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Editor: Ian Wylie (ian.wylie@btconnect.com)

CORBRIDGE MATTERS

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www.corbridge.ukpc.net

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Most photos from Ian Wylie



www.corbridge.ukpc.net

Parish Council
INFORMATION

Clerk of the Council: Mrs Mandy Senior
Tel: 07950 297634

Corbridge Parish Council next meets on
Wednesdays December 18 and January 22 in
the Parish Hall, St Helen's Street, Corbridge at
7pm

Council Notes

Christmas Quiz



Can you identify these places in Corbridge from the following clues:

1. From ancient Rome?
2. A German group who forged the way in electronic music.
3. From a nursery rhyme?
4. Infant in the money?
5. Part of a bicycle?
6. Important clergyman?
7. Heavenly creature?
8. A royal cooking place?
9. Part of a kitchen?
10. See yourself in a window?

Answers on page 6

Corbridge Remembers 2019



Marc Horn stood down as Chair of Corbridge Parish Council in September and I'd like to start this issue's column with heartfelt thanks to Marc for all he has done for our village. His contribution to village life will be sorely missed and I hope that in the future he will find time to get involved again.

St Andrew's Church has launched an appeal to raise money for a major refurbishment of the organ and are already, at the time of writing this, over half way to their target of £100,000. St Andrew's is both an important historical building and a thriving community centre for worship and much more besides. If you can make a donation, however modest, you can find details at www.corbridgechurch.org.uk or you can email lehunter@corbridgechurch.org.uk.

In recent weeks the roundabout on the south side of the bridge has been resurfaced and the heritage lamp posts on the bridge painted.

The Milkwell development is getting underway and a number of issues have already been dealt with including drainage problems on Cow Lane and surface water run-off elsewhere. I'm hoping we will soon see a permanent fix to the intermittent problems residents on Cow Lane have suffered. The Middle School drop-off arrangements have been handled effectively by their management and I know the council staff are doing all they can to keep local footpaths open as much as possible.

By the time you are reading this I'm hoping that Corbridge Parish Council will have been granted permission at a planning committee to introduce a "Scheme of Management" in the Market Place. This will be the first step in a process to make the Market Place a more fitting centre to our beautiful village and local residents will be consulted on plans.

There is a vacancy on the Parish Council so if you can spare a little time please contact Mandy Senior at corbridge@ukpc.net. There are some important projects in progress to get involved in.

Nick Oliver (Northumberland County Councillor)
Don't hesitate to get in touch - nick.oliver24@outlook.com or 07779 983742.

Daniel Hunter



DebbieArmstrong



Katarina Majer



William Soulsby



Emma Watson



Ruth Forster



Alex Miller



The second Great Corbridge Bake Off attracted almost 100 entries, including some remarkable creations. In our eyes they were all winners.

Corbridge Youth Initiative

It's been another memorable year for the Corbridge Youth Initiative. As was outlined during their recent AGM and Awards Evening at their Hill Street HQ. The annual trustees' report said: "This has been another successful year for all of those involved in the work of CYI with young people in the area. Thanks must go to the staff who work so hard with the young people and also to the trustees who volunteer their time to manage and monitor the charity - including towards raising the £65,000 plus a year in funds from various sources to enable the employment of the staff, without whom CYI would not continue."



THE NATIONAL LOTTERY COMMUNITY FUND

June 2019 Corbridge Youth Initiative (CYI) was extremely delighted to be awarded £89,670 by The National Lottery Community Fund. Using the evidence, impact and numbers made possible by the Northumberland Children's Trust funding, through our 'Back on Track' pilot, we successfully applied and have been awarded a three year grant to ensure we have the core stability and peripheral sessional capacity to continue this work going forward. We are really looking forward to all of the great things we can do together with our young people and families this upcoming year.



CYI WEEKLY GROUPS...

We have continued to provide a welcoming and safe environment crammed with fun activities, alongside issue based work, from our highly qualified staff team. In the last year, we have worked with a fantastic 131 individual young people aged 9 - 21. Our core sessions include:

- Juniors Yr 5 & 6
- Juniors Yr 7 & 8
- Seniors (Yr 9+)
- Girls Group (Yr 8+)
- Allotment Project (Bridge End Allotments)

OUR OTHER SERVICES...

