



Swarden WI

Newsletter for December

And so Lockdown (in any other name) continues. As the year draws to a close, we remain distanced from our friends and family; our social lives are practically non-existent.

However, it is still the season for joy and goodwill as well, so I hope one and all can take some comfort in that, and can make the festive season the best it can be in the circumstances.

Wishing you all a very merry Christmas and, I trust, a much happier year to come!

Carol Chandler

The President's table

Even when Christmas is a bit different from 'normal' times a few flowers and berries can bring festive joy.



Last month's Fruit and Nut Competition

There were two entries and both named nine out of eleven autumn fruits. Gill will be awarding prizes to Barbara Spear and Geraldine Dyer. Well done to them.

The fruits, nuts and berries in Gill's arrangement were: acorns, apples, blackberries, chestnuts, cobnuts (hazelnut), haws, hips, pears, rowan, sloes and spindle (neither entrant spotted it).



Wishing a very happy birthday to the following ladies whose special days are on the horizon:

Sandie Hughes	12 December
Jacque Shackleton	27 December
Jenny Gore	7 January
Jenny Mowatt	12 January
Kathy Gibbs	16 January
Betty Bromley	25 January
Kim Marsh	29 January
Patricia Hawkins	30 January

Many happy returns,
Ladies

Jam & Marmalade Sale – October 2020

November 2020

Dear Members

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who made jam, marmalade, chutney and all the lovely crafts for our sale on 31st October. It has been a difficult year and we were not sure if we would be able to hold the event. It was important to make sure that we could be as safe as possible.

We were so pleased to see the number of people who came to buy from the sale and that the History Society could join us with their stalls. Many people said how good it was to do something more normal! Thanks to all your efforts we have made approximately £700! This is not an exact figure yet, as we are still selling jams etc. and if any member would like to claim back expenses, please contact me.

Whilst writing, I wanted to say that we are looking for any members who would like to join us on the committee as some are coming to the end of their term. Please get in touch as we would love you to come and help and we do have a lot of fun along the way!

Look forward to seeing you all very soon.
Best wishes.

Margaret
(President Smarden WI)
margarettwort@hotmail.co.uk

P.S. In these challenging and difficult times, if anyone would like help with anything, please do not hesitate to let us know.



Kathy Gibb's beautiful quilted table runner which raised £50 for our funds in a Silent Auction



Members will recall that the Newsletter last month featured an obituary on June Field, a former President of Smarden WI's President.

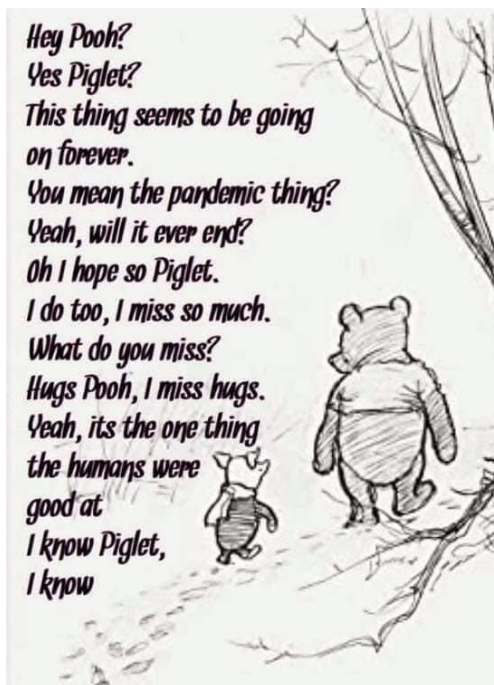


Gill Bromley knew June for many, many years – originally from the Young Farmers and later from the WI. Gill wrote to June's son, Jeremy, on her passing, and received this reply:

"Mum was always rather chuffed when people recognised her in Sainsburys, often from other local WIs as of course her past County role meant she was widely known. The WI meant a great deal to mum and she was so touched by the welcome she received at the centenary celebration. Amazing to think she had been a member for two thirds of that time. The tapestry was a source of great pride – it must have been like a quilting bee and I bet they put the world to rights.

Mum's WI badge accompanied her into the grave. It is a shame that mum never took Monica up on her offers of a lift to meetings, but I'm afraid that after dad died she just lost interest in life generally. It amazed us that she lived on for six years but she refused to allow her accumulating ailments to beat her!

