

The Ink Drinker

BYRON &
THE BARD
LAVENHAM

From the home of Magical Books for Magical People.

December 2023 • Issue One



Welcome to the first issue of Byron & The Bard's quarterly newsletter...

...Before explaining why we are calling it "The Ink Drinker", you deserve an explanation of why the shop is called Byron & The Bard...



Byron was our beloved family cat who appeared completely black until he turned over to have his tummy tickled and exposed his itchy, witsy, teeny, weeny little white cat mankini. While most of us think of Shakespeare, "bard" in its more literal, Celtic sense means a storyteller or a weaver of tales, and it's fair to say, a good many bards have found their way home onto our shelves.

Back to "The Ink Drinker" Why? Simply because It's the English translation of the French expression for "Book Worm".

If you have not yet visited the shop, we hope you'll enjoy being

made welcome in a new shop in a beautiful half-timbered Tudor Building in Merchants' Row, Lavenham. Please do come in and say hello.

In this issue we are focussing on ways we hope that we can help you. We will have an online presence – but we're not trading online. Why? It's quite simple. We want to get to know our clients and we want our clients to get to know us.

We are very happy to take orders for books, merchandise and gift tokens over the phone, if you can't come to the shop, and we're very happy to order in books that we don't have. Although we stock well over a

thousand titles, with new and fresh stock coming in every week; we cannot stock the hundreds of thousands of books that are available these days.

We offer a free Lavenham and local delivery service, otherwise we are happy to wrap, pack and post your orders elsewhere in the UK for a nominal charge.

We are very keen to work with local authors and illustrators, and we already have a small section dedicated to East Anglian writers, and works of fiction not based "abroad". We are fortunate to have received numerous approaches from both local authors and illustrators, and we intend the March edition of The Ink Drinker to feature our beloved Seeley Suffolk and our friendly rival county neighbours, and all our writers be they rising stars, or those long since in the ascendancy. We are very proud that lestin Long has agreed to launch his hot off the press next book in Byron & The Bard. You can find out details on the back cover.

In every issue, we hope that there will be something for everyone be you four or 104; and be you a fan of Walliams or Winman. Incidentally, our oldest customer to date is a quite lovely lady who had been celebrating her 99th birthday with her family in the Swan Hotel in Lavenham. We can't wait to meet our first centenarian!

In each issue, we'll be featuring an author or a genre of books, in this issue (unsurprisingly) it's Christmas Books. There will be



book reviews, written by customers or our staff, and in future issues letters from readers giving their suggestions of books that we should stock and that you might want to read too. Some of our customers collect very different editions of specific titles, and we'll be asking them for their stories too.

We may also have a quick lookback at some of our quirky window displays and the books that they featured as well as a calendar of upcoming events such as book readings and signings.

We will also announce anticipated book release dates (RD) over the coming months that we know our clients and customers will be keen to pre-order or reserve.

Now take five minutes off and read on. We hope that we will have the chance to wish you a Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year in person very soon.



Enjoy a Vintage Christmas



Almost everyone looks forward to giving, and receiving, books at Christmas, and they're a doddle to wrap! What's not to love? Doubtless, many a stocking will be filled with recent chart toppers. Be it "A Christmasaurus Carol" by the ever-popular Tom Fletcher, Richard Osman's "Last Devil to Die", Terry Hayes' "The Year of the Locust" – or David Jason's "The Twelve Dels of Christmas". His festive tales of Life and Only Fools & Horses. And we're hoping to see Lavenham's very own Iestyn Long's new Christmas book "A Merry Christmas and A Happy End of the World – it's Turkey Time" at the top of our "leader board".

In, the usually hectic, run-up to Christmas, whether you are young or old, it's lovely to have some "me time" and curl up with a good book and a cup of hot chocolate or a glass of mulled wine. We thought we'd dust off some old favourites that have stood the test of time and shouldn't be forgotten, each with a synopsis – but no spoilers.

A Christmas Mystery by Justein Gardner.

A magical tale transcending time and distance, with a chapter for every day of Advent. Follow young Joachim as he discovers a little more of a mystery every day that he opens a new window in his Advent calendar. Written in 1992 and originally intended for teenagers and young adults, it appeals to everyone.



A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens.

