

I have received the following letter from Carol Boneham, one of the founder members of the WRSG. If you would like to contact Carol I have her telephone number.

Dear Dorothy

I have pleasure in enclosing a poem for your Christmas News Sheet, which I am sure your members will enjoy. This particular poem won the American Editors Awards in 2006.

My first poetry book will be out for Christmas and costs Nine pounds ninety nine pence. This is for the publication charges only and I am not putting any extra charges on. So if any of your members would like a copy reserving then could they let me know? There is only very limited copies on this first edition.

I have also had some diaries done. They contain twelve poems and are priced at three pounds. They are much small but very attractive. So again if members would like a copy the above applies.

Carol (Boneham) International Poet

### Our Friend Bill

In my garden I've a friend called Bill,  
Made of wood and sure looks well.  
Sat upon the garden bench,  
Smoking pipe and cheeky face.  
He sits quite straight just looking around,  
He is our watchman makes no sound.  
No one can our fellow match,  
He has a paint that won't rot.  
The rain we do have a lot.  
And when the sun is shining bright,  
Our Bill shines without a doubt.  
When our friends and family arrive,  
they head for Bill that is no surprise,  
our cat Alice just loves Bill,  
Can you believe it she thinks he is real.  
She sits beside him heart content  
it must be Bill's wooden scent.  
There is one thing I recommend  
everyone should have a garden friend.  
And if somewhat you are feeling down,  
a garden friend will be around.  
They are full of interest and character  
galore,  
Will lift your spirits again once more.

*Carol Boneham*

The following are from Pauline Callaghan

### Why do we love children?

#### Nudity

I was driving with my three young children one warm summer evening when a woman in the convertible ahead of us stood up and waved. She was stark naked! As I was reeling from the shock, I heard my 5-year-old shout from the back seat, "Mom, that lady isn't wearing a seat belt!"

#### Ketchup

A woman was trying hard to get the ketchup out of the jar. During her struggle the phone rang so she asked her 4-year-old daughter to answer the phone. 'Mommy can't come to the phone to talk to you right now. She's hitting the bottle.'

#### Elderly

While working for an organization that delivers lunches to the elderly I took my 4 year old daughter on my afternoon rounds. She was unfailingly intrigued by the various appliances of old age, particularly the canes, walkers and wheelchairs. One day I found her staring at a pair of false teeth soaking in a glass. As I braced myself for the inevitable barrage of questions, she merely turned and whispered, 'The tooth fairy will never believe this!'

#### School

a little girl had just finished her first week of school. 'I'm just wasting my time,' she said to her mother. 'I can't read, I can't write, and they won't let me talk!'

**BEST WISHES  
FROM DOROTHY**

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this newsletter are taken in good faith and are not necessarily endorsed by the editor or the WRSG. The use of a product name does not constitute an endorsement or a recommendation by the WRSG

## Hospital blues, part 2

Marion's the one,  
She is lots of fun,  
And makes us laugh all day,  
With plenty of smiles,  
To loosen our piles,  
And chase the blues away.  
Then there's Mary so sweet,  
Who is bad on her feet,  
Through having a fall recently,  
Whilst walking her dog,  
She fell in a bog,  
And she is in the next bed to me.

Then there's Ida so pretty,  
But oh what a pity,  
She has a bad leg, but she is still jolly,  
She's got a big plaster,  
So we are fitting a castor,  
And wheeling her round like a trolley,  
Little Annie is ninety,  
It's her birthday today,  
And she's off to the theatre,  
But not to a play  
We have bought her a plant,  
Green, yellow and red,  
And when she feels better,  
She will get birthday bumps on the bed.

And lastly there's Nora,  
Who has had a new knee  
She's there in the corner,  
And between you and me,  
She will soon be playing,  
For Wolverhampton F C  
They are all a good crowd,  
So I'll shout it out loud,  
Three cheers for these ladies so plucky,  
And if I come in again,  
Sometime where or when,  
I will see them once more,  
If I'm lucky

*Bren Mullaney*



## *And another poem from Bren*

### Hope

Life's not always easy,  
Sometimes it doesn't seem fair,  
If others don't understand your pain,  
It's more than you can bear.  
And days when pain and loneliness  
overwhelm you,  
You can find peace if you try,  
Just watching the birds in the garden,  
See them soaring high in the sky.