JOB CLUB
The CYI Job Club is where we support those aged 16 - 25. Job Club enables young people aged 16 - 25 to make smooth and supported transitions into employment, education and training opportunities. At each session there is practical support with CV writing, job searches, applications for education/ apprenticeship/training/employment opportunities and interview techniques. We are also there to help with pre-employment support. We warmly welcome anyone along and the kettle is always on.

2019 SUMMER ACTIVITIES PROGRAMME

Thanks again to the extremely dedicated CYI Volunteer Fundraising Team for creating a calendar of spectacular community events. Thanks also to the fantastic people who came along and supported them. This year they raised an amazing £3457.97 this enabled 148 young people parents/carers to participate in our Summer Activity Programme. CYI are also extremely grateful to the local businesses that have made donations and supported us so well at every event.

RESIDENTIAL EXPERIENCES

Tynedale Youth Forum - We have been very fortunate to be able to provide residential opportunities for our young people again this year. Through our multi-agency working within the Tynedale Youth Forum we took part in fantastic opportunities including a Kielder Forest cycle ride, Archery, Team Building with The Army in Otterburn, Drama and Screen Printing Workshops at The Queens Hall, Mindfulness Yoga Workshops and Youth Work issue based workshops.

OCEAN YOUTH TRUST NORTH EAST COAST VOYAGE 2019

In May 2019 10 young people took on the challenge of sailing The James Cook, in collaboration with the Ocean Youth Trust. The CYI Crew worked solidly for 5 days winning, sweating & tilling ropes, hoisting and flaking sails, taking on night shift duties including anchor watch as well as working together in shifts to do all of the cooking and maintaining the vessel. A fantastic experience for all who chose to take it on. Not everyone can say they sailed a 70ft yacht before they could even drive a car! Well done to this year's crew.



NOTICE BOARD

Speedwatch: Northumbria Police hope to recruit Community Speed Watch Volunteers in Corbridge to help them make motorists aware the community will not tolerate speeding. If you are interested in applying please email the Parish Council at corbridge@ukpc.net and you will be given more information. While the scheme hopes to educate drivers, police will also take enforcement action through prosecution where necessary.

Voices of Hope Christmas Concert: 7:30pm Friday December 20 at St Andrew's Church.

Corbridge Carpet Bowls Club: Why not come and join us for a game of carpet bowls in the Parish Hall? We bowl on a Tuesday between 2pm and 4pm and then between 7pm and 9pm in the evening. It costs £10 to join the club and £2 for each session. Previous experience strictly not necessary. We are in it for the fun so why not come along and have fun with us!

Corbridge WI: Meets on the first Monday of every month, excluding Bank Holidays, at 2pm in the Parish Hall. New members welcome.

Tasty Treats: The Inner Wheel Club of Hexham and Tynedale has produced a small cook book called Tasty Treats. It costs £5 and is available from the Corbridge Tourist Information Centre and Library in Hill Street. The whole amount raised from sales will go to the Great North Air Ambulance Service.

Corbridge Film Nights: Sunday Dec 15 at 7pm for 7:30pm Festive Themed Film. Entry to this Christmas screening is free.

CORBRIDGE
NORTHUMBERLAND



CHRISTMAS in CORBRIDGE

LATE NIGHT SHOPPING
CAROL SINGING
STREET FOOD | STALLS
SANTA'S GROTTO | LIVE MUSIC
& MORE!