This all time classic by "The Man who Invented Christmas" was first written as a novella in 1843. Its characters have been portrayed in movie studios since its first silent theatre adaptation in 1901, which was less than five minutes long. There have been over 20 different versions starring everyone from Sir Alastair Sims to Michael Caine and

The Muppets, but be in its many literary, screen and stage versions, its basic themes of atonement and redemption continue to resonate with young and old alike.

Hogfather by Sir Terry Pratchett O.B.E.

NOT for young children, it's a very Sir Terry take on Christmas and the "Big Man". The Hogfather has been kidnapped – who (or what) better to be his understudy than DEATH, but can he, and DEATH's Granddaughter Susan Sto Helit (imagine a Goth Mary Poppins) save the Hogfather?



The Gift of the Magi by O. Henry.

A story of a young couple, newly married and living in an apartment in New York, with little money, who are still determined to give each other Christmas presents they think good enough of each other. A story of the value of love over worldly possessions. In today's economic climate it rings true now, just as much as it did when it was first published in 1905.



Letters from Father Christmas by J.R.R. Tolkien

Written between 1920 and 1943, and published posthumously in 1978, this collection of illustrated letters to Tolkien's children from Father Christmas chronicles his adventures – and misadventures – with his rather elfish secretary and the odd polar bear.

The Night Before Christmas by Clement C. Moore.

Just how many versions exist? Who knows! Beloved by everyone from Great grandparents to Great grandchildren alike, this timeless poem was originally published on 23rd December 1823, anonymously by a friend, four years before Clement C. Moore claimed or admitted ownership. They are quite possibly the best-known verses in American literature. Be honest, it's the only reason any of us can remember all the reindeers names! In millions of homes, all over the world, reading it is a Christmas Eve tradition. Long may it remain so.

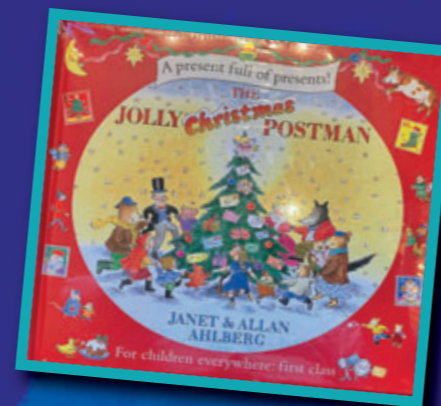


Polar Express by Chris Van Allberg.

Written and illustrated in 1985, almost 20 years ahead of the film, its atmospheric text and beautifully detailed drawings earned Van Allberg the Caldecott Medal in 1986. Fantasy or fact? It rather depends on whether, or not, you BELIEVE!

Christmas at Cold Comfort Farm by Stella Gibbons.

Cold Comfort Farm was originally written very much as a caustic comic, parody of rural and urban kitchen sink dramas – including DH Lawrence. If you haven't read it, the original 1932 novel is just as funny now as it was almost 100 years ago. But if you are fearing staying with the in-laws or have other concerns about Christmas, if you've got a sense of humour, this is just the antidote you need. Once you've read about the Starkadders – everything else pales by comparison.



The Jolly Christmas Postman by Janet & Allan Ahlberg.

This year marks its 30th anniversary, just proving that times flies even faster than envelopes. Opening the little letters in the little envelopes addressed to everyone from Humpty Dumpty to Little Red Riding is still quite magical for little people and their little fingers.

Hercule Poirot's Christmas by Agatha Christie.

First published in 1938, it's classic Christie and a classic Poirot, involving an English country house, a dead millionaire, and numerous potential suspects. It's no spoiler to say that the book ends with Poirot standing before a roaring log fire and declaring that he prefers central heating.



HO! HO! HO! IT'S CHRISTMAS!



Yes, my name is Holly, but I was named after a character in a book, I wasn't even born at Christmas. I always liked Christmas, but my sister died when I was seven, and those first few Christmases after Anne died must have been sheer hell for my parents. They couldn't bear to stay at home, and we had no close family, so we stayed in hotels, at Christmas, for many years. Please don't me wrong, they were wonderful, Mummy would bake, Daddy always took me to visit Father Christmas, and I don't know how, but somehow Father Christmas always found me, even when we were in Devon or on the Isle of Wight. To this day I don't know how! But with a child's intuition, I always knew it was a very difficult time for them, as it is for any parent who suffers the loss of a child.

