

News From:



...linking our community in Edenbridge



"We wish you a merry Christmas, we wish you a merry Christmas"

the tune rings in my ear as I hum it to myself, yet, strangely enough it doesn't conjure up peace, contentment and warmth in my inner being Christmas would fall on 25/12 (again!) this year, my mind is a whirl of activity thinking about, amongst other things, cards to write, menus to devise, presents to buy, bills to pay etc.etc. and somehow I wonder how December has come upon me so suddenly.

Surely, I could have done things differently and this year could have been better organised so that Christmas would be more meaningful and more relaxed...



I wonder, do you ever have these frantic moments such as I have described when often the answer is simple. Like me, you could take a moment to yourself to recharge, to restore your equilibrium and even remember the real reason for the season which is the birth of JESUS, who came as a baby yet was to become, out of such humble beginnings, the Saviour of the world. He wants to bring us Love, Joy and Peace in our busy lives.

This is the message we desire to permeate within the BRIDGES centre so whatever your role within BRIDGES, allow me to Thank you for all your efforts throughout this year in making BRIDGES a comfortable environment.



May you see Christmas as it fast approaches, with fresh eyes and my hope is that you embrace the spirit of this Joyous season and may I take this opportunity to wish you and your friends and family a very Happy Christmas and I look forward to working with you in the new year.

With every blessing

Mary Perrett

Centre Manager



China Painting at BRIDGES:

A group of us have been greatly enjoying learning a new skill at BRIDGES.

Bunty Walker is our teacher, and every few weeks, over

Have you noticed the new paintings in the Centre?

They have all been donated to BRIDGES and we have decided to sell them by means of a SILENT AUCTION. If you are unfamiliar with this kind of auction it is very similar to a traditional auction but there is no auctioneer. Instead bids are placed in writing at any time during the duration of the auction and the person who has bid the highest amount at the end wins the painting, simple! The bidding sheet for each painting may be viewed in the Centre Office at any time so that you can keep returning to see if you are still the highest bidder. For those of you familiar with eBay, it is very similar to their system.

These are all original works of art and all proceeds from the auction go to BRIDGES funds.

Please take a look, when you are next in the Centre and if you see a painting you like, place a bid and you may win it!

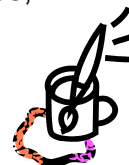


recent months, we have gathered under her guidance and encouragement.

We have been decorating tiles, plates, mugs and jugs and learning from Bunty, but also seeing the works of other artists in the beautiful books that she brings and enjoying gradually acquiring our own tool kit and little paint pots.

We have great fun mixing the powdered paint, repeatedly forgetting the difference between oil for painting, and the 'orange cleanser' for cleaning the brushes. We practise the art of applying paint in a new and unfamiliar way, using little round pads to try and dab our efforts into smoothness and producing patterns and petals (5 or 6 for a more convincing flower?), apples and butterflies, cottages and trees.

Bunty instructs us well and patiently, and we have a relaxed and very enjoyable couple of hours, lubricated at 'half-time' by and cup of tea (and biscuits!). Bunty returns home with our pieces carefully blu-tacked on to a tray and fires them in her kiln.



In January (Tuesday 13th) we look forward to a special event when Elaine Baker, an experienced China Painter, is going to talk and give a demonstration. We hope others will be able to come along and have a look at what we do on that occasion!

Please call Mary to book your place!

Elaine Baker has been painting on china for more than 15 years. Her main inspiration comes from the shape of the pieces and the colours and textures of nature which she includes within a contemporary design. She paints on bone china and porcelain with on glaze ceramic paints which are kiln fired.

"I have always lived in the countryside and was brought up to stop and look at what is around me - this helps with design and detail"

Elaine demonstrates her designs to other china painters and community groups. She has a studio (shed!) in the garden and works on commissions and ideas that suddenly spring into her head as she walks passed something in the flower border.

She also works for St Catherine's Hospice in Crawley as a Fundraising Co-ordinator with the special task of initiating new projects to bring in funds for the charity.

Christmas is Coming!

BRIDGES will be operating with different hours over the Christmas period:

Christmas Eve: open from 9:30am-12pm for coffee, mince pies and cake only.

BRIDGES will be closed hereafter until Saturday the 3rd of January 2009, 9:30am-12pm.

We wish all our visitors and friends a very happy Christmas and New Year!