St. ANDREW'S CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL
Fri 29 Nov - Tue 3 Dec | 9.30am - 5pm (9pm Monday)

EXTRA FREE PARKING AT TYNEDALE RUGBY CLUB
shuttle bus from rugby club and station
www.visitcorbridge.co.uk



Monday 2nd December from 4pm

Corbridge Church Times

St Andrew's Church

Sunday December 1: 10am Parish Communion / 5pm Christmas Tree Festival Songs of Praise
Sunday December 8: 10am Parish Communion / 3pm Messy Church / 6pm Advent Procession
Saturday December 14: 10am Mulled Wine and Mince Pies with Carol Singing / 4pm Charlotte Straker Tree of Light Service
Sunday December 15: 10am Parish Communion / 4pm Christingle Service / 6pm Evening Prayer
Sunday December 22: 10am Parish Communion / 6pm Evening Prayer
Christmas Eve: 3pm Crib Service / 7:30pm Candlelight Carols / 11:30pm Midnight Communion
Christmas Day: 10am Parish Communion
Sunday December 29: 10am Parish Communion / 6pm Evening Prayer

Corbridge Methodist Church

Sunday Service: 10:45am every week
Sunday December 22: 3pm Carols By Candlelight
Christmas Day: 9:30am At Riding Mill Methodist Church
Coffee Morning: Every Tuesday from 10am to 11:30am
Forum with speaker: 2:30pm on the second Wednesday of every month.

Corbridge Pentecostal Church

3pm Sundays at Corbridge Methodist Church - with the Methodists on Dec 22.
8pm on Mondays at Corbridge Methodist Church.



Christmas Tree Festival 2019

St. Andrew's Church Corbridge

Friday 29th November to Tuesday 3rd December
(inclusive)

Open 9.30am to 5.00pm daily (9.00pm Monday)

Including

Organ recital Friday 12.30pm – 1.30pm

Carol Singing at various times during the weekend

Songs of Praise Sunday evening at 5.00pm

Refreshments available

Wheel chair accessible



www.corbridgechurch.org.uk for further information.

Corbridge In Bloom

Another very good year for Corbridge in Bloom. We were awarded gold in the 2019 Northumbria In Bloom Awards for our horticultural practice, environmental responsibility and the participation of the Corbridge community in our efforts. It was noted we had won the only gold in the Tyne Valley and the chair thanked all of our supporters, volunteers, local residents and businesses alike and praised them all for their hard work during the year.

The full list:

Corbridge: Gold (Small Town)

Corbridge Parish Hall: Gold (Grounds of a hospital, university or public building)

Milkwell Park: Gold (Parks)

Aydon Road Allotments: Gold (Allotments)

Windsor Court: Gold (Care /Residential / Convalescent Home, Hospice or Day Care centre)

Woodbine Terrace: Gold (Residential Community)

Snowdrop Rise between Constable Place and The Crofts: Gold (Private Gardens)

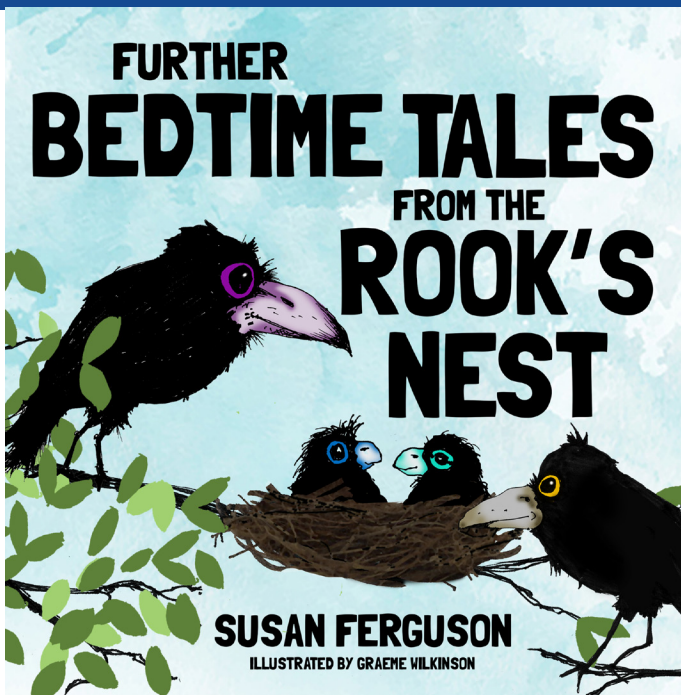
Corbridge First School Allotment: Silver Gilt with special praise for recycling (Schools)

The Garden Room: Silver Gilt (Commercial Premises);

The Angel Inn: Silver (Pub / Hotel).



