

Tia Pedrola

**Short story competition winner
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Barrow Remembers: Centenary of the end of the First World War



On Remembrance Sunday 2017 in Holy Trinity Church Barrow, seventy-two poppy wreaths were blessed. Over the next twelve months villagers placed those wreaths at the graves or memorials of each one of our First World War dead.

The Parish Council laid the first wreaths at the National Arboretum at Alrewas, Staffordshire to remember the three young men who died in Mesopotamia (now Iraq) and one young man who died in Palestine (now the Gaza Strip). The wreath laying year ended with a service at the cemetery on Cotes Road, when students from Hall Orchard and Humphrey Perkins schools laid wreaths on the graves of the seven men buried in the village. In the intervening months around fifty volunteers visited graves and memorials in France, Belgium and other parts of Britain.

This was how we remembered.



On researching the lives of those who died, it became apparent just what an impact on the village the deaths of these young men would have had: six young men from Beveridge Street died, eight from New Street, five from Church Street. This was how the 'Poppy Walk' came into being. We attached large poppies to lamp-posts around the village, along with a list of the WW1 dead who had lived in those areas before the war. The information was compiled from the 1911 Census, surviving war records, Commonwealth War Graves Commission records and Loughborough Echo articles from the time. The Parish Council almost immediately received very positive feedback from local people who found the installations thought-provoking and moving.

The Parish Council would like to thank Holy Trinity Church for their help and assistance in staging an exhibition about the men on our War Memorial and their lives. The exhibition took place on the two Saturdays before Remembrance Sunday and on the intervening Wednesday. We were particularly interested by the photos brought in by descendants of our war dead and the stories that they told. We are also grateful to those who lent artifacts including medals, photographs and a whistle used in the trenches to signal 'over the top'. The second Saturday included an extra fascinating exhibition at the Roundhouse including memorabilia

and exhibits from the era. The exhibition was remarkably well attended.

In years to come, there is the distinct possibility that Barrow children will ask their elders "What did you knit for the Centenary of the end of WW1?" Mrs Ann Childs asked for help to make seventy-two knitted poppies to mark each of our war dead. In the end she received over one thousand poppies, each made with love, by a team of knitters, crocheters and needlewomen from around the local area. The poppies were displayed throughout the village as swags and banners, the most dramatic of which was hung on Jerusalem Island. These will now be conserved before being made into a more permanent display for future use.

The Parish Council wishes to thank each and every person who has contributed to this year of remembrance. We want to express our particular thanks to all those who volunteered to lay wreaths. Without you this commemoration could not have taken place.

To finish, we end with these words, chosen by his mother and written on the grave of Arthur Bond, not just her only child but her only living relative. He died 25th January 1917, aged 33: "Loved too much to ever be forgotten."

Barrow Remembers.

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LOOKING AFTER THE PUBLIC FOOTPATHS, JITTIES AND OPEN GARDEN SPACES AROUND BARROW

Are there any residents of Barrow that are interested in helping to keep the footpaths, jitties and open garden spaces around the village looking their best? If so, would you be prepared to join a group of like-minded folk to look after and tidy up some of these footpaths and open spaces?

There would be many benefits if such a group could get support.

Social contact with like-minded residents: a chance to talk to friends and neighbours, whilst keeping Barrow looking clean and tidy. Together with learning new skills, and becoming more aware of our surroundings.

Giving something back to the community; the feel good factor that volunteering gives is known to promote well-being and happiness.

Regular exercise; similar groups already exist around the country and are called Green Gyms. These sessions provide guided practical conservation activities, which help to improve health and fitness.

This guided approach will be the basis for our new group. It will be free to join and provide a variety of activities during the year. It will be suitable for everyone, working at your own pace for either one, two or three hours. It will hopefully run every two weeks, on Thursday mornings throughout the year, depending upon the number of people who can support the group and the amount of work we are all prepared to do!

If there are any existing groups or individuals that do this work already, it would be fantastic if you could get in touch to join forces to share ideas and prevent duplicate effort. Groups such as the Gardening Club already do wonderful work on the Jerusalem Island roundabout. It would be great to work alongside any established village groups. The same would be true for the Barrow Open Gardens group that is such a success in the village.

Businesses can also offer support in several ways.

- Allow staff to volunteer for a couple of hours work on a six monthly or annual basis to clear or tidy a nominated public footpath, jitty, or open garden space around the village as a Community Team-Building event.

- Clear any rubbish accumulating around their premises on a regular basis.
- Clear any overhanging branches, or shrubs impacting the local footpaths and jitties regularly.

Whether you can support this new group or not, everyone living in Barrow can help to keep the footpaths and jitties tidy by simply checking whether their trees, shrubs and plants on the garden boundary are obstructing any adjacent pathways. Cutting back overhanging branches or plants two or three times a year will allow everyone in the village to enjoy the wide range of walks we have around the village without having to venture on to the roads in order to pass by. If you notice any elderly neighbours with overgrown areas encroaching footpaths, perhaps you could offer to help them or if not, get in touch with the group so we can help. Please contact the Parish Council on **01509 416016** or via email on **clerk@barrowpc.org.uk** to register an interest.