Fast forward a few years to my teens, and with the temerity of youth, I decided I should take charge of Christmas! I hasten to add that mummy did all the baking and cooking which was wonderful and there was always enough food to feed an

army even though there were only three of us. We stayed at home, and we'd collect holly and ivy from the lanes and buy mistletoe from the market and the house would be festooned. Not a picture was safe from a garland and nor were the bannisters! We'd go to Midnight Mass – and then go to the pub', which should have closed at 10.30, but stayed open and served mulled wine and hot toddies.

The die was cast. And I have, as anyone who has worked with me since 1988 knows all too well, perhaps, over-embraced the spirit of Christmas ever since. Just ask Jemma McKnight who works with me at Byron & The Bard. Luckily, she is just the same as me! There should be a picture of me sitting astride a Christmas Grinch saying YOU WILL BELIEVE! Yes, I was the chairman who insisted that we organised the Christmas Party before the summer holidays and yes, I am the chairman who once played "Frosty the Snowman" through the entire office telephone system. And yes, I am the mother that took her children on a day trip to

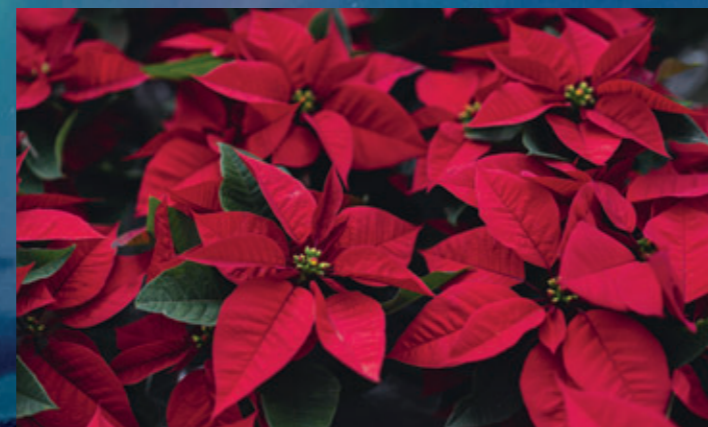
Lapland in sub-zero temperatures. It's my inner child, once I let it out, I've never let it get back in.

Not only is Christmas one of the most holy days of the year in any Christian Calendar, the Nativity is recognised and revered in both Islam and Judaism. Honaker, Diwali and, sometimes, Ramadan also fall sometime around December and each in different ways, represent the triumph of good over evil and light over darkness; in the same way as Saturnalia and the Pagan festivals around the time of the winter solstice did and do.

In my simple view Christmas transcends every colour, creed and sex, and makes people slow down and think less of themselves and more of others; or as our American friends would say "wake up and smell the cookies". In anyone's book that has got to be a good thing. And perhaps most important of all, is that light somehow gives us hope, and at some point, in all our lives hope is as important as the air that we breathe

Christmas rituals and folklore from around the world and who started what, where and when intrigue me.

Poinsettias are very much associated with Christmas, but it's a sub-tropical plant. A dear



Knowing that Holly has been planning and ordering Christmas stock and Christmas displays since early summer, way before the bookshop opened, we asked her about her obvious love of Christmas:

Spanish friend explained to me how the tradition started in Mexico. Once upon a time a poor and very sad little girl called Pepito had no present to give the baby Jesus. Walking to church her cousin Pedro, he told her that we was sure that the baby Jesus would appreciate even the smallest gift from someone who loved him. Pepita picked a handful of weeds from the roadside and made a small bouquet which, feeling embarrassed, because it seemed so meagre, she put at the end of the crib.

The weeds miraculously burst into bright red flowers, since which time they have been known as 'Flores de Noche Buena' or Flowers of the Holy Night.

A couple of weeks ago, some friends were in Iceland and later told me about a Christmas Eve tradition called Jólábókafliðið, pronounced Jolabokaflod – literally translated as 'Yule Book Flood' – when books are given to friends and family to then snuggle in for the night with a good book and hot chocolate.