Corbridge resident Susan Ferguson writes about Bedtime Tales from the Rook's Nest



I have always loved reading, especially children's story books over the years to my sons, nieces and nephews, and I always loved writing. A few years after moving to Corbridge, living in such a wonderful place surrounded by wildlife and watching all of this fascinating life going on around us gave me the inspiration to write about it.

From my kitchen window I have the best view looking down into the woodland and it all started there. I used to watch the pheasants walking around. They are so funny, each with their own character. One day I saw what I thought was an egg. On investigation I found this to be a plastic golf ball, which led to 'The Funny-Shaped Egg', my very first story. I would then just sit outside under the apple tree and write about what I saw as there is a whole other world of wildlife going on around us. I took pictures of my home and woodland as the stories are based around the birds, animals and their habitat. Also, I wanted the stories and illustrations to be true. I decided to tell

the stories through the eyes of the birds whose nests surround me, rather than myself, which is more pleasing and exciting for little minds and eyes.

The birth of my grandson Theo gave me the push I needed to put my stories into a book so he would have his very own story book - 'Bedtime Tales from the Rook's Nest' - for his first Christmas. I kept the book a secret from my family until it was published. I find writing a very private thing so it was indeed a big surprise when books appeared for them at Christmas. I'm an administrator in a large care home and work colleagues were also totally overwhelmed. They had no idea what I had been doing until I produced the book at work and told them about it.

My follow up 'Further Bedtime Tales from the Rook's Nest' is now complete and at the printing stage. I am so excited. I know if I had not moved to Corbridge, finally finding my idyll, this would never have happened.

interview

David Kennedy tells Ian Wylie about a life in the church and moving to Corbridge



"I'm very proud that my birth certificate says born in Newcastle upon Tyne in the county of Northumberland. I therefore regard myself as being an authentic Geordie and also Northumbrian."

As a little lad, David Kennedy dreamed of flying to the heavens. "I wanted to be a space man. As everybody did," he recalls. "When I got a bit older I fancied being a doctor." In the end, NASA and the NHS missed out on his talents. A later ambition to become a teacher evolved into a life with the church. A career orbit which last year saw a re-entry into parish ministry in Corbridge.

It is now some 14 months since David left Durham Cathedral to be installed as Vicar of Corbridge with Halton and Newton Hall, accompanied by wife Janet on a memorable evening at St Andrew's Church. Not many would deny he has made quite an impact since that night. "What strikes me about Corbridge is the amount of potential there is," he says. "It's wonderful to see how church and community works so closely together. I very much wanted to build on that."

David was born 62 years ago in a Salvation Army run maternity hospital along the Scotswood Road. "I'm very proud that my birth certificate says born in Newcastle upon Tyne in the county of Northumberland. I therefore regard myself as being an authentic Geordie and also Northumbrian. My parents had moved to South Shields. So I was brought up there south of the river. My dad was an electrical engineer at Reyrolle in Hebburn. My mum began her working life in Lloyds Bank in Grey Street. Then, as was common in those

days, she stopped work to begin the family.

"I went to Sunday school as most kids did then. But my real entry into church was through singing. I've sung since before I could talk. That was spotted at Sunday school and it was suggested I might like to join the church choir. So around the age of six or seven I joined the church choir. That got me into the church. Through music. That's what caught my imagination."

Teenage thoughts about becoming a religious education teacher then mixed with others about entering the church ministry. "I was in sixth form one day and my own RE teacher said, 'There is a conference for sixth formers about going into the ministry.' That included a tour around a parish in Sunderland and I found that inspiring. I then had a letter from the Diocesan Recruitment Officer - it sounded like joining the Army. He asked if I would come and see him. I went and talked about who I was and my faith and the church. The next thing I knew I had a letter saying I was now to meet the Bishop of Jarrow, who was in charge of ordinands - people who are ordination candidates.

