

# Bun, Cuppa and Chat

## NEWSLETTER

### Veterans' Group

November

2025

December



This is a packed issue, combining Remembrance, the Poppy Appeal and Christmas as well as a few other items of interest or amusement to read during these chilly, damp or just dark winter nights.

Norman joins with me in wishing you a joyful Christmas and peaceful New Year. However, we know this is a difficult time of year for many of the group, especially if the anniversary of your loved one's death falls around Christmas or if this is the first Christmas without a beloved family member. Norman and I are mostly at home over Christmas and the New Year, so please contact us if you need support or help – contact details at the end of this Newsletter.

#### Bun, Cuppa and Chat News

Thank you to our kindly volunteers, both our bakers who provide yummy goodies for our monthly events and our lift-givers who bring those unable to drive themselves into Rushall for Bun, Cuppa and Chat. Many thanks to Glenn, Amy and Ryan and all their staff for welcoming us into the Mariner's Galley café, the excellent savouries they provide each month and for making Bun, Cuppa and Chat part of the Mariner's Galley family.

Thirty-five of us squeezed into the Mariner's Galley for Festive Fare, Cuppas and Chat at the end of November, with all the eats provided by Glenn, giving our volunteer cake-makers a break. It was a lovely occasion, with delightful food, tea and coffee on tap and lots of chat, rounded off by a Christmas cake 'to go' for everyone there! Dates for Bun, Cuppa and Chat next year are given on the right.

We were sorry to learn that Jim Woods passed away recently. He and his late wife, Marion, were regular attenders at Bun, Cuppa and Chat some years ago, but Jim has found it more difficult to get out in recent years. Our thoughts are with his daughters Tracey and Linda and all his family. Several more members of our Bun, Cuppa and Chat family are now living in local care homes, including Peggy (who according to her sister, Pat, has now acquired 'wheels' to get around The Mayfields!), Julia S. in Walcot Hall nursing home, and Daphne who is in temporary care following another hospital admission. Kathleen has been in hospital and we hope to see her in the new year when Bun, Cuppa and Chat resumes. Ken Deighton is now receiving palliative care and our thoughts are with both Ken and his wife Julia at this difficult time. Our thoughts are also with those of the group who have health or mobility issues and are rarely able to leave their homes.

Thank you to the Bun, Cuppa and Chat folk who contributed so generously to the Poppy Appeal, including through the Group's own collecting tin for pins and badges and the Mariner's Galley café's tin. Between the two tins, you raised over £280!

Thank you to Helen, Rodney, Pearl, Rose, William, Mig, Olive, Michael, Norman and the Long Stratton Army cadets for raising the superb sum of £1669.50 for the Poppy Appeal at the Long Stratton Co-op, including over £350 which was donated via the contactless card reader, which we used for the first time this year. Thank you too to Tony, Mark, Linda and Rosemary B. for laying wreaths on behalf of Bun, Cuppa and Chat.

#### Bun, Cuppa and Chat Dates 2026

*We will continue to meet on the 4th Thursday of the month next year, 2.30pm-4pm, January to November, at the Mariner's Galley Café, Rushall, although one of the summer meetings will be a lunch starting at 12.30pm. Details will be given nearer the time.*

**Thurs Jan 22**

**Thurs June 25**

**Thurs Feb 26**

**Thurs July 23**

**Thurs March 26**

**Thurs Aug 27**

**Thurs April 23**

**Thurs Sept 24**

**Thurs May 28**

**Thurs Oct 22**

**Thurs Nov 26**



Rose and Pearl on duty at the Co-op

The total funds raised for this year's Poppy Appeal in the Dickleburgh and Long Stratton areas look to have topped £6000, over £400 more than last year. My thanks to the pubs, cafes, shops, churches and businesses in the Dickleburgh and Long Stratton areas who raised money, to my two stalwart house-to-house collectors, one village co-ordinator, the Co-op collectors, and to the 18 schools (yes 18!) who between them contributed over £1500 towards the total. And of course, to all the generous folk who filled the tins with notes and coins and tapped the card reader. The photographs below give a flavour of the events and activities locally that marked Remembrance and the Poppy Appeal. My personal thanks to Zoe Harris, our new Norfolk Poppy Appeal Manager for her support to us Poppy Appeal Organisers.