I did a little digging and discovered that the tradition may not be all that old; Apparently, it took off in World War II when paper was one of the few commodities not heavily taxed or in short



supply. Books became a gift of choice. As a chocoholic, bookaholic, I know I'm biased, but it would certainly go down better with me, than spending Christmas Eve with a lump of dug-up cured shark fillet and a tot of the Icelandic national drink, rather ominously nicknamed "Black Death"!

In England, we never seem to be able to make up our minds. On the one hand we claim Dickens was "The Man who invented Christmas" but then we want to play it all down and

accuse our North American cousins of allowing the stealing of the real meaning of Christmas, and then allowing Father Christmas to be hijacked by Coca Cola and going W-A-Y over the top ever since.

As always, the truth is somewhere between the two. Yes, Christmas was, shall we say, reinvigorated in England by Prince Albert, Queen Victoria and Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol". Turkeys became far more fashionable

than goose, candle lit Christmas Trees took off (taking many a ceiling with them) but most importantly, the greatest granddaddy of all anti-heroes, one Ebenezer Scrooge came into being. His salvation became something of beacon of hope to many people ever since. When it was first published, charitable giving rocketed and donations continue to peak at Christmas, whatever the economic climate.

I hate to burst our patriotic



bubble, but Clement C. Moore wrote "T'was The Night Before Christmas" some twenty years before Dickens ever even thought of Marley and the ghosts of Christmas past, present and future. Reindeer were named, and we know that not a even a mouse has dared to stir ever since.

A Christmas Carol highlighted a universal truth; the extent to which Christmas is celebrated is governed by economics as much as anything else and nothing illustrates this better than the tradition of the Christmas tree in the Rockefeller Plaza, New York.

It was being built during the depths of the Great Depression. On Christmas Eve 1931, the construction workers decorated a 20 foot balsam fir with crushed tin cans, paper garlands and strings of cranberries. A beacon of hope for desperate men at a time of intolerable poverty and unimaginable loneliness.

Compare that with the 2023 tree which, at 80+ feet tall and with a diameter of 43 feet weighs in at 12 tons, is decorated with around 50,000 LED lights and is topped with a 3-D Swarovski star that weighs 900lbs and contains (wait for it) 3,000,000 crystals!

At the end of the day, very few of these traditions are really either English or American. Almost every single one stems from somewhere in mainland Europe. Like family traditions, they evolve and adapt, get dropped or added to and embellished. As our Vikings invaders once taught us to say, "Wassail"! and while we are at it, grab a quick (probably politically incorrect) Pagan kiss until the mistletoe."

I asked Holly whether the shop would have a theme for Christmas, she sidestepped the question with the deftness of a politician, by talking about a mistletoe ball she had yet to order, but she did let slip that she's very fond of a book written in by E.T.A. Hoffman in 1816, although it didn't become really famous until 1898 when someone else took it to another level!

A.R.K.vent Calendar Competition

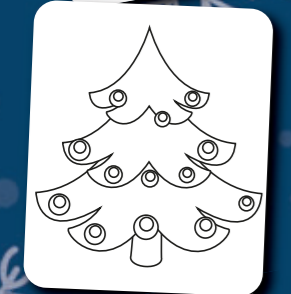
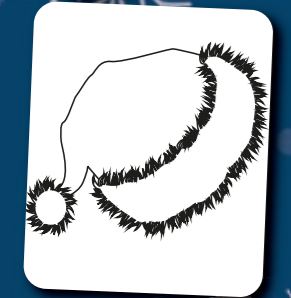
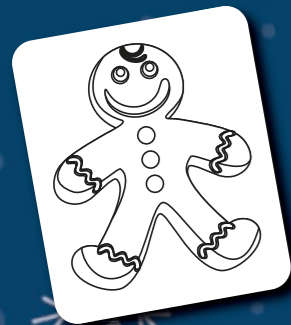
Christmas is a time to, if you are lucky, receive. Far more importantly, it's a time to think of others. Byron & The Bard has made you an A.R.K.vent calendar. What's that? It's a small Act of Random Kindness for every day of advent. They don't have to be done in any order, just as and when you can.

When you have done an A.R.K. put a BIG ✓ in the box and give yourself a pat on the back. You might even find you get a warm, fuzzy feeling in your tummy.