The card {from Gill} really brought back memories, particularly of Admiral Furse and the wonderfully named Lettice Rathbone, and counting the WI carol-singing money round a roaring fire at Hegg Hill, everyone rather the worse for wear after too many farmhouse ciders. Straight out of 'Cider with Rosie'."



Gill adds that she can highly recommend the greeting cards reproduced from Polly Furse's paintings of Smarden and the local area. They are on sale in the Smarden Community Store. Maybe we should revive the boozy WI carol singing when its safe to do so again!

A reminder that donations to the Ashford Family Foodbank can be left in the green crate in Eleanor's garden, Halfways Cottage, Pluckley Road. More details in the November Parish magazine on page 23/24.

Smarden Community Store now also has a green crate just inside the door for any donations.

Eleanor is collecting from both and has recently taken 15 filled crates to Ashford Foodbank. Six of these were from Smarden donations, the remainder from Waitrose in Tenterden. All were gratefully received by the charity.

Online monetary donation are also possible.

Contact: familyfoodbank@children-families.org.



Please keep your eyes peeled for the appearance of a mystery raffle ticket. When you find it, please hold on to it. All will be revealed later!



YOUR COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!

Several members of our WI will be standing down next year and we have vacancies to fill. We meet once a month to exchange ideas, and welcome any members who would like to join us. There is hope of returning to meetings again sometime next year and a number of new or returning committee members will be needed to bring ideas and enthusiasm to our group. If you can help us continue now, and get up and running again next year, please contact either Margaret (margarettwort@hotmail.co.uk) or Lynn (lynncarmichael25@yahoo.co.uk).

As many ladies might know, Margaret has been keeping herself occupied making piñatas for Christmas gifts for her family and others. She also made some which we sold (very easily as they are so wonderful!) at our jam sale. If anyone is unaware, a piñata is a container often made of papier-mache, pottery or cloth which is decorated and filled with candy, small gifts and such-like, and is then broken as part of a celebration.

The idea of breaking a container filled with treats came to Europe in the 14th century, where the name, from the Italian *pignatta*, was introduced. The Spanish took the European tradition to Mexico where piñatas were introduced for catechism puposes. Today the piñata is still part of Mexican culture, the cultures of other countries in Latin America but it has mostly lost the religious reference.



Beehive



Snowman



Brussel Sprout



Reindeer



Spiderman



Penguin

Anyone getting one of these for Christmas is very lucky indeed!
Well done to Margaret



Shielding



My shield is a rectangle,
green, with black furnishings,
no feathers, lions, unicorns, no pointy
corners
or glinting gold to blind in sunlight.
No jousting knight, holding it aloft
to rebut the oncoming lance,
no horse beneath the silver armour
churning up dust with polished hoof.
My shield holds against all comers,
a barrier between me and the world
deflects poisoned arrows, airborne,
unseen, deadly, indiscriminate.
No drawbridge nor portcullis,
no moat to drown this darkest foe,
no ramparts, no rocks to hurl:
just a shield, my ally and my jailer.
From my fortress I see birds fly free,
families, dog walkers, cars pass by,
my shield is my protector, I take cover:
trust in its unfailing loyalty.
My shield is a rectangle
keeping me safe in my castle home,
defended, but cut off, alone.
No coat of arms, no proud pennant
flying in the summer breeze, no knight
in shining armour to release
this damsel in distress.
My shield is friend, foe,
my faithful-to-the-death front door.

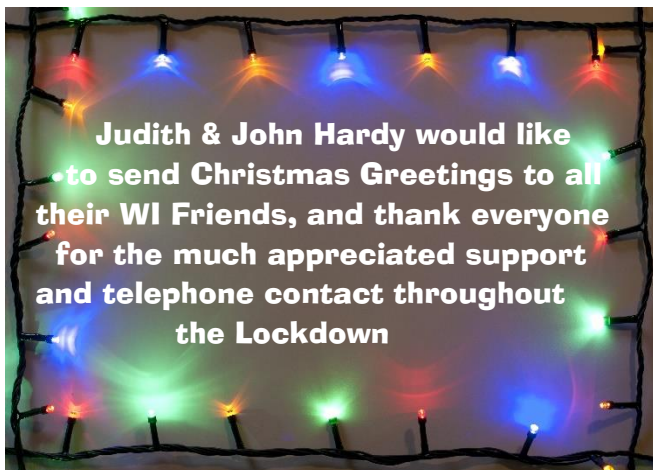
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Lockdown 2020