<u>DATES FOR YOUR DIARY</u> all in BRIDGES unless otherwise noted			
December	3rd	Weightwatchers	6:15pm-7:45pm
	4th	BRIDGES Prayer	3pm-4pm

		Group	
	8th	Hi Kent- Hearing Aid Help	10am-12pm
	9th	MIND- Mental Health Clinic	10am-12pm
		Morris and Friends Folk Music	12pm-2pm
	10th	Weightwatchers	6:15pm-7:45pm
	11th	Carers first	10am-12pm
		Get Sorted Session- S.D.C Health Review	11am-1pm
	17th	Weightwatchers	6:15pm-7:45pm

Book Suggestion:

The Shack by William Young

Mack tells us the heart wrenching story of a weekend on a camping trip in the mountains of Oregon with his kids, nothing unusual until tragedy strikes in the most unexpected way. Mack cannot forgive himself, and he blames God for allowing such a tragedy to happen to him. Then one day Mack finds a note in his post box inviting him to return to The Shack, the scene of the tragedy. Unsure if it is a cruel joke, a trick by the killer or whether it is really God trying to speak to him, curiosity gets the better of Mack and he decides to go back to find the answers. On his challenging and painful journey Mack finds his answers, healing, peace and forgiveness.

The book will challenge you and shatter your ideas of who God is. The questions Mack wrestles with are probably questions we have all wrestled with at some point. In particular this book is especially relevant to anyone who is or has experienced suffering in his or her own life. The Shack is a modern day source of healing and encouragement. It will not be what you expect, it may be uncomfortable and it is certainly not conventional, but I would thoroughly recommend that it is well worth reading.

Susannah Clark

Public Theology Researcher, Evangelical Alliance.



I love this book. It is fast paced with a gripping though tragic story line. Have those tissues ready! I really needed to hear what it has to teach me about the things that happen to us in life, so much so that I read it four times within a couple of months so as not to forget! It has changed my relationship with God who I now know 'is especially fond' of ME (Oh, and you too in case you wondered). I recommend you read it for yourself and give it to anyone else who hasn't yet read it as a Christmas present. Available everywhere Price £8.99.

Carol Conquest. The Eden Church.

If **you** have read a book recently that you think other volunteers might enjoy why not write a review for our next newsletter and give it to Mary.

After the joys of a full-on Christmas feast, you might want to try this delicious **broccoli and stilton soup** which will definitely keep your appetite at bay...

Serves 4:

25g butter	1 medium onion, chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed	550g broccoli, separated into florets and the stalk sliced
1.4 litres turkey or chicken stock	125g stilton, crumbled
A few chives to garnish, optional	



1. Heat the butter in a large pan and gently fry the onion for 10 minutes until softened. Stir in the garlic and broccoli and cook for 1 min.
2. Add stock, bring to the boil, and then simmer for 15 min until broccoli is tender. Remove from heat and add 100g stilton. Whiz in a blender in batches until smooth.
3. Return to a clean pan and reheat gently. Check the seasoning and serve garnished with the remaining stilton and chives, if using.

Through the Looking Glass- A personal view of Bridges by Nigel Glass:

I am a part-time nanny to three of my grandchildren; and because the part-time is almost always in the morning, the four of us - Elijah, Nathaniel, Petroc and I, are grateful and regular visitors to Bridges.

Like many of the visitors with young children, I particularly appreciate the play area - I don't know whether the layout was planned as a jail for toddlers, but it serves as a jolly good one, safely trapping them as I get to read a few pages of the paper. What is to me a useful restraint, strikes them as a safe place. I rarely see children unhappy to play there - it's probably something to do with the security of being able to look over the barriers to see familiar adults. And I can see them! Some thought has gone into the selection of toys. My charges are spread between six months and four, and there is always something to their fancy, although the baby is likely to fancy anything that is thrust at him! The toys are clean and in otherwise safe conditions and the bins and shelves make it easy to involve the children in clearing up, or when such help is not easily forthcoming, do it oneself! But this is less than half of the spirit of Bridges. It's a place of giving and receiving, outside the rampant self interest of raw capitalism. The likes of me and my grandchildren, the volunteers who cook and serve the food; the organisers and cleaners; the people who use the quiet area at the back of Bridges; the advice groups which meet there; and the regular gangs of hikers - we are all a microcosm of society getting along with each other in some of our mutual needs and interest. And with our limitations! I'm struggling to control my toddlers, while today's cashier is struggling with the till! The food is of surprisingly good standard, somewhat better than most small cafes. This may be because the cooks are bringing their skills direct from their home kitchens - with all the personal care of a family meal. Once, I forgot to tell the cook that I like my poached eggs fairly well done and couldn't eat the softer eggs that were served. Someone noticed that I had returned the eggs uneaten and, when I next came in, apologised. A regular customer might get this level of solicitude at one of Marco Pierre White's restaurants, but rarely elsewhere. (At Gordon Ramsay's they would likely get an invective laden attack on their sense of taste!) Something which I feel to be really important at Bridges is the opportunity for children and more senior citizens to interact with each other. Between these groups, the bulk of adults are so busy at the business of living that they are less accessible to the young and old. In the USA some Quaker homes for senior citizens are promoting in-house kindergartens for this reason. When I see toddlers and older people look at each other, I seem to glimpse some shared wisdom about the world that flows between them. It is a world that might be more accessible to all of us if there was more of the mutual society that Bridges represents.