Listening to a favourite record,  
Or a letter from a friend,  
A cup of tea, a much loved book,  
And a broken heart will start to mend.  
A phone call from a loved one,  
The warm sun upon your face,  
Little things can motivate you,  
To rejoin the human race

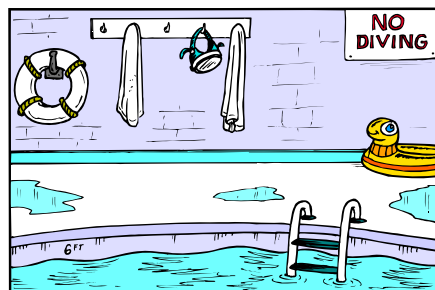
Others have been there before you,  
And found courage to cope,  
Even when pain overwhelms you,  
A kind word will give you hope.  
Remember we are given a precious gift  
A gift of life, so when things are bad,  
Remember the good things in the past,  
And be glad for the happy times you had.

### Hydrotherapy

I have been working towards the  
reinstatement of hydrotherapy in  
Wolverhampton for the past four years.  
The service has been up and running since  
the 13<sup>th</sup> November. Referrals are through a  
physiotherapist. If you think you will  
benefit from hydrotherapy you need to  
discuss this with your physiotherapist or  
ask your GP or Consultant to refer you to a  
physiotherapist.

Any problems give me a call.

*Dorothy*



## Christmas day

Co-operation is the key to a stress-free Christmas Day. 'You all need to help each other out, rather than let one person do everything, and agree on what you all want to do,' 'Try not to have expectations that are too unrealistic and remember that if things go wrong, it's not the end of the world.

Planning is crucial. Write a list of what you have to do, such as when to start cooking then stick to it.

Try out new recipes before the big day so they don't go wrong.

Don't do everything yourself. Get other people to help, such as your mum laying the table or your partner looking after people's drinks.

Encourage everyone to be honest about what they want to do for Christmas. You may learn that your relatives don't really want to visit you every year, or don't mind if you'd rather go abroad.

Avoid tensions by reaching a compromise on what the family wants to do rather than let one person have their way.

## Relaxation

Giving yourself time to relax is important in avoiding Christmas stress, Instead of going out every night, curl up with a good book or pour soothing aromatherapy oils into a bath and have a long soak.

Before you go to bed, drinking camomile tea may aid relaxation.

Exercise is a great stress reliever. Take a walk every day rather than staying indoors throughout Christmas, or book a pre-Christmas treat at a health farm.

Laughter can relieve stress. Book a pantomime.

### The following is a joke from Bhagwant

A man is talking to his friend over some lunch and says,

"I was at home last night and my wife was at the front door and our dog was at the back door - both wanting to be let in at the same time."

His friend asks, "So who did you let in first?" the man says

"I let the dog in first because at least he stops barking when he's in the house."

## Septimus Spider

Its spider time again this year,  
Creeping quietly out of dark corners,  
Filling me with fear  
Waking up at midnight,  
Finding one on the bed,  
Then screaming the house down,  
Almost waking the dead

There were two in the washing,  
As I carried it downstairs,  
And they both ran down my arm,  
Good God, now they come in pairs.  
I saw a big one by the cooker,  
The largest I've seen before,  
I quickly rattled the pots and pans,  
And it scuttled out of the back door.

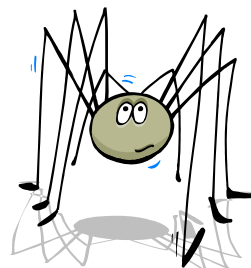
Last night I sat on the sofa,  
To watch a bit of T V.  
The hairs on my neck stood up,  
Something was staring at me.  
There on the rug was a big one,  
With legs so long and hairy,  
I was frozen to the spot,  
It was frightening and very scary.

I went to the bathroom,  
There was one in the sink,  
He ran off quite quickly,  
But where to I cannot think  
Now he's probably hiding,  
So what would I do  
If I opened the window  
And hope he goes out  
Maybe in comes another down the spout.

I'm going to cure this phobia,  
If it's the last thing I do,  
But first of all I will have to sort out,  
The big one in my shoe

HELP- Most of these has happened recently  
it's like we have been invaded.

Luv Bren



### The Last Christmas Tree

I saw a truck of Christmas trees  
And each one had a tale,  
The driver stood them in a row  
And put them up for sale.  
He strung some twinkling lights  
and hung a sign up with a nail;  
"FRESH CHRISTMAS TREES"  
It said in red "FRESH CHRISTMAS  
TREES FOR SALE."