Barrow Christmas Street Market & Big Switch-on

**Saturday 1st December
2.30 - 5.30 on High Street
with Christmas Lights Switch On at 5.00pm**

What to expect:

lots of stalls selling Christmas presents, cakes, jams, crafts, light-wands, food stalls, games, face-painting, balloon modelling, fairground rides, Santa's Grotto, free mince-pies and the Christmas Tree Festival on the doorstep in Holy Trinity Church. A lovely family event.



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Christmas Fayre in Barrow and Burton

By the time this edition is delivered to your door the special feast on Christmas Day, in the hostelrys mentioned in this article, are almost certain to be fully booked – unless a cancellation has come in. I called in around mid-October and even then Christmas Day itself was choc-a-bloc. However, Christmas menus appear about Nov 26th 27th and keep going until about December 22nd or 23rd so Barrow and Burton are awash with festive food for weeks and weeks, giving you time to book that festive meal. Knowing Christmas Day will be booked up, I've chosen dishes from the December Fayre run-up to Christmas Day menus. But, to begin with, in alphabetical order, some basic information:

The Blacksmiths Arms: 2-4 Church Lane (North Street) Barrow, LE12 8PP; Our Christmas Party Menu is available lunch and evenings from Nov 20th priced at 2 courses for £25.00 and 3 courses for £30. Gluten Free Options and Vegan Menu also available. Christmas Opening Hours Food Served: Christmas Eve 12pm-8pm. Christmas Day: Fully Booked. Boxing Day 12-4pm. Michelin listed. www.blacksmiths1753.co.uk info@blacksmiths1753.co.uk Tel 01509 413100.

The Greyhound Inn: 25 Melton Road, Burton on the Wolds, LE12 5AG; Christmas Fayre Menu 4 courses for £19.95 (warm mince pies are counted as a course) Available lunch times and evenings. Christmas Day special menu £54.95 www.greyhoundburtononthewolds.co.uk Tel 01509 880860 Boxing Day: Lunch from 12 - 4 full menu with Specials. All home-cooked food. Dec 23rd special family evening with Santa's Grotto 5-6pm (tickets £5 per child to Rainbows) and live band.

The Hunting Lodge: 38 South Street. Barrow, LE12 8LZ; Christmas Fayre Menu, 3 course £23.95 Available lunchtimes and evenings. Christmas Day Menu Adults £62, children under 12 £31. www.huntinglodge.co.uk

probablythebestpubsintheworld.co.uk Tel 01509 412337 Boxing Day: choices from the December A la Carte Menu.

The Soar Bridge Inn: 29 Bridge Street, Barrow, LE12 8PN; 3 courses £19.95; 2 courses £17.50 Tel 01509 412686 Christmas Fayre menu can be viewed on our Facebook page. Available lunches and evenings. Christmas Day no food, open for drinks from 12 - 2pm. Select menu served Christmas Eve and Boxing Day 12-4pm. Time out Funky Jazz and Pop Christmas Eve from 5-7pm.

The Three Crowns: 2-6 Cotes Road, Barrow, LE12 8JS; Christmas Menu, 3 courses £23.95; 2 courses £18.95 Available lunches and evenings. www.threecrownsbarrow.co.uk Tel 01509 621177 Christmas Day no food, open for drinks 11-3pm. Boxing Day: open from 11am to 4pm to cater for Barrow Runners. Boxing Day evening is the very popular Race Night – a joyously exciting, very crowded night, betting on eight on-screen horse races, starts at 6pm. Must book in advance.

Traditional Christmas Dinners are on offer at all the places above which, with one or two variations here and there, is the familiar turkey, roast and mashed potatoes, vegetables, pigs-in-blankets, sage and onion

stuffing, bread sauce, cranberry sauce and meat gravy. Gravy is a particularly crucial ingredient in Leicestershire! And for pud there's Christmas Pud with brandy sauce and/or custard.

But before the main course come the starters. What's on offer? As I read through them I really began to feel hungry – they all sounded so good. The Greyhound's Homemade Warm Stilton, Spinach and Cranberry Tart was most appealing as were the Festive Falafel at The Soar Bridge or The Hunting Lodge's Lemon Chicken Skewers served with a tomato and chilli jam. However, the prize for the starter with the longest name must go to The Blacksmiths: Leek, Black Bomber Cheddar and wholegrain mustard soufflé, orchard fruit compote and crispy leeks. A long name but presumably a light starter. At the Three Crowns there's a starter with a Polish name - Chicken Krometsky - chicken goujons wrapped in ham, fried in batter and then dipped into curried mayonnaise – mmmm! And there are of course many more to choose from. Each menu offers between four and eight starters.

If you are tired of turkey, what else is there as a main course? What about The Soar Bridge's option of a Cinnamon-Spiced Sweet Potato Curry with fruit naan bread and rice, or the Hunting Lodge's Vegan Three Bean Chilli, full of beans and other vegetables, simmered in a

spicy sauce and again served with rice? Or at the Greyhound you can go French and choose a homemade Beef Bourguignon – beef and lots of little mushrooms all floating in a rich wine gravy... I drool at the mere thought. From beef to fish. Most of the restaurants offer fish as a choice and at the Three Crowns it's Sea Bass fillets served with Dauphinoise potatoes and a creamy white wine parsley sauce. An impertinent little French white and you're away! At the Blacksmith's Arms there are two options for diners who are gluten free. One is a lamb-shank based dish, with Koffmans cabbage, jus and mash, but the other is fish. This time it's haddock with colcannon, wholegrain mustard, cream and a poached egg. It's worth being gluten free at The Blacksmiths! Again lots of choice, as the festive menus each offer between five and seven main meals.