"I had to get the train to Durham and then walk up Gilesgate to a forbidding house with this Bishop who seemed to be 20 foot high. He interviewed me and then basically said I was an ordination candidate. I was on the carousel and it was up to me to jump off if I felt it wasn't right. From then teaching fell away in terms of a

interview

career. This conference was fortuitous because it was held in St John's College, Durham. I told a senior tutor there I wanted to do theology at university and he said, 'Well, why don't you come and do it here?' So I did."

After his three year course a young David was told to go off and experience the real world. "I went to Liverpool, to West Everton, which was an inner city parish with huge social problems. There was a church there which had a very good boys' club and a hostel for student types to go and spend a year volunteering there." In addition to that he got a job and found himself working at the Royal Liverpool Hospital as it opened in 1978 ahead of the Winter of Discontent - widespread strikes by public sector unions - which left rubbish piling up in the streets and bodies unburied.

"I found some days I'd be in the hospital kitchen. Some days I'd be in the laundry. And quite often I'd be manning the mortuary overnight because the porters were on strike. It was a remarkable experience. You grow up quick, particularly with regard to the mortuary. People weren't being buried so the mortuary was heaving because people kept on dying and there was no way to take these bodies away. It really was quite a challenge."

Having gained that experience he later trained for the ministry at St John's College, Nottingham. David then returned to the north east to take up a post as curate in Spennymoor. Which is where he met and married Janet. "The vicar was recruiting sopranos for the choir and told me to go and interview every young woman in the congregation under the age of 35. That's how Janet and I got to talk and it went on from there. Music again. It all happened within a year. Then we moved to Kirk Merrington which was the first church I was in charge of." Their first daughter Rachel was born there with son Christopher and youngest daughter Claire born in Birmingham when their father moved to The Queen's College in the city to spend nine years as a tutor in liturgy and spirituality. "That was an ecumenical theology college and great fun because it was a multicultural city and the college was quite progressive in its thinking, wanting to encourage particularly ethnic minority vocations. With Anglican, Methodist and United Reformed Church ministers trained together."

Another return north followed in 1996 to become Rector of Haughton-le-Skerne in Darlington at the oldest church in town - St Andrew's. Five years later he was en route to Durham Cathedral to work as a Canon. "We were very happy in Darlington. But the Bishop wrote to me and asked if I would let my name go forward to work at the cathedral. The post was having oversight of the Cathedral's worship and music and also The Chorister School. So much to my surprise, after only four and a half years in Darlington, we moved to Durham, living in the Cathedral Close. A place I often passed as a student, never ever dreaming I'd one day live there. Suddenly here I was living and working in Durham Cathedral, which was a tremendous honour. A very exciting place to work."

"I knew the cathedral from being a student and having always enjoyed choral singing, that side of it wasn't strange to me. But the church in Darlington was relatively informal and suddenly we found ourselves in a very formal context, which was rather different. It gave remarkable opportunities. To be involved in a very vibrant community. A university city. I was also college chaplain at Grey College. You're meeting people from all over the world. Our ministry to visitors was very important. Standards were very high in terms of everything you did. The services, the quality of the music, the preaching. You also had high powered people sitting in the congregation. University professors and experts. So you had to do your research really carefully otherwise you'd be challenged."



David was responsible, among others, for the introduction of girl choristers at the cathedral and on an equal basis to the boys. "In 2009 we admitted - at an unforgettable evensong - the first cohort of girl choristers. Exactly 10 years ago. And now at Durham the clergy are a mixture of women and men as well. It was part of a whole movement through the whole life of the cathedral. Where once upon a time it would have been perceived as quite a male dominated place in terms of leadership roles."

Aside from the day to day work of the Cathedral and beyond there were many special moments. As a lifelong Newcastle United fan, David organised Sir Bobby Robson's Memorial Service in 2009 with the football legend's widow Lady Elsie. "That was absolutely unforgettable." Several years later he found himself showing new Magpies' manager Rafa Benitez

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interview

around the cathedral. "We also had a variety of royal visits. My last one just before coming to Corbridge was when Prince Charles came to open the Open Treasure exhibition. The Dean asked me to organise the logistics of that. Which was, again, a great honour."