When you have completed your ARKvent calendar, either post it to us at Byron & The Bard or take a photo of it and email it to hello@byronandthebard.com with your name and address to reach us no later than 14th January 2024, and you will be entered into a prize draw to win one of two £25 Byron & The Bard Gift Cheques (Ts & Cs apply). Please note there is NO age at which you are too old to enter!

The winners will be notified by snail mail or email, and their names posted in the shop and published in the March edition of The Ink Drinker.

All 24 A.R.K.s completed? Give yourself a BIG tick:



1

Smile at everybody, even people that you don't know.

A.R.K. 1 completed:

2

Make somebody laugh out loud.

A.R.K. 2 completed:

3

Leave a note by your post-box, for your postman, to say thank you.

A.R.K. 3 completed:

4

Pay someone you don't know a compliment.

A.R.K. 4 completed:

5

Hold the door open for someone.

A.R.K. 5 completed:

6

Don't forget to use the magic words PLEASE & THANK YOU all day and every day. (Santa's elves may be watching).

A.R.K. 6 completed:

7

Put some food out for the birds.

A.R.K. 7 completed:

8

Drop a penny on purpose (when no-one is looking), it might bring them good luck!

A.R.K. 8 completed:

9

Tidy your room - without being asked.

A.R.K. 9 completed:

10

Draw a picture for someone and give it to them just to make them happy.

A.R.K. 10 completed:

11

Pick up some litter and put it in a bin.

A.R.K. 11 completed:

12

Make sure no one feels left out when a group of you are chatting.

A.R.K. 12 completed:

13

If you have any old clothes, toys or books that you can't pass on, give them to a local charity shop or church.

A.R.K. 13 completed:

14

Make time to read your little sisters or brothers a story.

A.R.K. 14 completed:

15

If you are in a car, or on a bus or train wave to someone in another one that's passing.

A.R.K. 15 completed:

16

Be kind to yourself and do something that you enjoy.

A.R.K. 16 completed:

17

Let somebody, who's in a hurry, go in front of you in a queue.

A.R.K. 17 completed:

18

If you do something wrong by accident, admit it and say you are sorry.

A.R.K. 18 completed:

19

Send a Christmas card to a neighbour you have never met.

A.R.K. 19 completed:

20

Ask a grown-up in your house if there is anything you can do to help them.

A.R.K. 20 completed:

21

Make a decoration and put it on a Christmas tree in a local square or park.

A.R.K. 21 completed:

22

Send a Christmas card to children, or old folk in a local hospital or nursing home.

A.R.K. 22 completed:

23

Be kind and polite to the other team's supporters whether your team wins or loses.

A.R.K. 23 completed:

24

Make a kind Christmas wish for someone else and really, really mean it.

A.R.K. 24 completed:



Would you like to type a letter with "Auntie Vi"?



Pictured here, and on the front cover, is a photo of the typewriter that lives upstairs in Byron & The Bard, and which is named in homage to my mother, WRNS Officer Violet Crayton. This "Imperial Companion" typewriter, manufactured in the 1930's, was meticulously renovated by Mr & Mrs Vintage Typewriters Limited and is identical to the that one Mummy (pictured above in Mumbai) had, and which travelled to India with her in 1944.

It's not at all unusual to be downstairs in the bookshop and hear the keys clattering away. It's a lovely and strangely comforting sound. Quite often we'll go upstairs at the end of the day, and find, usually, anonymous notes or verses of poetry which people have left with "Auntie Vi". It's kind of people to leave them, and we intend keeping them in a scrapbook..

We are very happy for people to type away, but we do ask people to please treat Auntie Vi' with the care and respect a very special, and rather old, lady deserves.

The recruitment posters urged, "Join the Wrens

and free a man for the fleet", so on her 21st birthday, 23rd August 1941, Mummy did just that and joined the WRNS which stood for Women's Royal Naval Service.

All on-shore Royal Naval Establishments are designated as ships, and I believe that after training, her first posting was H.M.S. Badger in Harwich, Essex. Quickly, rising through the ranks, Mummy was commissioned and became a censor officer. Her job was to read everyone's private letters and redact or obscure anything that might be a security risk, such as where a ship was stationed or where she (ships are always female) was going. "Loose Lips Sink Ships" & "Careless Talk Costs Lives" were the slogans of the day. Today they would be hashtags or taglines.