**St Margaret, Starston: Felix Lombe Taylor carrying the Book of Remembrance**



**Long Stratton Army Cadets**



**Aslacton Primary School**



**Poppy Appeal Organiser's Helpers Sugie supervising and Nacho at the Missus's feet at Rushall Remembrance**



**Dickleburgh Sea Scouts on parade, and wreaths on the War Memorial**



**Poppy crosses made by the children at Tivetshall Primary School laid at the war memorial at St Mary's ruined church**





Tacolneston Primary School



Saxlingham Nethergate Primary School



### Remember Me

Remember me.  
Duty called and I went to war  
Though I'd never fired a gun before  
I paid the price for your new day  
As all my dreams were blown away

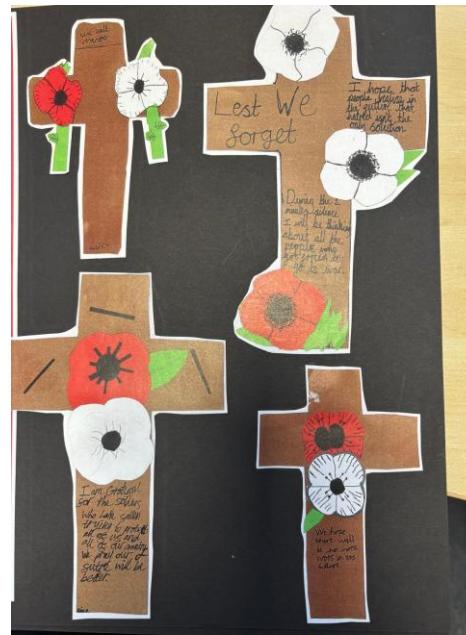
Remember me.  
We all stood true as whistles blew  
And faced the shell and stench of Hell  
Now battle's done, there is no sound  
Our bones decay beneath the ground  
We cannot see, or smell, or hear  
There is no death, or hope or fear

Remember me.  
Once we, like you, would laugh and talk  
And run and walk and do the things that you all do  
But now we lie in rows so neat  
Beneath the soil, beneath your feet

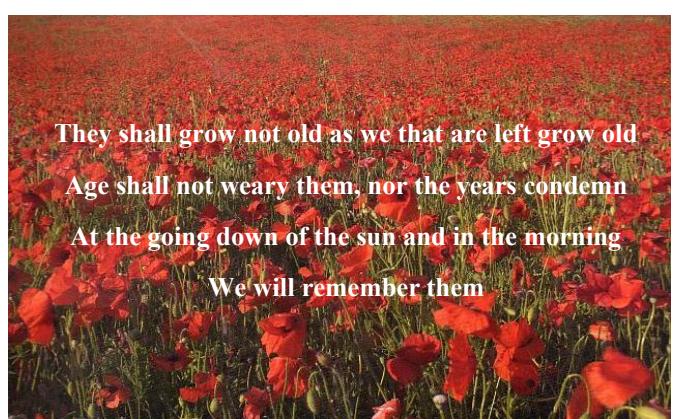
Remember me.  
In mud and gore and the blood of war  
We fought and fell and move no more  
Remember me, I am not dead  
I'm just a voice within your head.

**Harry Riley, 2012**

*Standing for the two minutes' silence in a local supermarket on Armistice Day, my mind conjured up the scene of rows and rows of beautifully kept white head stones and crosses, designating the war dead, in the cemeteries across Europe. If those dead could speak with one voice and send us a message, I wondered what they might say? The above poem is my suggestion. HR*



Ryan and Norman at Rushall Church



## Christmas in 1914

Two stories of the first Christmas of the Great War figure in both histories and personal accounts – Princess Mary's Gift Fund Box and the Christmas Truce. Original Princess Mary's boxes often appear on eBay today, rarely though with the contents still intact. Princess Mary wished to provide a 1914 Christmas present for every sailor and soldier serving overseas, so a public fund was set up to provide the necessary money for the project. Princess Mary urged people to donate, writing: "I want you now to help me to send a Christmas present ... to every sailor afloat and every soldier at the front. I am sure that we should all be happier to feel that we had helped to send our little token of love and sympathy on Christmas morning ... Could there be anything more likely to hearten them in their struggle than a present received straight from home on Christmas Day."

The box was made of embossed brass and usually contained a packet of tobacco and a packet of cigarettes, a portrait



The writing case and contents

photograph of Princess Mary and a Christmas card from King George and Queen Mary. Contents varied though – non-smokers would have a khaki writing case with pencil, paper and envelopes and a packet of acid drops in the box, and Indian troops, depending on their religion, might receive sugar candy and spices in their tins. The tobacco and writing cases were considered inappropriate for nurses serving at the Front, so they received chocolate instead. Shortage of supplies meant that the contents of the tins became even more varied, and might include shaving brushes, combs, 'bullet' pencils, cigarette cases and knives.

