

DECEMBER

Writing from in-person group which takes place Wednesday 10.30-12.30

People share (non-obligatory) homework at the start of each session before further writing, reading and discussion. (Apologies, some items reformatted to save space):

Light (Jane)

The light is fading,
Darkness is drawing in
No more light late into the evening
Now the dark draws ever close
Bringing with it the gift of cold.
The light may be fading from the sky.
And with it, its warmth.
But both warmth and light don't need to
fade from us
They are both always with each of us
And they will both return twice as bright
and warm
To fight off the darkness and the cold
They just need a little rest.

The joys of Hibernation (Bill)

Winter is here and it is time.
I have found the den now cause it's time.
No more looking for food now cause it's
time.
My cubs will be safe now cause it's time.
Time to rest now, cause it's time.
There is a 'time' for every purpose under
heaven.

Cosy connections (Will)

You were never a cosy connection, your velvet clad hand cast no warmth when placed upon my cheek, it was like snowflakes upon a frozen lake, yet your cradle soothed like ebbing waves on wet rippled sands, even your smile held no warmth, a flickering image of the hollowness within, but your eyes twinkled with an angelic spark, a spark that outshines the lighthouse's swirly light, drawing one into a safe yet cold harbour, were one is chained to bitterness as harsh as the northern sea, though is graced with the beauty of the storm, lit by lightning, now here you are, standing, arms spread wide, a trap but a cosy one within a cold darkness.

Heirloom (Tia)

Precious family items, quite a few, ceramics, metal, even a tiny soft toy precious arranged within a home, bringing moments of a memory on a dark silent night.

Tower (Pauline)

The Eiffel tower, Blackpool tower; Tower of strength, Towering inferno. Tower of London. I visited New York a few years ago with my daughter. There were many towers there, a great sea of them. But they were skyscrapers. We went to the top of the Empire State Building, and I thought the lift was never going to stop. We also went on a helicopter ride and looked down on the great mass of towering skyscrapers. It was magnificent.

Strange yet familiar (Rachel)

A face from school in S. Africa looked familiar, she was a distant friend, she must have noticed me staring a lot, it's as if I knew her from another life.

Loyalty (Linda)

Loyalty used to mean to be loyal to somebody, to your beliefs, your friends, your country, but now we have loyalty cards, perks if we stay with the same broadband supplier, the same insurance companies. Yes, being loyal can mean so many different things nowadays.

'Face your fears': workshop and masks; first of BV's **Advent windows** find them all round Leek, throughout December. '**Cosy**' images + Will's not-so-cosy one (illustrates his written piece).



Christmas wreath

In 1839, Johann Hinrich Wichern created the 1st Christmas wreath, which was a large wooden wheel with 20 small red candles and 4 white ones. It was hung from the ceiling of the prayer room at the Rauhes Haus in Hamburg, a mission for children. Red candles lit on weak days and white candles lit on Sundays helped children count down the days to Christmas. In 1860 evergreens were added to wreaths and today we add some sparkle with modern features like baubles.



DECEMBER DETAILS

You, our participants

currently contribute to our rent in Fountain Street and help keep our services going

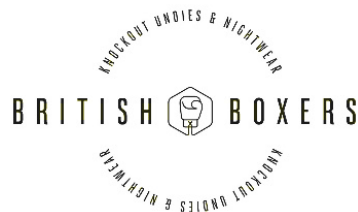
with donations, large and small, in cash and in kind.

Vitally, you are also supporting one another.

Loyalty (Anna)

He showed such kindness, such loyalty,
He came to comfort me when I was low
He showed such discretion, such dignity
In the face of defeat, the epitome of
caring, he ensured an injured Jackdaw
Would remain unharmed by him,
And all this embodied in a fluffy, large
ginger cat.

This newsletter is supported by:



Cathy Bower
PHOTOGRAPHY

Heirloom (Maggie)

The back wall of my living room is dominated by a 5' by 3' oil painting. When Dad was made redundant in 1972, they had to move to a pit village in Leicestershire. Dreading leaving the Lancashire hills, Dad asked a miner for his help. This was a man who had studied painting at night school. He created a scene with a stream and bridge in the foreground and trees all around. Pendle hill in the distance. When both parents died, I felt honoured to keep it with me on my wall. You can't miss it and I absolutely love it!



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ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE

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Borderland Voices contact **Andy Collins: at home but Wed in Leek**



Borderland Voices

27 years of arts for mental wellbeing



**The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service**

Wishing you peace at Christmas
DECEMBER 2025

In-person sessions, Leek Health Centre, on Wednesdays.

10.30-12.30 **Creative Writing**; 1.30-3.30 **Expressive Art**;
4.00-5.30 **Informal DIY Drop-in. All welcome:** write, colour, chat

To ask about spaces email info@borderlandvoices.org.uk

Images: 'Face your Fears' masks: workshop + 3 masks
(recognise town mayor Derek Hillyer?). 1st **24 Doors artwork**.
2 'Cosy' images + Will's which illustrates his writing.

Dec art: 3rd: Xmas decor (2) + WELLIES; 10th: Longest Yarn
visit Tean (leave 1pm, back 3.30); 17th + 24th **Xmas crafts** + Andy

Bring + share Xmas lunch: 12.30 onwards **Wed 17th**

Dec volunteer opportunities: Trestle Market, Twilight Market **Fri**
5th 4-8pm + OUTSIDE booth, Butter Market. **Sat 15th** 10am-4pm:
Selling calendars. Contact **Andy** if you can help.

NB No sessions: on **Weds 31st Dec + 7th Jan.** See you **14th Jan**