Why move to Corbridge and the second St Andrew's Church to take prominence in his career?

"I had done 17 years at Durham, which is a long time. I came to the conclusion that I'd achieved everything I had set out to achieve in that particular post. Also Durham involved me in a lot of governance and committee work. People say they have always regarded me as being a parish priest at heart. I felt the time had come for me to return to parish ministry because it's so people focused."

"When the possibility of Corbridge came up it was exactly the kind of place I might have dreamt of serving in. People say it's very different. And, of course, there is a great difference of scale. But Corbridge is a much older foundation than Durham Cathedral. And it's a church in the heart of the village as the cathedral is at the heart of Durham. A church that's open all day every day, as the cathedral was, so we have a ministry to visitors. It has a choral tradition which is an important part of our life in a village church. So it's been a natural step after my cathedral years. I adjusted to parish ministry really quite quickly. We've also been coming to Corbridge for many years. The Tyne Valley is a great place to live."

So how is David building on the Corbridge potential he spoke about earlier in this interview?

"I've spent a whole professional life thinking about Christian worship and its development. That was a priority, developing the worshipping life of the church. I've always been involved in training. Particularly enabling ministers. So it was a great joy to have a curate appointed to the parish - Lynn Caudwell. And to work with Lynn and Linda Hunter as a ministry team within the church. While we're also looking at how we can develop our ministry to visitors. Our new mission statement in church and on our website encapsulates what we are as a Christian community and how we might both develop the life of the church but also serve the village. Which is why we're here."

One challenge faced by all church communities is attracting younger people and families while not alienating the existing older congregation. "Corbridge is a well supported church. But the age profile would concern me. We are trying to establish a new Sunday afternoon service, which is meant to be for all ages and is more informal and interactive. While Messy Church for families is already well established in the life of the church. We are trying to provide both traditional and more contemporary forms of service in a way I hope will honour what has been a long tradition in Corbridge. But also enhance it and supplement it. That's very much a work in progress at the moment."

"I know the Sunday morning communion service, which has taken place in Corbridge for many years as

is common with many churches in this part of the world, is greatly valued. The church is pretty full on a Sunday morning. So if it ain't broke, don't fix it. Although I am looking to develop the morning service. We're on a little bit of a journey as a church. We're trying to see what sticks and what will catch the imagination. I wouldn't say we've got there yet. But it is something we are engaging with directly."



A current experiment to be reviewed in the New Year has been to move the 9:30am Sunday service to 10am. "It's partly because we also have another church at Halton and the service times clash. I wanted a bit more flexibility with regard to how we use the ministry team for that and our retired clergy. People have been very tolerant of the changes I've introduced so far. Which, of course, have all been done through the Church Council. We're trying to see whether the 10 o'clock will enable us to continue to grow as a church. We will review that as a congregation and see what people feel."

"We were very sorry the Roman Catholic congregation had to stop worshipping in Corbridge last year. But I've always worked very closely throughout my whole ministry with my Methodist minister colleagues and also the local Methodist churches. So it was a very natural thing for me to begin to seek to see what we could do together. Marie Beard, the Methodist minister for Corbridge and Riding Mill, has been wonderful. We're now developing an annual programme of shared services and also things like study groups. We very much want to give a united vision to the parish. A single Christian community in different families, if you like. Having worked for nine years in a college that was training Methodist ministers, I'm very much at home in the Methodist tradition. And value, particularly, the hymns of Charles Wesley. They are just magnificent."

"The St Andrew's Church organ was already on the agenda when I arrived. Organs are complex and every 40 to 50 years they need a major overhaul. There had

interview



been a failed bid to the National Heritage Lottery Fund and I had a sense this might be a project that would catch the imagination of the community. The response to our appeal has been remarkable. I'm overwhelmed by the generosity of this community - the people who took the time to come into church to give us a donation, others who have donated directly and things that have appeared through the vicarage letterbox. On behalf of everyone at St Andrew's I would like to thank members of the community for your magnificent support of the Organ Restoration Project. We are so grateful. At the time of this interview we are well on our way towards our target of £100,000. We can now with confidence apply to grant-giving trusts as the next stage of our fund raising."