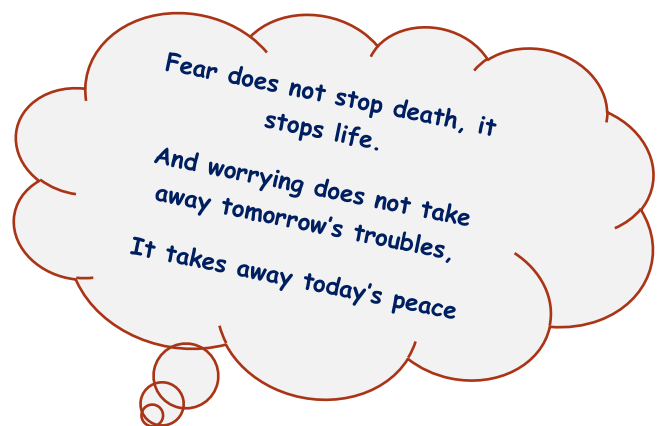


It's Lockdown 2020,
Covid 19's seen to that,
So now the diary's empty
And I'm feeling rather flat.
No visitors allowed inside,
Unless they're in my bubble,
Only go out to exercise,
Seems like too much trouble.
I've done the garden fifty times
And housework till I glowed,
I've even learned to shop online
Though I'm a technophobe.
My kitchen's been made over now,
My bathroom shabby chic'd.
Cross-stitch whiled away some hours
And knitting for the kids.
I've baked and read a book or three,
Penned deathless verses too,
Then, bored with my own company,
Made the odd attempt to Zoom.
I've held my shield, worn my mask,
I'm on first name terms with Matt.
Scoured the house for undone tasks,
Groomed my incredulous cat.
So in lockdown 2020
House and garden immaculate,
I seem to have achieved plenty-
But no-one's allowed in to see that!

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**Judith & John Hardy would like
to send Christmas Greetings to all
their WI Friends, and thank everyone
for the much appreciated support
and telephone contact throughout
the Lockdown**



*Fear does not stop death, it
stops life.
And worrying does not take
away tomorrow's troubles,
It takes away today's peace*



Welcome to Alison Henwood



My husband Phil and I originated from Sussex but lived in Essex for over 50 years. We moved down to Smarden to live with our son and his two daughters and are thoroughly enjoying the country life - this has been particularly welcome since lockdown! We have retained a flat in Essex so that we can continue to visit on a regular basis.

I am a retired solicitor having worked as the Borough solicitor for a local authority for many years, and for the last few years of my working life had a change of direction and managed a local Citizens Advice Bureau. The latter proved to be a very rewarding experience.

Phil and I have three children, two of whom live abroad - our daughter in Australia, and our youngest son in Dubai.

I enjoy social golf, reading and cooking.

Since coming to Smarden I have been struck by the friendly atmosphere in the village and the Community spirit. The new shop is an amazing achievement particularly in these challenging times, and I have recently started volunteering there.

I am looking forward to the in-person meetings of the WI once the restrictions are lifted and learning more about Smarden life.



Obituary

Cdr Martin Moore MBE R.N. (rtd)

28 November 1955 – 2 November 2020



Those of us who attended our last-held meeting in March this year will recall the talk Commander Martin Moore gave on his 30 year career in submarines and, more latterly, in Naval Intelligence. Martin has been of great assistance to Smarden WI in other areas too. When planning for our centenary in 2019, Martin was asked to help weld together a presentation from extracts in the Smarden Scrapbooks and our photo archives. Working alongside Jane Fleet, our then President, he tied her commentary to slides he had produced. The presentation was widely praised and a repeat requested at our annual Garden Meeting in July

Sadly Martin passed away in November after being diagnosed with advanced pancreatic cancer, which is coincidentally a cause for which Gill Bromley is currently carrying out a series of challenges to raise money.

[NB: for a fuller, more detailed obituary for Commander Moore, please see the November edition of the Parish Magazine.]



T'was a month before Christmas 2020

T'was a month before Christmas
And all through the town,
People wore masks,
That covered their frown.

The frown had begun
Way back in the spring,
When a global pandemic
Changed everything.

They called it Corona
But unlike the beer,
It didn't bring good times,
It didn't bring cheer.

Contagious and deadly,
This virus spread fast,
Like a wildfire that starts
When fuelled by gas.

Airplanes were grounded,
Travel was banned.
Borders were closed
Across air, sea and land.

As the world entered lockdown
To flatten the curve,
The economy halted,
And folks lost their verve.

From March to July
We rode the first wave,
People stayed home,
They tried to behave.