He poured himself hot cocoa  
In a steaming thermos cup,  
And snowflakes started falling  
As a family car pulled up.  
A mom, a dad, and one small boy  
who looked no more than three  
Jumped out and started searching  
for the perfect Christmas tree.

The boy marched up and down the rows,  
His nose high in the air;  
"It smells like Christmas, mom!  
"It smells like Christmas everywhere!"  
"Let's get the biggest tree we can!  
"A tree that's ten miles high!  
"A tree to go right through our roof  
"A tree to touch the sky!" "A tree *SO* big  
"That Santa Claus will stop and stare and  
say, 'Now, *THAT'S* the finest Christmas  
tree "'I've seen this Christmas Day!'"

It seemed they looked at every tree  
At least three million times  
Dad shook them, pinched them, turned  
them 'round to find the perfect pine.  
"I've found it, mom! "The Christmas tree I  
like the best of all! "It's got a little bare  
spot,"But we'll turn that to the wall!"  
"We'll put great-grandma's angel  
"On top of the highest bough!  
"Oh, can we buy it? Please, mom,  
PLEASE?! Oh, can we buy it NOW?"

"How about some nice hot cocoa?"  
Asked the man who owned the lot  
He twisted off the thermos top,  
"Now, *THIS* will hit the spot!"  
He poured the steaming chocolate  
in three tiny paper cups.  
They toasted, "Here's to Christmas!"  
And they drank the cocoa up.  
"Is this your choice?" The tree man asked,  
"This pine's the best one here!"

The boy seemed sad my daddy says  
"The price is just too dear." "Then, Merry  
Christmas" Said the man, who wrapped the  
tree in twine "It's yours for just one  
promise you must keep at Christmas time!"  
"On Christmas Eve at bedtime as you fold  
your hands to pray, Promise in your heart  
To keep the joy of Christmas Day!  
"Now hurry home! This freezing wind is  
turning your cheeks pink! and ask your dad  
to trim that trunk and give that tree a  
drink!"

And so it went on all that blustery eve  
as the tree man gave tree upon tree upon  
tree to every last person who came to the  
lot. Who toasted with cocoa in small paper  
cups, Who promised the promise of joy in  
their hearts and singing out carols, drove  
off in the dark.

And when it was over one tree stood alone  
But no one was left there to give it a home.  
The tree man put on his red parka and  
hood and dragged the last Christmas tree  
out to the woods.  
He left the pine right by a stream in the cold  
So the wood's homeless creatures could  
make it their home He smiled as he brushed  
off some snow from his beard when out of  
the thicket a reindeer appeared.

He scratched that huge reindeer on top his  
huge head "It looks like we've started up  
Christmas again!"  
"There are miles more to travel,  
"And much more to do!  
"Let's go home, my friend,  
"And get started anew!"  
He looked to the sky and heard jingle bells  
sound and then, In a twinkling,  
That tree man was gone!

The end - ©1992 Howard D. Fencil



**WHY THE EVERGREEN TREES NEVER  
LOSE THEIR LEAVES**  
**BY FLORENCE HOLBROOK**

WINTER was coming, and the birds had flown far to the south, where the air was warm and they could find berries to eat. One little bird had broken its wing and could not fly with the others. It was alone in the cold world of frost and snow. The forest looked warm, and it made its way to the trees as well as it could, to ask for help.

First it came to a birch tree. "Beautiful birch tree," it said, "my wing is broken, and my friends have flown away. May I live among your branches till they come back to me?" "No, indeed," answered the birch tree, drawing her fair green leaves away. "We of the great forest have our own birds to help. I can do nothing for you." "The birch is not very strong," said the little bird to itself, "and it might be that she could not hold me easily. I will ask the oak." So the bird said: "Great oak tree, you are so strong, will you not let me live on your boughs till my friends come back in the springtime?"

"In the springtime!" cried the oak. "That is a long way off. How do I know what you might do in all that time? Birds are always looking for something to eat, and you might even eat up some of my acorns."

"It may be that the willow will be kind to me," thought the bird, and it said: "Gentle willow, my wing is broken, and I could not fly to the south with the other birds. May I live on your branches till the springtime?" The willow did not look gentle then, for she drew herself up proudly and said: "Indeed, I do not know you, and we willows never talk to people whom we do not know. Very likely there are trees somewhere that will take in strange birds. Leave me at once."