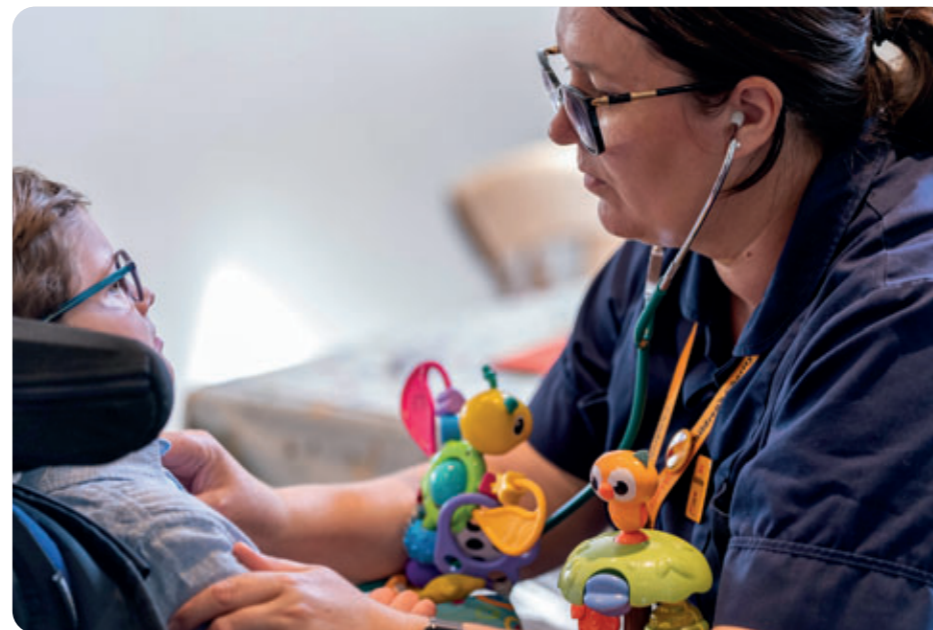
Never an easy or popular job. People would appear to pour their hearts out, and the entire contents of the letter would have to be struck out. It sounds very harsh, but some of those people could and would have been spies. Mummy used to tell a funny story about someone writing "I cannot tell you where I am, but there are pharaohs at the bottom of my garden." If it was true, it would certainly have been edited with her thick black pen.

In 1944 and by then a Second Officer, Mummy was posted to India where she was stationed in Mumbai and Kochi. Towards the very end of WWII, she and four other WRNS were selected to act as P.A.s to the R.N. and other Allied Admirals attending a top-secret summit discussing the strategy to end the war in the Far East. Having signed the Official Secrets Act, to her dying day, she never told me where, when or with whom this took place.

When she returned to England after the war, Mummy remained in the Wrens and was posted to H.M.S. Condor in Arbroath, Scotland. It was there that she met Lieutenant Commander John Bellingham and the rest, as they say, is history. In those days, you were not allowed to be both an officer and a married woman. On 7th August 1948 2nd Officer Crayton's letter of resignation was accepted by The Admiralty in Whitehall, who in the same letter offered her their sincere congratulations on her marriage. For some reason they allowed her to keep her portable typewriter which my older sister and I then played with as children. It was given away in the 70's by which time I had all but ruined it. It's a romantic, very remote and fanciful possibility that this might just be the very same machine.



Marvin and his magical work in East Anglia.



Byron & The Bard was born because we believe that stories have the power to shape our world, and there's no tale we're more excited to share than the new chapter we're writing with Roald Dahl's Marvellous Children's Charity in the hope that we can help some difficult lives a little better.

Why Roald Dahl's Marvellous Children's Charity?

This marvellous charity supports children and young people living with the most complex medical conditions, making their lives brighter thanks to their own Roald Dahl Nurses.



These wonderful, dedicated people are an extension of the child's family, supporting and comforting all affected by the lifelong illnesses being experienced. We are

supporting this charity in the hope of raising funds for an Ipswich-based Roald Dahl Nurse to sprinkle their magic into the lives of seriously ill children in Suffolk and North East Essex.

Byron & The Bard will be donating ten percent of the initial funding, in a combination of cash and in kind to help get this wonderful project off the ground.