When summer emerged
The lockdown was lifted,
But away from the caution,
Many folks drifted.

Now it's November
And cases are spiking,
Wave two has arrived
Much to our disliking.

Frontline workers,
Doctors and nurses,
Try to save people
From riding in hearses.

This virus is awful,
This COVID-19.
There isn't a cure.
There is no vaccine.

It's true that this year
Has had sadness a plenty
But why be merry?
Is there even one reason?

To decorate the house
And put up the tree,
When no-one will see it,
No-one but me.

But outside my window
The snow gently falls,
And I think to myself,
Let's now deck the halls

So, I gather the ribbon,
The garlands and bows
As I play those old carols,
My happiness grows.

Christmas ain't cancelled
And neither is hope.
If we lean on each other,
I know we can cope.



*Shawna Hickling,
Calgary, Canada
November 2020*

Christmas Riddles

Be The First To Match The Riddle To The Correct Answer.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ___ What do you get if you cross Santa with a Detective? 2. ___ What Christmas Carol is a favorite of parents? 3. ___ What do you get if you cross Santa with a duck? 4. ___ What do monkeys sing at Christmas? 5. ___ What kind of people are afraid of Santa Claus? 6. ___ What did Santa change his name to after sliding down a chimney where the fire was still burning? 7. ___ What do you call Santa when he has no money? 8. ___ Why did the Christmas cookie go to the doctor? 9. ___ Where do Snow-Women like to dance? 10. ___ What is a snowman's favorite lunch? 11. ___ What did the Gingerbread Man put on his bed? 12. ___ How do sheep say Merry Christmas in Mexico? 13. ___ What did the buck say to the doe on Xmas Day? 14. ___ Why was Santa's elf depressed? 15. ___ What goes Oh! Oh! Oh! 16. ___ What did Adam say the day before Christmas? 17. ___ What do elves learn in school? 18. ___ Who delivers Christmas presents to dogs? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Claus-trophobics B. Santa Paws C. It was feeling crummy. D. Merry Xmas, Deer! E. Crisp Kringle F. Santa walking backwards. G. Saint Nickel-less H. At Snow-balls I. The elf-abet J. A cookie sheet K. Low 'elf-esteem L. Silent Night M. Fleece Navidad N. An ice-burger O. A Christmas quacker P. It's Christmas, Eve Q. Santa Clues R. Jungle Bells
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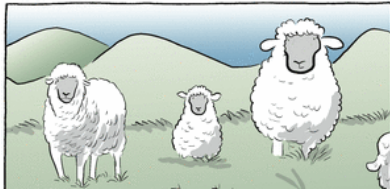
TOTAL CORRECT ANSWERS



Christmas 2020-style!

No nativity this year because the three wise men face a travel ban.



The shepherds have been furloughed.

The innkeeper has shut under tier 3 regulations and a slump in bookings



Santa won't be working because he faces breaking the rule of six with Dasher and Dancer, Prancer and Vixen, Cupid and Comet, and Donner and Blitzen!

As for Rudolph, with that nose, surely he should be taking a Covid test!



But, however you spend Christmas this year and with whomever you spend it, we hope you can enjoy it. Fingers crossed, it will be a one-off!

*Merry
Christmas*



"THE CHRISTMASSY, ARTY PAGES"



*"CHRISTMAS WAVES A MAGIC WAND
OVER THIS WORLD, AND BEHOLD,
EVERYTHING IS SOFTER
AND MORE BEAUTIFUL"*

Norman Vincent peale

Lynn Carmichael

SNOWFLAKES ARE
ONE OF NATURE'S
MOST FRAGILE
THINGS, BUT LOOK AT
WHAT THEY CAN DO
WHEN THEY STICK
TOGETHER



*"What is Christmas?
It is tenderness for the
past, courage
For the present,
Hope for the future"*
Agnes M Pahro

Kathy Reynolds

*The best way to spread
'Christmas Cheer
is singing loud for all to hear*



Geraldine Dyer





May this Christmas

*end the present year
on a cheerful note
and make way for
a fresh and bright
new year.*

*Here's wishing you a
Merry Christmas
and*

a Happy New Year!

Border by Megan Shields, Centre by Kathy Reynolds, and inset circles by the ladies of Smarden WI

The artwork theme for the next edition of the Newsletter

Will be "New hope for the New Year".

Any entries are welcome, whether art, photos, poetry, story or anything really.

Please send your entries to Kathy Reynolds at Katrey15@hotmail.com