Finally deserts. Where to start? To begin with, let's assume you haven't room for a slice of Christmas pud. For something lighter at The Three Crowns you could try Eton Mess with its squashed meringues and

raspberry coulis, whilst at the Blacksmiths they have a mulled wine semifreddo or at the Greyhound a Bailey's Panacotta. However, if you don't feel you've had a pud unless it's a heavy one, then at the Hunting Lodge there's sticky chocolate and orange cake with fresh cream and at the Soar Bridge a white chocolate and cranberry cheesecake with spiced fruit ice-cream. Finish off with coffee and mince pies and a promise to start dieting in the New Year.

Good food is crucially important but so too is a merry atmosphere and each hostelry prides itself on being a warm and welcoming

place to celebrate Christmas. The rooms will be festively decorated; crackers on the table and a tree in a corner, in several inns wood fires will be burning in open fireplaces or log-burners and of course each has a very well-stocked bar. So you've no excuse! To find out more if you live near just wander in and pick up a Christmas menu, if you don't then look up their website or give them a ring. Bon appetit and Merry Christmas.

Gaynor Barton

The Conservative Club, 14 North Street, Barrow LE12 8QA. The club is affiliated to the ACC (Association of Conservative Clubs) but non-members are welcome to visit. **Tel: 01509 412793, Email: info@barrowconservativeclub.co.uk**

Christmas Day: 12 – 2pm Festive drinks; mulled wine, spiced rum - no food except bar snacks.

Boxing Day: 12.00 – 12.30am. 1pm - Race Day – Festive drinks + burgers, hot-dogs, filled cobs, bar snacks.

Christmas 2018 Pop Quiz

The following are cryptic clues to objects found around the home at Christmas.

- In 1973, which record did Slade have a Christmas number one with?
- 1983, who was number one with 'Only You'?
- Which record was a Christmas No.1 in 1975 and 1991?
- Name The Scaffold's 1968 Christmas number one?
- 1992 saw who at number one with 'I will always love you'?
- For how many weeks was she at number one?
- Everyone remembers Band Aid. In which year were they number one?
- Tom Jones gained a Christmas number one with which hit in 1966?
- Who was the fastest milkman in the west?
- Which is the only eponymous Christmas No.1 single?

Puzzled? Go to page 23 for the answers.

Churches at Christmas

Churches Together in Barrow upon Soar wish everyone a very happy Christmas and blessings for the New Year ahead.



Holy Trinity

Sun 23rd	11:00 am	Holy Communion
	6:00 pm	Carol Service
Mon 24th	5:30 pm	Christmas Eve Crib Service
	11:30 pm	Midnight Holy Communion
Tues 25th	10:30 am	All Age Holy Communion

Baptist Church

Sun 16th	10:00 am	Nativity Service
Tues 18th	7:00 pm	Christmas minus 1, a reflective service for those who have lost someone
Sun 23rd	6:00 pm	Carols by Candlelight
Mon 24th	4:00 pm	Christmas Eve Carol Service
Tues 25th	10:00 am	Christmas Day Celebration

Catholic Church

Mon 24th	6:00 pm	St Gregory's Sileby
Tues 25th	9:00 am	St Gregory's Sileby
	10:30 am	Divine Infant Syston

Methodist Church

Sun 16th	10:15 am	Interactive Nativity Service
	6:00pm	Traditional Carol Service
Mon 24th	6:00 pm	Crib Service
Tues 25th	10:00 am	Christmas Morning Praise at Mountsorrel Methodist Church
Sun 30th	4:00 pm	Cakes and Carols

A Gluten Free Christmas

Gluten is a protein found in grains, wheat, barley and rye and can play havoc with people's diets. Eating gluten free food options either at Christmas time, or simply for enjoying a healthy lifestyle, can be challenging. Alternatives to gluten laden foods can be difficult to find when eating out at restaurants or grabbing a bite to eat on the go. When gluten free options are made available, I always feel welcome, socially accepted and well catered for.

Temptation, guilty pleasures and attractively decorated foods are just a few reasons to indulge in Christmas food filled with gluten. Whether it's gluten intolerance, irritable bowel syndrome or coeliac disease, Christmas can be a difficult time for people with food allergies. It's a happier time for everyone when food intolerances and allergies are recognised and adjustments or alternatives are made available at the table.

Use rice in stuffing, cornflour in gravy and gluten free bread for breadcrumbs. These small alternatives can make a big difference to those with food intolerances.

Here are a few of my favourite recipes during the festive season.

A gluten free Christmas starter - serves 4 people

- 1 Camembert wheel
- 4 garlic cloves
- small handful of rosemary
- jar of chutney or cranberry sauce
- endless slices of gluten free bread.