### The 1914 Christmas Truce on the

Western Front is sometimes thought to be a myth, but it did happen. Not across the whole Front, or in just one place, but in several different areas where the front-line trenches were divided from each other by 100 yards or so of No Man's Land. These events were spontaneous, often started when one group of soldiers started singing carols, with the sound carried across No Man's Land in the still night air on Christmas Eve. Colin Wilson of the Grenadier Guards recalled: 'We heard a German singing Holy Night of course in German, naturally. Then after he'd finished singing there were all sorts of Christmas greetings being shouted across no man's land at us. These Germans shouted out, 'What about you singing Holy Night?' Well, we had a go but of course we weren't very good at that. Anyway, they said, 'Meet us and come over in no man's land.' Well after a time we were allowed – a limited number of us – our officers allowed a limited number of us to go into no man's land.'



The Gordon Highlanders & Germans on Xmas Day

The men often exchanged gifts and souvenirs while fraternising. Two men from George Jamieson's section went off to meet the German soldiers. They arrived back around about lunchtime, 'Keith with one of the Landwehr hats on – the grey thing with the red band round the button – Philip had a water bottle. They'd had drinks, they'd had smokes and they'd been walking about. He said, 'You just wouldn't believe it!'. Ernie Williams remembered that a football appeared from the German side and Germans and British joined together in a kickabout, a couple of hundred men. Ernie managed a kick of the ball – 'I was pretty good then at the age of 19.'

In some cases, though, overtures of friendship were ignored. Clifford Lane of the 1st Hertfordshire Regiment recalled a commotion in the German trench 100 yards away and lighted objects, like Chinese lanterns, raised above the parapet, with the Germans shouting over to the British trench, but 'before we could do anything, we were ordered to open rapid fire you see. Which we did. The Germans did not reply to our rapid fire they simply carried on with their celebrations, ignored us completely and were having a very fine time indeed. We never did anything else but simply continued in our wet trenches trying to make the most of a bad job.'

The generals from both sides soon put a stop to such fraternisation, but the truce, where it happened, allowed soldiers to bury their dead and repair their trenches, and gave both sides some respite from the horrors of the War and a chance to share peace at Christmas and some common humanity. *With acknowledgement to the Imperial War Museum - Ed*



## The Primary School Nativity

Mary and Joseph arrived at the inn and Joseph knocked at the door.

It was opened by the innkeeper.

"May we come in," asked Joseph.

"No", replied the innkeeper abruptly, and closed the door in their faces.

The little boy playing Joseph looked around him nervously, then knocked again.

The innkeeper opened the door once more, and glowered at Joseph, "What is it?"

"I am Joseph, and this is my wife, Mary. She is expecting a baby. May we come in?"

The innkeeper shook his head vigorously. "No, you can't!" The door was slammed again. Joseph was getting more alarmed now and banged on the door until the scenery shook. As the door was opened he asked, pleadingly, "If there is no room in the inn, perhaps we could stay in your stable?"

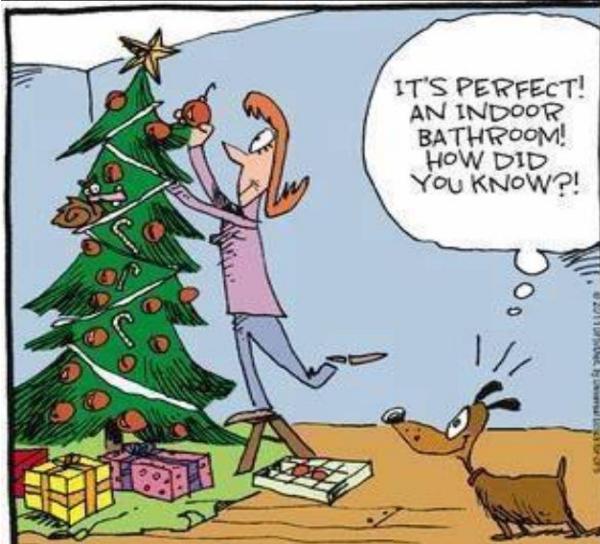
"No, you can't!"

"But why?"

"Because I wanted to play Joseph."



From *Fill My Stocking* by Alan Titchmarsh



## Some local Christmas services

<b>Pulham Market</b>	14 December, 6.30pm Carol Service
	18 December, 7pm Carols on the Green
	24 December, 11.30pm Midnight Mass
<b>Pulham St Mary</b>	21 December, 5pm Carol Service
<b>Starston</b>	21 December, 6.30pm Carol Service
	24 December, 11pm Midnight Mass
<b>Dickleburgh</b>	25 December, 10am Family Communion
	20 December, 7pm Carol Service
<b>Thelveton</b>	25 December, 10am Family Communion
<b>Rushall</b>	21 December, 3pm Carol Service
<b>Frenze</b>	14 December, 6pm Carol Service
<b>Shimpling</b>	Tues 16 Dec, 7pm Carols
	Wed 17 December, 7pm Carols.