And we are shouting about the work of the Roald Dahl Nurses via our shared perimeter advertising at Ipswich Town's Portman Road stadium, to help raise awareness.

If you'd like to help, then go to www.roalddahlcharity.org where you can donate and help us fund a locally based Roald Dahl Nurse to support seriously ill children.

If you would like to make a donation please scan the QR code with your mobile device.



To find out more about Max's story as shown in the photographs, please visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S7roc4y-x-k>



Seasons Greetings

to all our customers & clients from all your friends in Merchants' Row.

Memsab Restaurant • Curiosity Corner
The Boutique • Countryflair Gifts • Byron & The Bard
Sweetmeats Tea Room • Accountants of Lavenham

@lavenham_merchantsrow

Nicki Dixon asked Wayne Tanswell about bringing the magic to life...

We hope you have been wowed when walking through our door and we'd like to introduce you to the man responsible for much of the visual magic here at Byron & The Bard.



Wayne Tanswell is a local traditional signwriter with thousands of "flying hours" under his belt in terms of signage.

Think traditional pub, hotel and shop signs, golf club rolls of honour, vehicles, anything that needs that individual, unique touch you just can't get with a machine.

As a traditional signwriter, Wayne has worked all over the world on projects in places such as Bahrain, Zambia, across Europe and in the UK.



He's held art exhibitions dedicated to his unique style in London, Cambridge and here in Suffolk and he has certainly left his mark here at Byron & The Bard.

So many of you who have stepped into Byron & The Bard have marvelled at our staircase painted with well-known book spines – Wayne did those.

And you will hopefully have checked how



you measure up to the likes of the BFG and Olaf from Frozen on our height charts – Wayne did those too as well as creating our stunning hanging sign outside 72 Water Street, Lavenham.

Shop owner, Holly Bellingham, has nothing but praise for Wayne.

"We wanted to make Byron & The Bard somewhere magical to visit, somewhere visual and Wayne has helped us achieve that.

"He's an exceptionally talented man and has helped create our unique look."

Wayne said working on getting the book shop ready had been a "one in a million" project.

"It's such a quirky building, full of nooks



and crannies and I absolutely loved bringing it alive.

"It's a unique place and I am happy and proud to have been part of creating its special look."

To see more of Waynes fabulous work, please visit his website at: www.waynetanswell-signwriter.co.uk



In the spotlight...

Iestyn Long



Iestyn Long lives with his family here in the heart of lovely Lavenham.

He describes himself "as reasonably tall and narrow" which is a slight understatement! He also says that he has a shortage of hair (agreed, it's not as prolific as his talent) and although English he has a Welsh name that is a constant confusion to one and all.

Allegedly, while listening to the tunes of Sir Cliff, Iestyn enjoys observing ants, stroking sparrows and drinking copious amounts of tea and the occasional pint after he's been off clambering up



mountains.

Iestyn is self-deprecating in the extreme and is the author of many successful fantasy books for young adults.

Byron & The Bard is very privileged to be launching Iestyn's new Christmas novel at 2pm on Saturday 9th December 2024.

Here is just a little of the

write ups about it.

A high-octane, delightfully silly, festive adventure story by fantasy author Iestyn Long.

Jump into the blue and join Bennie and his friends on a whirlwind adventure this Yuletide a fun, festive story for all the family!

It's nearly Christmas, and all the turkeys are going missing. Bennie and his friends investigate the mystery but soon find themselves in the thick of a dastardly

plot.

After encountering a peculiar creature deep in the woods, Bennie and his friends are whisked away on a fantastical adventure that carries them to bizarre, far-flung places and exposes them to a terrifying enemy.

To rescue Christmas and the planet, Bennie and his friends must coax Earth's most reclusive hero from retirement.

- Can Bennie and his friends SAVE CHRISTMAS and THE PLANET from disaster?

- Or will Humanity rue the day they first served roast turkey for Christmas dinner?

- Find out in this rip-roaring festive yarn suitable for kids and adults alike!

Be careful what you eat this Christmas. It might just come back and bite you.

IT'S TURKEY TIME!

Bea Fitzgerald

Bea Fitzgerald is an author and content creator.