Stick garlic cloves and bundles of rosemary in the top of the wheel to add flavour, warm Camembert in oven for 20 minutes at 180 degrees. Once out of oven remove garlic and rosemary. Toast gluten free bread; serve with chutney or cranberry sauce.



A gluten free Christmas stuffing - makes 6 stuffing balls

- 60g apricots
- 500g sausage meat
- 50g sultanas
- 50g dried sultanas
- 125g breadcrumbs (from gluten free bread)
- 1 bottle of Guinness beer
- 2 large onions
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 6 slices of bacon
- 6 half walnuts and a handful of chives

Chop apricots into quarters; soak sausage meat, chopped apricots, sultanas and gluten free breadcrumbs in Guinness for 24 hours. Caramelize 2 onions and chives with olive oil in frying pan over heat until golden brown. Drain ingredients from Guinness and mix together with onions. Form mixture into 6 individual balls, wrap each ball with bacon and put half a walnut on top to finish. Place on baking tray and put on the middle shelf in the oven. Cook for 30 minutes at 160 degrees or until golden brown.

Gluten free children's Christmas party cookies - makes 60 cookies

- 340g butter
- 2 large eggs
- 250g granulated sugar
- 250g brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 800g gluten free flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 bags of white chocolate chips
- 6 crushed candy canes

Mix butter, eggs, sugar and vanilla in a medium mixing bowl and flour, baking soda in large mixing bowl. Combine wet ingredients with dry and mix for 10 minutes on a medium

speed. Mix chocolate chip morsels and crushed candy canes to mixture. Mix together with fork for further 5 minutes. Roll into small spoon-size balls and arrange on baking tray in rows allowing space to enlarge in baking stage. Cook for 8-10 minutes, at 180 degrees. Allow to cool on baking tray for further 2 minutes before transferring to cooling racks.

Sarah Bridle





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High fives to The Three Crowns

The festive season is in full swing and many people are looking forward to turkey and trimmings in a restaurant on Christmas Day. But how many diners consider the state of the restaurants they are visiting?

How clean is the food prep area? Are staff trained in hygiene standards? Are there any grubby corners? These are questions many of us don't like to dwell on...

You can put your mind at rest if you are eating at The Three Crowns, because Barrow's bustling pub in the High Street recently achieved the highest food safety rating from the Charnwood Borough Council.

That top rating – five out of five – is what Carole Burton, the pub's licensee and chef, has worked hard to achieve, and it's the second time the establishment has scored full marks. Carole has run the pub for 13 years and all food is cooked from scratch, in a small kitchen, by her and her team. They maintain impeccable standards, not only because they have a responsibility to their customers but because, like all restaurants, they never know when a food safety officer is going to arrive for an inspection.

"It's a difficult rating to achieve," says Carole "and we are thrilled to have been awarded a five-star rating."

The Three Crowns is a busy pub and serves up around 600 meals a week – a few months ago, they served 220 lunches on a busy Sunday. Their weeknight specials also attract customers, as do sports matches shown on the big screens. For events like the royal wedding and football World Cup, the pub went the extra mile to make things festive, besides serving cracking meals.

But it's all in a day's work for Carole, who grew up in the hospitality industry. Her parents, Barbara and the late Lon Attenborough, ran the Conservative Club in Barrow for many years.

She is also very aware of meeting the needs of customers with allergies. In the kitchen is a book with ingredients of all foods logged so if a customer with an allergy comes in, ingredients can be checked. Vegetarians are well catered for, as are vegans, and here too, ingredients are scrutinised.



Ratings are issued by Charnwood Borough Council's Food Hygiene Rating Scheme, which is overseen by the Food Standards Agency, and operates across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It gives information about the hygiene standards in the premises at the time of inspection by an Environmental Health Officer. It also recognises those businesses with the highest standards and encourages others to improve. Restaurants, takeaways, cafés, pubs, hotels, supermarkets and other retail food outlets, as well as other businesses where consumers can eat or buy food, will be given a hygiene rating as part of the scheme.

Vicky Spanovic, Food Safety Manager, Regulatory Services at Charnwood Borough Council, says each business is given a rating based on how well it meets the requirements of food hygiene law at the time of their inspection. In particular, how hygienically the food is handled – safe food preparation, cooking, cooling and storage, the condition of the premises – cleanliness, repair, layout, lighting, ventilation, pest control and other facilities, and how food safety is managed and documented – using a system such as

Safer Food, Better Business to show that food is produced safely.

The hygiene standards found during inspections are rated on a scale ranging from zero at the bottom (which means "urgent improvement necessary") to a top rating of five ("very good"). Where a business does not achieve the top rating, the Environmental Health Officer will explain to the business owner what improvements must be carried out. A revisit will be carried out at any business scoring a rating of 0, 1 or 2.

Businesses are given a window sticker showing their rating and encouraged to display these at their premises, but display is voluntary in England at the moment. The Food Standards Agency team urges the public to always check the rating of a restaurant or food outlet. If the restaurant has a 0, 1 or 2, switch to one that has a higher rating. If no sticker is displayed, you can look up food hygiene ratings at www.food.gov.uk/ratings Meanwhile Carole and her team are undaunted by the busy Christmas period ... "Bring it on," they say with a smile.