Vicars work long hours over a six day week and David is no different "What I've found is life here is very busy. It's quite a big community and we want to support it in every way we can. I'm also now Area Dean, which means I have responsibility for oversight of the Corbridge Deanery, which extends as far east as Prudhoe and then south to Blanchland and north to Stamfordham and Matfen. That's now a very important part of my work. The Diocese has also asked me to lead on part of the Diocesan vision on prayer and I am also doing some theological education. So I have quite a busy life.

"But the heart of it is pastoral ministry to the people of Corbridge. It's a beautiful place to live. I love walking around it and I'm always pleased when people wave and say hello. I enjoy the social side of village life. I

enjoy the sense of history. With Hadrian's Wall just up the road and Corbridge's history as a Roman town. That appeals to me. With St Andrew's having this very historic foundation. So I feel it is a deeply rooted place with a real sense of identity. I find it what they call a 'thin place'. Many people come into church. They just sit quietly and say there is something about the atmosphere. To my mind, that's actually saying to me this is a place where people are able to access - I would say - God. They may say something else. But certainly what people say to me is there is something about this place that is special and in that sense, I think, holy."

Christmas is, of course, particularly busy. "Christmas is a wonderful time of the year if it is encouraging families to get together, encouraging giving - although I hope not simply selfish giving - and if it is actually bringing joy and celebration and happiness. But the heart of Christmas for me is as a religious festival. Last year, the fact that over Christmas Eve and Christmas Day we had over a thousand people at worship - to me, that said something really important about the way in

On behalf of everyone at St Andrew's I would like to thank members of the community for your magnificent support of the Organ Restoration Project. We are so grateful

which people want to engage with what I would regard as being the true meaning of Christmas."

There is also a wedding at St Andrew's in the coming Christmas week. "Life goes on. We are a 52 week church. It never stops. Open 365 days a year. I like to think of St Andrew's Church as the throbbing heart of Corbridge around which the village has grown."

David and Janet's children love both coming to Corbridge and sampling the vicar's cooking. Not least his curries. "Rachel works at the Greenwich Museums in London in retail. Our son Christopher lives and works in Durham and Claire is a primary school teacher in London."

The current Vicar of Corbridge with Halton and Newton Hall hopes to stay in post until he retires. "The church allow us clergy to go on until they are 70. Into their 71st year. So if my health is robust and I don't feel I've passed my sell-by date, that's what I would hope to do. "I'd just like to thank people for the way in which we feel we have been welcomed and embraced by Corbridge. I don't think it is like that for every priest who comes into a new community. People have been kind in terms of what they have said about the ministry I'm bringing. But I feel that has been a two-way thing. You can only give as people are willing to receive what you give. We have found Corbridge a very open, friendly and welcoming community. It's a real joy and privilege to serve it."





A Corbridge Christmas



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MY LITTLE PLACE
Role Play

Session Times
9.30AM until 11AM
11.15AM until 12.45PM
1.30PM until 3.00PM
3.30PM until 5.00PM

Price per session
£5 per Child
One Adult Free with one paying Child
one extra Adult are £1 each

How to find it
St Mary's Wynd
Hexham, Northumberland
NE46 1EW

01434 600 937

Where IMAGINATION is CHILD'S PLAY



Forum Books



There's nothing like a real book when the nights are closing in and we're tucked up indoors. So to help you find something special we've put together our favourite reads of the year so far plus the books we just can't wait for you to see. From gripping crime to big-hearted nature writing and inspirational kids' reads, there's something for everyone. Dig out your warmest socks and spend an evening on the sofa with your next favourite read.