She has worked in publishing for a number of years and has a degree in English Literature from the University of Reading, where she also studied several classes in Ancient History. Bea is passionate about stories and fascinated by the way they endure and resonate through centuries and generations. When she's not writing, she's entertaining her followers on TikTok and Instagram with her mythology-themed comedy account @chaosonolympus. Girl, Goddess, Queen is her debut novel.

The Sunday Times Top 10 Children's Bestseller.

To hell with love, this goddess has other plans...

Thousands of years ago, the gods told a lie: how Persephone was a pawn in the politics of other gods. How Hades

kidnapped Persephone to be his bride. How her mother, Demeter, was so distraught she caused the Earth to start dying.

The real story is much more interesting.

Persephone wasn't taken to hell: she jumped. There was no way she was going to be married off to some smug god more in love with himself than her.

Now all she has to do is convince the Underworld's annoyingly sexy, arrogant and frankly rude ruler, Hades, to fall in line with her plan. A plan that will shake Mount Olympus to its very core.

But consequences can be deadly, especially when you're already in hell...

A fierce, fresh and enormously fun YA fantasy re-imagining from a growing TikTok superstar.

We look forward to welcoming Bea to Lavenham on Saturday 12th January 2024 to sign Girl, Goddess, Queen.



Sending Season's Greetings to all our Customers and Visitors

With a huge thank you for all of your support this year.

Come and
enjoy a VIP
shopping
experience at

BYRON & THE BARD

You and a group of up to nine friends can enjoy having the shop to yourselves for two whole hours (from 6.30-8.30pm) of peaceful chatting, browsing and enjoying nibbles & a complimentary glass of wine or bubbles (18+ unless accompanied).

What's not to love?

Price £15 per person including a £10 Byron & The Bard gift voucher (Ts & Cs apply).



To book your party, or for details of all other events please call Byron & The Bard 01787 703909 or Jemma McKnight 017388 235667

Diary

FORTHCOMING EVENTS AND SHOPPING HOURS FOR DECEMBER, JANUARY & FEBRUARY:

Thursday 30th November	10.00am - 1.00 (Apologies; we're preparing the big reveal)
Friday 1st December	10.30am - 6.30pm
Saturday 2nd December	10.30am - 8.00pm Lavenham Late Night Shopping
Sunday 3rd	10.30am - 5.30pm
Monday 4th - Friday 8th	10.30am - 6.30pm
Saturday 9th December	10.30am - 5.30pm Iestyn Long Book Launch 2.00pm
Sunday 10th December	10.30am - 5.30pm and at BNatural Christmas Market, Bildeston 11.00am-4.00pm
Monday 11th - Friday 15th	10.30am - 6.30pm
Saturday 16th December	10.30am - 6.30pm (FYI it's ITFC v Norwich City 12.30 K.O. #COYB!)
Sunday 17th December	10.30am - 5.30pm FATHER CHRISTMAS is coming to Byron & The Bard! From 11.30am - 1.30pm
Monday 18th - Friday 22.	10.30am - 6.30pm
Saturday 23rd December	10.30am - 6.00pm
Sunday 24th December	10.30am - 1.00pm
CHRISTMAS DAY	MERRY CHRISTMAS! (Byron & The Bard will be closed all day)
BOXING DAY	Byron & The Bard will be closed all day
Wednesday 27th	Byron & The Bard will still be closed
Thursday 28th/Friday 29th	11.00am - 5.00pm
Saturday 30th	11.00am - 5.00pm
Sunday 31st	11.00am - 1.00pm
Monday 1st January 2024	HAPPY NEW YEAR BUT SORRY WE ARE CLOSED!
Tuesday 2nd	IT'S STILL HOGMANAY AND WE'RE STILL CLOSED!
Wednesday 3rd January	Closed. Apologies; but we're preparing our New Year Reveal.
Thursday 3d - Friday 11th January	11.00am - 4.00pm
Saturday 12th January	11.00am - 6.00pm Bea Fitzgerald "GIRL QUEEN GODDESS" Book signing 2.00pm
Sunday 13th - 31st January	11.00am - 4.00pm
Monday 1st - Sunday 11th February	
Monday 12th - Friday 16th	11.00am - 5.30pm "Blind Date With A Book"
Saturday 17th - Thursday 29th February	11.00am - 4.00pm