PRIZE CROSSWORD

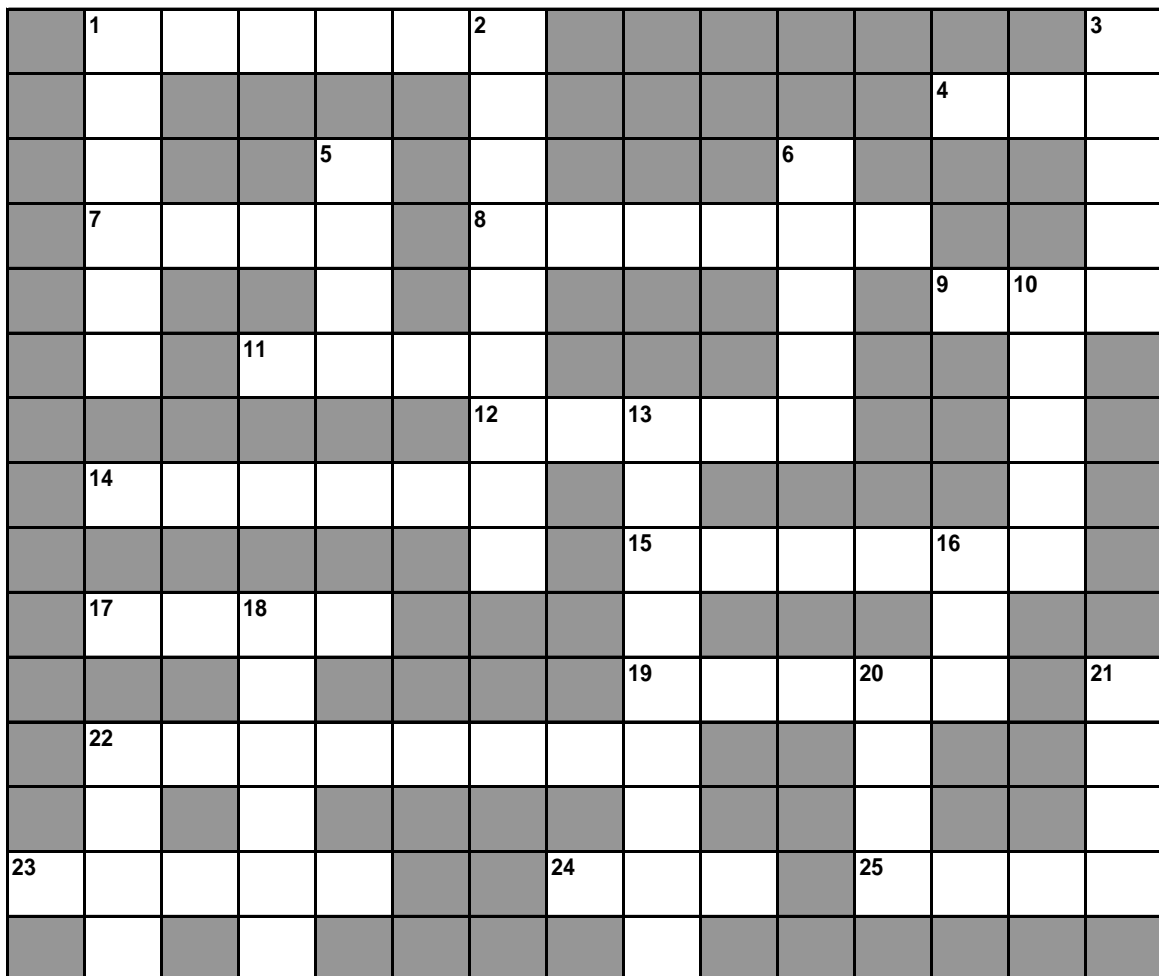
Complete the crossword and you could win a prize!