The poor little bird did not know what to do. Its wing was not yet strong, but it began to fly away as well as it could. Before it had gone far a voice was heard. "Little bird," it said, "where are you going?"

"Indeed, I do not know," answered the bird sadly. "I am very cold." "Come right here, then," said the friendly spruce tree, for it was her voice that had called.

"You shall live on my warmest branch all winter if you choose."

"Will you really let me?" asked the little bird eagerly. "Indeed, I will," answered the kind-hearted spruce tree. "If your friends have flown away, it is time for the trees to help you. Here is the branch where my leaves are thickest and softest."

"My branches are not very thick," said the friendly pine tree, "but I am big and strong, and I can keep the North Wind from you and the spruce." "I can help, too," said a little juniper tree. "I can give you berries all winter long, and every bird knows that juniper berries are good."

So the spruce gave the lonely little bird a home; the pine kept the cold North Wind away from it; and the juniper gave it berries to eat. The other trees looked on and talked together wisely.

"I would not have strange birds on my boughs," said the birch.

"I shall not give my acorns away for any one," said the oak.

"I never have anything to do with strangers," said the willow, and the three trees drew their leaves closely about them. In the morning all those shining, green leaves lay on the ground, for a cold North Wind had come in the night, and every leaf that it touched fell from the tree.

"May I touch every leaf in the forest?" asked the wind in its frolic.

"No," said the Frost King. "The trees that have been kind to the little bird with the broken wing may keep their leaves."

**This is why the leaves of the spruce, the pine, and the juniper are always green.**



## Christmas

I am 67 years old and Jessica and Jack have just shattered my illusion!

“There is no Father Christmas it is your Mom and Dad” They said they had known for a long time but didn’t want to upset me! I told them that nothing and no-one will stop me believing in the magic of Christmas!

My brother, Ray and I had a very happy childhood. At Christmas my Nan and Grandad used to come and stay. We didn’t have a car and it was quite an expedition getting them from 229 Cannock Road to Stowheath Lane on two buses. My Dad carried the suitcase, My Mom carried the presents, My Nan carried the cakes she had made and I carried the bag containing the chamber pot!

I couldn’t understand why they brought the chamber pot because we had a toilet in the upstairs bathroom and an outside toilet. I now think it was because Grandad had severe rheumatoid arthritis and probably couldn’t walk when he first got out of bed.

My favorite Christmas gift ever was a sugar box which my Nan had covered in beautiful white material to make into a bed for my little doll. Every week in the “My Weekly” there were knitting patterns for my little doll and my mom and my cousin’s wife Iris used to knit them for me.

I was a very lucky little girl.

One Christmas I received a red umbrella. It wasn’t raining but I walked up and down Stowheath Lane with the umbrella up. I cannot imagine my grandchildren getting pleasure out of such simple things.

Don and I decided to get married near to Christmas. We married on the 15<sup>th</sup> December 1962. We had the keys to our house at the end of October and we wanted to spend our first Christmas there. My brother had an accident on his motorbike on the 12<sup>th</sup> December and was in hospital with a broken leg for our wedding. (Yes both of us) My accident was in December 1958 and Ray’s in December 1962.

What a worry we were to our parents.

My Mom and Dad and Don’s Mom both asked us to go for Christmas dinner but we said no thank you as we wanted to stay in our new house.

BUT by the time we should have gone shopping for our Christmas food we had run out of money. Not like today when you would just get out the plastic.

My Mom and Dad came round to say that Ray was coming out of hospital for Christmas day and would we go round too. We said “yes please” and our pride never let us admit that we were going because we couldn’t afford a chicken as well as to see Ray. We went to my Mom and Dad’s for lunch and Don’s Mom’s for tea because they only lived twelve doors apart.

I am staying at home again this Christmas because I party all through December and when the actual festive season arrives I am glad of a rest. I also think it is nice to “Do my own thing” rather than fit in with everyone else. That probably makes me a “grumpy old woman” but I am really happy for it to be just me, the Baileys, the Tia Maria coffee, the Cadbury’s roses and my Christmas lunch from Caroline my neighbour!!

I hope you all have a happy, healthy and peaceful Christmas.

*Dorothy*

## Enchantment

Mittens and hats are pulled from the drawer

Scarves and coats litter the floor

Excitement, excitement, thrills and delight  
While they were sleeping, it snowed in the night.