Lindsay Ord

ANSWERS

1. Merry Xmas Everybody
2. Flying Pickets
3. Bohemian Rhapsody
4. Lily the Pink
5. Whitney Houston
6. 10
7. 1984
8. Green, Green Grass of Home
9. Ernie
10. Mr Blobby

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Barrow Open Gardens Does Autumnwatch

On the eve of the equinox, Barrow Open Gardens hosted an exciting event, 'Barrow Does Autumnwatch', in the Gap and car park at Barrow Baptist Church, Beveridge Street, which were transformed for one day only into an autumnal scene.

Visitors entered the event via a floral arch and past a virtual River Soar surrounded by a spinney of native plants and trees kindly on loan from Coles Nursery (Thurnby) and complete with tiny canal boats, a bridge and a display by Barrow Heritage Group on the history of the River Soar at Barrow. (If you missed this you will be able to see it in the Library soon).

Beyond the Soar, guests were treated to a range of stalls all helping to raise funds for Rainbows. A very popular stall was the one selling fresh garden produce, fruit and plants donated by Barrow gardeners and allotmenters - the apple crop was particularly good this year! The carpark also saw the welcome return of three of our regular experts complete with lots of information, Marion the 'Bee Lady' Ted the Master Composter and John Schofield the Nurseryman.

Beyond the market place was the farming scene framed by the 'Autumnwatch Barn' decked in fabulous homemade bunting and straw bales and the 'Scarecrow Field' complete with Barry Atkinson's vintage red tractor, Roger Chappell's restored Morris Traveller and the venue for our 'Make a



Scarecrow Competition'.

Once again the people of Barrow came up trumps providing an amazing display of scarecrows of all shapes and sizes. The overall winner, decided by public vote, was 'Jim' made by Anne and Ken Baker, though on the day everyone was a winner, particularly the children so 'Thank you' you clever people of Barrow.

The Barn was also the venue for some talented Barrow musicians, mother and daughter Charlie and Saffy on guitar and vocals, the Hall Orchard Recorder Group, Caroline Faulkner's Flute Ensemble and the unique and pleasant sound of the Barrow Ukulele Orchestra strumming an eclectic selection of tunes and even a George Formby favourite or two.

Beyond the Barn was the indoor Marketplace where there was a mix of food stalls selling

jams and pickles, Barrow's famous artisan Brød and scrumptious confections by Chocolate Alchemy. There were craft stalls selling paintings, ceramics, beautiful art glass, cards, turned wood, stickmen planters and fabulous knitted and crochet items while the Baldwin Trust stall entertained the children and the Hedgehog Rescue stalls raised funds for their charities. Then last but not least, the famous Open Gardens Café serving homemade cakes and drinks and the Harvest BBQ with chef Graham Dunn on the grill made sure you went home well fed.

Not even the weather could dampen our spirits. So thank you people of Barrow who once again turned out in support and helped us raise a grand total of £811 for Rainbows.

Have a good winter and keep warm till the spring show.

Lin Webb

Barrow Playgroup's Autumn Toddle

On the 23rd October, children from the Barrow Playgroup took part in the playgroup's annual 'autumn toddle'. The children donned their winter coats on what was a crisp, sunny, thankfully dry autumn day, to walk around King George V Playing Field with staff and a team of parent helpers. Each year the toddle is sponsored and this year the Playgroup have chosen to split the sponsorship between the Playgroup, which is a registered charity and relies on fundraising to buy new equipment and materials, and Sheffield Children's Hospital which has been instrumental in providing care for one of the Playgroup's young people.

The children enjoyed spotting cuddly autumn creatures, a hedgehog and a squirrel, – unfortunately no real ones this year! They also collected leaves in all the colours of autumn, as well as conkers, enjoyed pumpkin-rolling, mini-beast hunting and exploring the playing field's hills. After a long circuit for little legs, the children enjoyed playing on the new park equipment before heading back for a well-earned snack. The gathered autumn spoils were used in crafts and activities throughout the week, including making some fantastic conker Halloween spiders!

The playgroup staff and committee would like to say well done to all the children who took part and to those parents and carers who came

along on the day because the toddle couldn't have taken place without them. And another big thank you to all those who supported the playgroup by sponsoring the event.

Preparations are now under way for Barrow Playgroup's next fundraising event, the Christmas Fair, which will take place at the Methodist Church Hall on the 7th December. Your support would be greatly appreciated. Playgroup also has spaces available for children from two years. For more information about places, please call the Registrar on **07975957242**. For more information about fundraising events, please email **playgroupbarrow@gmail.com**.

Amy Wooler





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Barrow Pre-School Playgroup



Barrow Pre-School Playgroup is an OFSTED registered charity playgroup.

In their recent inspection they were awarded a GOOD.

We provide learning through play for children aged 2 - 5yrs.
Sessions are run at the Methodist Church Rooms, Barrow upon Soar Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9.15am to 12.15pm and Tuesday and Thursday 9.15am to 3.25pm.

For more information please contact Cathy Northcote-Smith on **07975 957242** or email barrowplaygroup@hotmail.co.uk

Playgroup operates a waiting list, so please be sure to get in touch with your child's details as soon as possible.