**Just return your completed crossword to bridges with your name & number.
The winners will be drawn on 23rd December.**

1st Prize A lunch at BRIDGES with a drink

2nd Prize A hot drink and a cake at BRIDGES

3rd prize a drink at BRIDGES

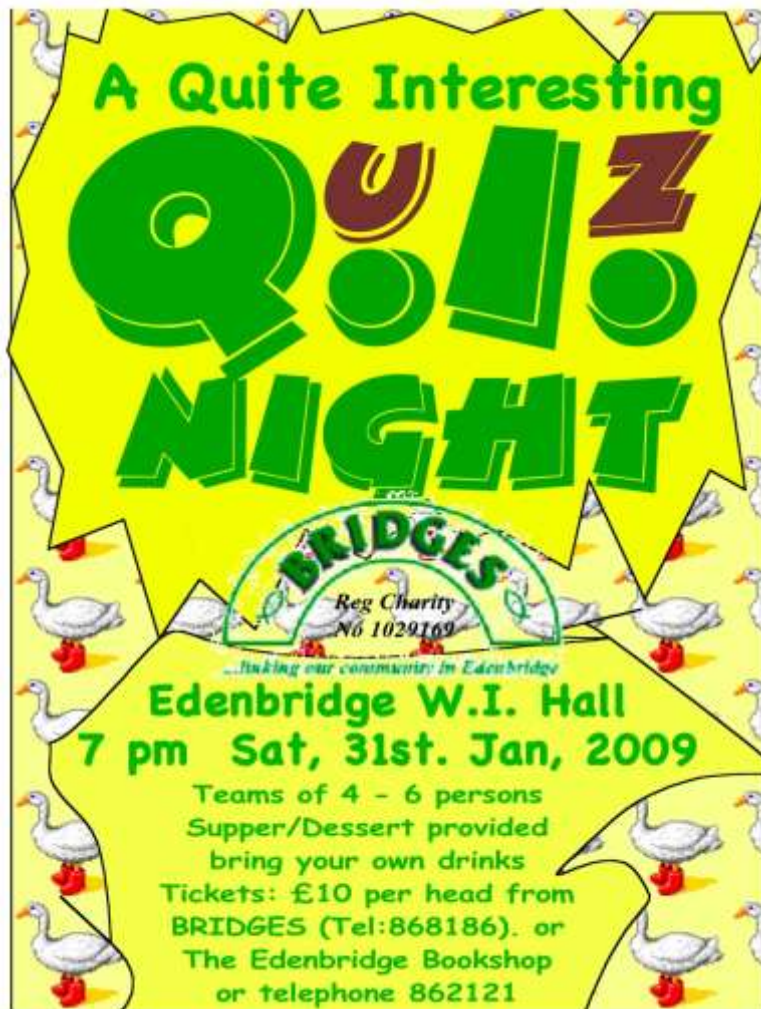


NAME:.....

PHONE:.....

Clues Across:

1. See 20 down
4. Christingle services are held on Christmas --- (3)
7. The point of the compass that the wise men travelled from (4)
8. This wooden structure by the main door in BRIDGES reminds us what the building was once used for (6)
9. See 20 down
11. The Christmas - - - - decorates BRIDGES at this time of year (4)
12. The Christmas bird with a red breast (5)
14. See 20 down
15. Christmas dinner? (6)
17. The shepherd's gift for the baby Jesus (4)
19. Carols by Candle- - - - - (5)
22. Often left out for Santa to eat (5,3)
23. The original colour of Santa's coat (5)
24. Happy - - - Year, a seasonal greeting (3)
25. - - - - Herod(4)



Clues Down

1. The 4 weeks before Christmas (6)
2. While - - - watched their flocks by night (9)
3. '- - - on Earth, Goodwill to all Men' a Christmas greeting (5)
5. It led the shepherds to baby Jesus (4)
6. One of Santa's reindeers (5)
10. The - - - and the Ivy (5)
13. The town where Jesus was born (9)
16. Reindeer's - - - carrots to see on their journey Christmas night! (3)
18. What did baby Jesus lay in? (6)
- 20, 9 across, 14 across
- 1 across, 21 down. A well known Christmas carol (4,3,6,6,4)
21. See 20 down
22. Our Centre Manager and the mother of Jesus share this name. (4)