Throughout Advent, we are holding a Prayer Mission across the Benefice with prayer stations in each of the six main churches, which are open daily. Please do use the space for private prayer and the resources available, including the prayer cards which can be completed and placed in the lockable prayer boxes.

## Christmas fruit cake recipe

### Ingredients

1 cup water and 1 cup sugar  
1 teaspoon salt  
2 large eggs  
1 bottle whisky  
2 cups dried fruit  
1 cup brown sugar  
8 oz nuts  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
Juice of 1 lemon

the whisky is still okay. Cry another tup. Turn off the mixerer. Break two eggs and add to the bowl and chuck in the dried fruit. Mix on the turner. If the fried druit gets stuck in the beaterers, pry it loose with a dresscriver.

Sample the whisky to check for tonsisticity. Next sift two cups of salt. Or something. Who cares? Check the whisky.

Now sift the lemon juice and strain your nuts. Add one table. Spoon. Of sugar or something. Whatever you can find. Grease the oven. Turn the cake tin to 350 degrees. Don't forget to beat off the turner. Throw the bowl out the window, check the whisky again and go to bed.

Sample the whisky to check the quality. Take a large bowl. Check the whisky again. To be sure it is of the highest quality, pour one level cup and drink. Repeat.

Turn on the electric mixer, beat one cup of butter in a large fluffy bowl. Add one teaspoon of sugar and beat again. Make sure

Not sure where this recipe came from, if it had been brandy, I would have guessed that I had found it amongst my mother's recipes. But anyway, enjoy but please do not operate machinery or drive after making it!



## Norman's Chuckle Corner

- Father Christmas gets his elves working hard on all sorts of jobs, making toys, filling his sack, and cooking. He told one elf to go sweep the snow away from the sleigh ‘Okay, Father Christmas, I am on my way.’ ‘Hey, wait a minute, elf’ said Father Christmas, ‘You have only one welly on.’ ‘I know Father Christmas’, said the Elf, ‘There’s only one foot of snow’.
- What do they call an Old Snowman? Water.
- A boss asked an employer his name. ‘Stuart’ the employee said. The boss scowled ‘I don’t know what a namby-pamby place you worked in before, but we don’t use first names here, it breeds familiarity which ultimately leads to a breakdown in authority, so I always call my employees by their last names only and they refer to me as Mr Harvey...understood? Right now we have that straight, what’s your last name?’ ‘Darling,’ replied the young man. ‘My name is Stuart Darling, Mr Harvey’. ‘Ok Stuart, let’s find you a desk.’
- Teacher to pupils: “There are three kinds of people: those who can count and those who cannot.”
- A boy was late getting to school, and when he arrived, the class had started. He apologised for being late and explained that he had to get his own breakfast. “Never mind, that’s OK,” said the teacher. “We’ve started by looking at this map of the British Isles. Can anyone tell me where the Scottish Border is?” “Yes, Miss,” said the boy who was late. ‘In bed with mum, that is why I had to get my own breakfast.’
- The problem isn’t that obesity runs in your family. The problem is that nobody runs in your family
- ‘Waiter, this lobster’s only got one claw.’ ‘He’s been in a fight, Sir’. I said ‘Well, give me the winner.’
- A young man stopped as he passed an old man crying on a park bench and asked, ‘Are you okay? Can I help?’ The old man with tears in his eyes, said, ‘I’m 90 years old, I’m married to a lovely lady, and she is younger than me; she looks after me, washes my clothes, cooks my meals, and will do anything for me.’ The young man bent down to the old man and said, “Well that doesn’t sound too bad at all so why are you sitting here crying?” “Because” the old man sobs loudly “I can’t remember where I live.”

## Musings from Nacho and Sugie

Sugie here. The Missus was not best pleased when she found a vole quivering with fear on the landing, and she got very cross when she was about to step into the shower, and a mouse crossed the floor and hid behind the loo. I thought it was **dead** rodents she didn’t like!



Nipped onto the Missus’s bed while she was in the shower – she then had to make it with me on it!



Nacho here. I’m planning to compete in the Canine Triathlon next year. Swimming and running are fine, but cycling less good so need a third event – field gymnastics, roly polying, ratting? What do you think?



I am sure I saw a rat in here!

**The Bun, Cuppa and Chat Group is part of the Benefice of Dickleburgh and the Pulhams,  
Rector: The Revd Carl Melville, T. 01379 452029**

**Organisers: The Revd Norman Steer and Rosemary Steer, T. 01379 854245**

**Newsletter Editor, Rosemary Steer, email: [rosemaryasteer55@gmail.com](mailto:rosemaryasteer55@gmail.com) ; Norman – [steernorman@gmail.com](mailto:steernorman@gmail.com)**

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