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Christmas Trees

There are some lovely artificial trees for sale but I guess nothing beats the woody smell of a real tree. In a list of the most popular varieties the Nordmann fir comes out on top (*Abies nordmannii*). These originate in the Caucasus Mountains and make lovely Christmas trees with needles that aren't sharp and grow around the branches making them look compact and bushy; it holds its needles well.



The next most popular tree is the Blue Spruce (*Picea pungens* Glauca). It has soft bluey-grey needles, more prickly than the Nordmann fir, but very pretty and it too holds its needles well. It's native to the Rocky Mountains in the USA. Third most popular is probably the one I best remember from childhood. It's the Norway Spruce (*Picea abies*). It's native to the colder areas of northern and eastern Europe. Its needles are paler green, shorter and spikier than the others and is notorious for dropping needles in a warm room, I remember them being very sharp in my socks if I was walking around in stocking feet!

The three trees in the photos were originally bought to decorate the garden. The biggest is the Nordmann fir which lived in a pot for a number of years and was planted out for the Millennium. The one next to it is a Norway Spruce that I grew from seed. This was a fascinating experiment as I had to keep the seed in the fridge for about 3 months to make it germinate – mimicking what happens in the wild.

The last tree is the Blue Spruce. It was in a pot for a couple of years before it started to suffer... they want to "Be a Tree..."



It's settled in well, and maybe, when it's bigger, its chance to be decorated for Christmas will come.

We in Britain don't have what you would call a native Christmas tree. We only have trees like the Scots Pine, Holly and Yew. It probably explains why we bring evergreen branches into the house during the darkest days and nights of the year. This dates back to pagan times. Evergreen bowers promised renewal, some even flower or have berries when brought indoors. The Celtic Druids and the Romans would decorate their dwellings for such celebrations as the winter solstice and Saturnalia. The early Christians too used evergreens to symbolise everlasting life. Christmas trees first appeared in northern Europe in the 1500s. A picture from Germany in 1522 shows a tree paraded through the streets followed by a man on horseback possibly representing St Nicholas. Again in Germany, the preacher Martin Luther is said to have been walking home through the forest one night and looked upwards to see the stars shining through the branches. It was so beautiful he told his children that it reminded him of Jesus who had left the stars of heaven to come to earth at Christmas.



For us in Britain it was Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's husband, who brought the tradition here. He remembered it from his childhood and wanted his children to experience the magic. A drawing made in 1848 of the Queen and Prince Albert with five of their children shows them around a prettily-decorated Christmas tree at Windsor Castle. The tradition soon spread across the country, first in wealthy families and then to everyone.

These days many towns, cities and villages have their own Christmas tree. The most famous is the Norway Spruce in Trafalgar Square. In 1947 a Norway Spruce was first sent by the people of Oslo to the people of Britain. It was a thank you for all the help given to their country when it was invaded in 1940.

Maggie J

But how to decorate your tree?

Why not visit The Christmas Tree Festival in Holy Trinity Church (Dec 1st and 2nd) and get lots of lovely ideas.

Wishing you a very Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.



Five sleuths

Death by Radio: Murder Mystery review

Autumn's dark nights are not the same without the Barrow Panto Group's seasonal Murder Mystery. Once again, to a packed hall of amateur sleuths, the stage was set for the annual whodunnit; this time set in the 1940s. Because it was set in the 40's, members of the audience were encouraged to dress in period costumes and there were some splendid efforts.

The list of suspects has strong family connections but this isn't immediately obvious in the opening of the play, which has many a twist. As always, the opening scenes set the plot and characters with some newcomers Danielle, Zac and Matt Gudger and John Bean stepping up to the mark with good performances. The plot was a complex one, as each member of the cast had to conceal from the audience why the victim – the radio producer, Sydney – was going to get it, whilst both ON AIR, when recording, and OFF AIR when they aired private grievances.



Steve Crossley & Danielle Gudger

One innovation was to involve members of the audience in making the sound effects inviting Sue E and Barry A to help them out. A gunshot sounding like a tambourine must be a MM first, as was the dog that made werewolf howling sounds! Adding to the atmosphere, and completely unrehearsed, was a bat that got in without paying, and circled the audience like a Christopher Lee movie.

The victim, Sydney, is electrocuted through his microphone and so his shocking death puts all the other players immediately on trial. Enter Inspector Foot, Barrow's answer to Clouseau, to interrogate the suspects, but at this point we break for supper. The audience now get some sheets of clues as well as excellent food brought to them by the suitably dressed 'land-girl' young helpers. This is the Murder Mystery norm as you eat, drink, read the clues, ask each other who could have done it and then ask the cast. To win all you have to do is name the murderer, the method and the motivation. For those unlucky not to have attended, the murderer was the dastardly journalist/spy Nigel. (No comment here, by this critic, on the name Nigel and today.) One team did solve the mystery. Bravo!