Thirty-five minutes of wrapping up warm  
Pulling on boots to play on the lawn  
One hundred and eighty seconds they played  
Then back in the house, and that's where they stayed.

Into the kitchen, warm cocoa and treats  
Thawing their hands and drying their feet  
The little one turned and took in the view  
'WOW! LOOK! - It snowed in the back garden too!'

Copyright; Bee Rawlinson



### Marathon cheque presentation

From left to right Dr. Ali, Dorothy Darby, Chris Dodd, Liz Walker, Dr. Newton and Dr. Al-Allaf

Chris Dodd came to the Rheumatology Outpatient Department to present the cheque for £130 to Liz our Treasurer on Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> November. Chris ran the Half Marathon on behalf of the WRSG in a time of 1 Hour, 59 minutes and 1 second. Thanks again to Chris and to our members for their sponsorship money.

### Rheumatology Department closure times for this Christmas / New Year are as follows:-

The department will be closed from 12.00 noon on Friday 21st December 2007 until 8.00 a.m. Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2008

If you need help over the holiday period you should contact your G.P surgery for advice. If you ring your G.P. surgery you should be given a number for the Doctors on Call service or you can contact:  
NHS Direct 0845 4647

*The WRSG send Best Wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our staff*

### Fairtrade

Jessica rang to ask if I would help with a survey she was doing at school on Fairtrade. She seemed quite surprised that I knew about Fairtrade and that where possible I would support them.

It made me think that maybe we could think about buying Fairtrade goods when we are doing our Christmas shopping, particularly chocolates, wines and bananas which are available in most supermarkets.

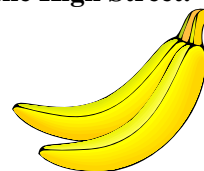
The Fairtrade Foundation was established in 1992 by CAFOD, Christian Aid, New Consumer, Oxfam, Traidcraft and the World Development Movement. These founding organisations were later joined by Britain's largest women's organisation, the Women's Institute.

Fairtrade products are grown by small farmers or plantation workers, who pick their crop with care. They are passionate about the quality of their produce, their way of life, and their families

"The fight is to show we can organise ourselves as effectively as the big companies," says Fairtrade banana farmer Angel Regalado.

The Fairtrade label is increasingly common. But while shoppers seem keen to pay a little over the odds for fair trade products, some observers question how effective it really is in helping developing world farmers. Fair trade products are popping up everywhere.

Gone are the days when you had to trek to an off-the-beaten-track shop that smelt of hemp in order to buy a fair trade woolly jumper or bar of chocolate. Now you just need to visit the High Street.



**HAPPY CHRISTMAS**



# WRSG Newsletter

WOLVERHAMPTON RHEUMATOLOGY SUPPORT GROUP

Charity No. 1041181

CARING IS SHARING

Issue Number 70

DECEMBER 2007

**Editor:**

Dorothy Darby

Telephone: 01902 654417

E-mail [Dorothy.darby@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:Dorothy.darby@blueyonder.co.uk)

Web: [www.wrsg.org.uk](http://www.wrsg.org.uk)

## Contents:

- Announcements
- Features
- Poems



## Carver Wolverhampton City Marathon

This event was on 2<sup>nd</sup> September. The presentation of the cheques has been arranged for 10<sup>th</sup> December at 2.00p.m in the Mayors Parlour at the Civic Centre. I will let you know how much we received in the New Year newsletter.

I am very pleased to be able to tell you that Chris Dodd raised £130 in sponsorship money for his Half Marathon.

See page 2

## Christmas event at Shugborough Hall

Sheila Fardoe is arranging a Christmas Festivities visit to Shugborough Hall on the evening of Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> December. The cost is £12 per person which includes the coach and admission. We leave Falkland Street Coach Park at 4.00p.m and leave Shugborough at 9.00 p.m To book places ring Sheila

## Christmas Coffee Morning

Our Christmas coffee morning is on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> December at the Holly Bush, 494 Penn Road, Wolverhampton from 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

We are providing tea and coffee, squash and mince pies. There is no charge for the event. We will hold a raffle and a "bring and buy" sales table and the proceeds will go towards the refreshments. The aim of the coffee morning is the same as last year. We just want to meet and have a chat and hopefully a laugh.

Admission slips are enclosed with this newsletter for members who have booked places and we look forward to seeing you there.

You may wish to stay for lunch because the Holly Bush has a very varied, reasonably priced menu.

Dorothy