The Secrets We Kept is a thrilling debut novel by **Lara Prescott**. This fictionalised telling of a fascinating true story is about secrets, female spies, a banned masterpiece, love and a book that changed history. A celebrated Russian is writing a book, Dr Zhivago, which could spark conflict in the Soviet Union. The Soviets ban it but in the rest of the world it's becoming a sensation. This is the perfect espionage thriller with women at the forefront, how refreshing! **Charlotte**

Following the laugh-out-loud **The Diary of A Bookseller**, the owner of The Wigtown Bookshop - the largest second hand bookshop in Scotland - **Shaun Bythell** is back with his 'confessions'. Unsurprisingly, we love to read Shaun's trial and tribulations. Told through diary entries that entertain with bizarre requests, inform on the challenges of the high street but essentially reveal the inside story of a life lived in books and the friendships forged through reading. **Helen**

Saltwater by **Jessica Andrews** is a novel about belonging, loss and the love that binds families together. This debut from Northern writer Jessica is both beautiful and honest. Written in brief, poetic fragments it follows Lucy as she breaks free from the margins to find her place in the world. I adored finding the North East I know in this gorgeous book. It's a stunning debut novel from a writer destined for big things. **Sarah**

Poetry is officially good for you and **Gyles Brandreth's** new anthology **Dancing by The Light of The Moon** makes it truly pleasurable!

With over 250 poems Gyles sets out to 'transform your memory and change your life' ...from the new Poet Laureate Simon Armitage to Rupi Kaur, and Shakespeare to Spike Milligan it's both authoritative and immense fun. A workout at the poetry gym is sure to make you smile and adore words. Dame Judi Dench loves it and we're sure you will too! **Helen**

Homing by **Jon Day**: Sometimes we're too busy watching chimps in the Congo or piranhas in Peru to stop and take time to fully appreciate the natural world around us. Ostensibly a book about pigeons but actually examining questions about what a home is and what it is to make one. Homing achieves what only the very best writing does and reaffirms emotional truths we didn't know we knew. **Rory**

Anna Hedworth opened her restaurant Cook House originally in two shipping containers in Ouseburn, Newcastle, and here - in her book of the same name - tells how she quit her job to start her own business. Self taught from supper clubs to blogging, her writing sings and is practical, enthusiastic and inspirational. Plus with over a hundred recipes this is a real must. Anna's knack with flavour is amazing and although I've only tried a handful - slow roast spiced lamb shoulder, mackerel pate & pickled fennel, granola, dark chocolate and almond cake - so far it's foolproof and completely delicious; **Cook House** is a new kitchen staple. **Helen**

We can't wait for this year's Christmas Tree Festival at St Andrew's Church and, as usual, we've been inspired by a new favourite children's book. **Yuval Zommer's The Tree That's Meant to Be** is a warm, hopeful and beautifully festive story full of the power of friendship and brimming with gorgeous illustrations.

Pop in and see us anytime you want to talk books...and happy reading!

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Christmas Wine

Bestselling Corbridge author Mari Hannah

Some people think crime writers sit quaffing wine while pouring over their manuscripts, occasionally lying back on a chaise longue, seeking inspiration for the next bloody murder. Nothing could be further from the truth. I never drink when I write. It's hard enough when you're sober! The only thing that flows constantly in my house is words. So I don't often write about wine, unless it's a cheap red spilled on the carpet of a gory crime scene, a bottle smashed deliberately in the course of a pub fight.

I'm no connoisseur, but I've been asked to share some of my personal favourites with you. Over the festive period, when the computer is locked away, my family all wear silly hats and Christmas jumpers - compulsory. It's a tradition to begin with homemade chuck-it-all-in mulled wine before we pop open the bubbly as family arrive, usually a celebratory bottle of Veuve Clicquot from a generous publisher, left untouched from a launch day at Corbridge's favourite bookshop, Forum Books. No hangover (I promise) and, of course, free plonk always tastes better!

My wine choices have become a tradition with Christmas dinner - always late because we're busy drinking! Like a 'blood curdling' red? Châteauneuf-du-Pape is a classic from the south of France. If your choice is 'ghostly' white, then wine from the eastern part of the Loire Valley will fit the bill. Maybe it's the Roman connection I'm drawn to. Who knew that "Roman bridges cross the Loire at the river village of St-Satur, the port for Sancerre, marking its ancient position along a major Roman route?" (I stole that from Wiki!) I love a good Sancerre. We could do worse than twinning with this village.



*Whatever you're drinking this year,
have a very Mari Christmas!*

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