Abi Crossley, Carol Cross and Jackie Johnstone

Now the shout outs; to producer Helen Sadler, an especially big shout out and smiley face, to stage manager Alan Willcocks for a convincing array of technical accessories, pianist Wendy Miller so essential to a good 40s radio prog, and the very excellent sound and light team, Also want to mention the backstage folk, the rations organised by Judith Rodgers and the BUSCA team, the tombola two, and the producers of the smart programmes. Finally a special mention to cast member Jackie Johnstone, who played Violet Sitforth, as she managed to stay semi-drunk during the entire performance and remember (unlike the fuzz) all her lines... It was a truly excellent evening.

Murder by the critic

Barrow upon Soar Show 2018

The sixth Annual Barrow upon Soar Show was held in the Methodist Church Hall on Saturday 15th September. This is an open show for all ages with classes in Vegetables, Fruit, Flowers, Preserves, Baking, Photography, Painting, Knitting, Crochet and Patchwork. There were 77 competitors from the village and surrounding areas and we had 304 entries this year.

There were some outstanding entries despite the different weather conditions this year. Judges from the Leicester Guild decided that the awards for Best in Show Adult Horticulture and Home Produce was awarded to the Carpenter's Arms entry of five dahlias, Best in Show Adult Craft to Judi Lolli for her entry in the embroidery

class, Best in Show Children's Class to Frederick Richardson for his miniature garden. Lillian Middleton's butternut squash was the People's Choice and Sophie Garner's entry of a hedgehog family won the Children's Choice Award.

Many people came along to view the entries and sample the refreshments. It was a great



show of talent with a lovely community "buzz"! The committee would like to thank everyone who helped in any way to make the show so enjoyable.

Chiltern Seeds very kindly donated some packets of seeds as "a thank you" to the children for entering the show. The committee will soon be planning for next year and would welcome suggestions for new classes; please send ideas by email to pyates1017@aol.com

Tilly Yates

BUSCA will host the next Centre Stage production "Forget Me Not" - The Alzheimer's Whodunnit

The 'seriously funny' (Sunday Mirror) Leicester-based comic, poet and psychiatric nurse Rob Gee strikes storytelling gold with his smart, dark and very witty comedy-theatre crime show set on a dementia ward.

Jim's wife has died from what appears to be natural causes. Jim is a retired police detective and he smells a rat. He's determined to solve one last murder. The problem is he also has dementia. It's a case worthy of the greatest detective mind. But his will have to do. By turns hilarious comedy and thought-provoking drama, this is a one-man triumph; part social commentary, part black comedy, part Cluedo and 100% entertaining.

While Rob is now a full-time writer he was previously a registered psychiatric nurse. The NHS (including the Leicestershire NHS) is now using the show to help train healthcare staff in the area of compassion and ethics. So Rob has achieved the rare feat of combining serious and upsetting subject matter with comedy and great skill, producing a highly entertaining piece of theatre.

Rob says: "For everyone who says, "I don't want to see this, my dad had Alzheimer's", you tend to have two others saying "I really want to see this, my dad had Alzheimer's." And all of them are talking about it."

Judith Rodgers



The show will take place on Friday January 25th starting at 7.30pm in Humphrey Perkins Community Centre. Full price tickets on the door are: standard £11, concessions £10 and students in full time education £6. All tickets bought in advance receive a £1 discount. Advance tickets are available from The Flower Shop, the library and by Paypal or card from www.busca.org.uk

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Village Diary

Wed 28th	Beveridge Club Beetle Drive; 14.30	Fri 30th	Let's get Crafty; 13.30; Library Variety Concert in Holy Trinity Church
Thurs 29th	Christmas Tree Festival - Runs until 2nd Dec		
Thurs 29th	Grand Opening of Christmas Tree Festival; 19.30; Holy Trinity Church		
Sat 1st	Methodist Church Minimarket; 10.00 - 11.00 Crochet Club 11.00 - 13.00 Methodist Coffee bar Switching on of Christmas Lights and Street Market 14.30 - 17.30 in High Street (note) Christmas Tree Festival; 11.00 - 19.00	Fri 7th	Library Rhyme Time: 10.30 Library Let's get Crafty; 13.30
Sun 2nd	Christmas Tree Festival; 11.00 - 17.00	Mon 10th	Self Help Art Group; Bishop Beveridge Club; 12.30 - 14.30
Mon 3rd	New Horizons; Methodist Coffee lounge; 14.00 Charnwood Art; Bishop Beveridge Club; 19.00 - 21.00	Tues 11th	Weekly guided walk; 10.30 from Three Crowns car park
Tues 4th	Weekly guided walk; 10.30 from Three Crowns car park Parish Council meeting; PC office; 19.00; everyone welcome; public participation at approx 19.15	Wed 12th	Bishop Beveridge Club Carol Service WI: Chocolate - Tom Phillips; Cons Club Assembly Rooms; 19.30; all welcome Methodist Ladies Circle
Wed 5th	Bishop Beveridge Club Bingo; 14.30 Mother's Union; 15.30	Mon 17th	Christmas Lunch at Birstall Golf Course
Thurs 6th	Gardening Club: Annual General Meeting (19.30 members only) and Party Night (20.00 All welcome); The GAP- behind Baptist Church	Fri 21st	Library Rhyme Time: 10.30 Bishop Beveridge Club lunch 12.30 - 13.30 Let's get Crafty; Library
	Leicestershire Metal Detecting Society; 19.15; Cons Club function room	Sat 22nd	BUSCA Christmas Dance with C&J Sound; Humphrey Perkins Community Centre; 19.30 - 23.00; tickets from Mike on 413649
Wed 2nd	Mother's Union, 15.30 Trinity Rooms; Holy Trinity Church	Wed 26th	Barrow Runners Handicap 6 mile race; contact Mick Ballard on 413586 Beveridge Club: Boxing Day Open Coffee morning; coffee and toasted tea cakes; 10.00 - 12.00
Thurs 3rd	Leicestershire Metal Detectorists; 19.15; Cons Club		
Sat 5th	Methodist Church Minimarket; 10.00 - 11.00 Crochet Club; Methodist Hall; 12.00	Wed 16th	Beveridge Club Bingo; 14.30; Beveridge Club Gardening Club: Kate Ward - Favourite Midlands Gardens; 19.30; The GAP - behind Baptist Church
Mon 7th	New Horizons; Methodist Coffee lounge; 14.00	Sat 19th	Clock Club Rummage sale in Aid of Clock Club; 10.00 - 11.30; Bishop Beveridge Club Charnwood Orchestra "Vienna and Beyond" concert; Humphrey Perkins Community Centre; 19.00; tickets from the Flower Shop
Tues 8th	Parish Council meeting; PC office; 19.15; everyone welcome; public participation at approx 19.30	Fri 25th	Centre Stage: Forget me Not - an Alzheimer's Whodunnit - an amazing one-man show. 19.30; Humphrey Perkins community centre; Tickets from the Flower Shop, library and www.busca.org.uk
Wed 9th	Bishop Beveridge Club: "White Christmas" at Curve (fully booked) Bishop Barrow WI: Wolds First Responders; Cons Club Assembly Rooms; 19.30	Mon 28th	Bishop Beveridge Club Film: "That Good Night" 14.00 Barrow Book Club; 19.00; Hunting Lodge "A Little Life" by Hanya Yanagihara
Mon 14th	Beveridge Club Film: "Mamma Mia: Here we go Again" 14.00		
Thurs 1st	Leicestershire Metal Detectorists; 19.15	Sat 16th	Clock Club Rummage sale in aid of Isla Stones; 10.00 - 11.30; Bishop Beveridge Club BUSCA Valentine's Dance; Humphrey Perkins Community Centre; 19.30 - 23.00. Dancing with Just Us. Tickets from Mike Collins on 413649
Sat 2nd	Methodist Church Minimarket; 10.00 - 11.00 Crochet Club; Methodist Hall; 11.00	Mon 18th	Bishop Beveridge Club Film: "The Time of our Lives" 14.00
Mon 4th	New Horizons: Methodist Coffee lounge; 14.00	Wed 20th	Bishop Beveridge Club Bingo; 14.30; Beveridge Club Gardening Club; John Slone Wonderful World of Willows; 19.30; The GAP-behind Baptist Church
Tues 6th	Bishop Beveridge Club Bingo; 14.30; Parish Council meeting; PC office; 19.00; everyone welcome; public participation at approx 19.15	Mon 25th	Barrow Book Club; 19.00; Hunting Lodge
Fri 9th	Bishop Beveridge Club Wine and Cheese tasting; details to come		
Wed 13th	WI: "Stained Glass" by Claire Williamson; 19.30; Cons Club	Mon 11th	Bishop Beveridge Club Coach trip to Pennells Garden Centre
Sat 2nd	Methodist Church Minimarket; 10.00 - 11.00 Crochet Club in Methodist Hall from 12.00	Wed 13th	Beveridge Club Fun Quiz; 14.45; Beveridge Club WI: "Willow weaving" by Peter Wood; 19.30; Cons Club
Mon 4th	New Horizons; Methodist Coffee lounge; 14.00	Mon 18th	Beveridge Club Film: "Edie"; 14.00; enquiries from 414519; £4 members £4.50 visitors, inc tea and cake
Tues 5th	Beveridge Club Pancake Day: Pancake and soup lunch; 12.30, Beveridge Club Parish Council meeting; PC office; 19.00; everyone welcome; public participation at approx 19.15	Wed 20th	Gardening Club; Jane Woolmer Composting and soil improvement; The GAP-behind Baptist Church; 19.30
Thurs 7th	Leicestershire Metal Detectorists; 19.15	Mon 25th	Barrow Book Club; 19.00; Hunting Lodge
Fri 8th	Barrow Panto Group: "Peter Pan"; Humphrey Perkins Community Centre; 19.00; tickets from Flower Shop		
Sat 9th	Barrow Panto Group: "Peter Pan"; Humphrey Perkins Community Centre; 19.00; tickets from Flower Shop		

Barrow Christmas Street Market
2.30 - 5.30
Saturday 1st December

BUSCA Christmas Ballroom Dance
with C & J Sound (Sold Out)
Saturday 22nd December

Centre Stage Production
'Forget me Not'
The Alzheimer's Whodunnit
Friday 25th January

The Annual BUSCA Valentine Dance
Saturday 16th February

Barrow Panto Group
Peter Pan
Fri and Sat
8th & 9th March