

JANUARY

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):

Progress (Bill) What, I wonder, is progress? Sometimes we seem to take one step forward and two steps back. At other times we may seem to race ahead and perhaps give ourselves a pat on the back for doing so. Until something else happens that pricks our over inflated balloon. Perhaps all we can expect is to keep going through the ups and downs of life and remember keep on getting up when we fall and try, try, try again.

The returning light (Linda)

Winter is such a bleak time of year, especially this winter. This is the “winter of our discontent” wrote Shakespeare when he was writing Richard the Third and 2022 has indeed been our winter of discontent. We are facing the biggest energy crisis that we have had in years, inflation has gone through the roof, there have been rail strikes, postal workers have been on strike and for the first time in the history of the NHS, the nurses are now on strike. Even people who are in work are having to rely on food banks. To make matters worse we have had an arctic blast from Norway causing freezing cold temperatures. But soon the days should be getting lighter, we will be seeing more hours of daylight so hopefully with the coming of the sun and with a brand-new year on the horizon we might see better times ahead because let's face it things surely can't get much worse, can they?

A story of kindness (Jane)

Kindness comes in many forms. Just a small act can make someone smile for the rest of their day. It's as simple as telling a person they look amazing today. Giving them a hug. Offering them a flower. There's a person I've seen on the Internet who does these simple acts. Just small acts, and the reactions he gets are amazing. On one he gives a lady a flower, she's overcome by the gesture, she cries. On another he gives people Kinder eggs. A big fella looks at him wearily till he opens his hand then his face lights up like a child. It's wonderful and wholesome to see these reactions. If everyone did one act of kindness a day the world would be a much better place. In the meantime, we have videos like these to remind us and give us the warm fuzzy feelings making us smile when we see those beautiful reactions.

Message (Rachel) A message for fellow members of Borderland Voices. I enjoy coming to the group and meeting people and developing my writing skills, making friends and listening to different stories and keeping my brain functioning.

Message (Maggie)

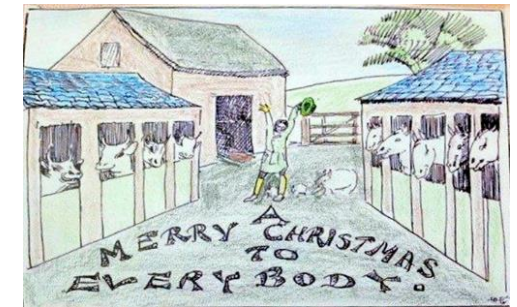
I have been a member of Borderland Voices for almost a year. I really appreciate the safe space to express new thoughts and heartfelt memories. It is a space to share kindness, humour and biscuits.

A message (Will)

Dear Reader
Here's a little message to you. Hope your new year is one of joy and happiness but if it's not or one of them dark days just know you're not alone and are loved for you are one of many lights that make this world bright and fulfilled for you matter, now and forever.



A murder of 'Love-crows'; one of our 3 Xmas lunch tables at the Blue Mugge, when AC received a beautiful bouquet; Pauline's peace star (see writing); Xmas cards, some copied/collaged from WLA designs.



MERRY XMAS



JANUARY 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.

Vitaly, you are also supporting one another.

Holding on and Letting go (Rachel)

Trying to balance things in life is difficult. Holding onto things is easy but letting them go is more difficult. We like to collect a lot of clutter. Trying to find a balance between day-to-day tasks. Watching my feline friend trying to balance as she lies on my legs, now she is older and unstable on her feet. Trying to balance as I walk with my stick is a task in itself. Walking on the ice, frost and snow is all about balancing. Watching trapeze artists as they hold their balance. Life is all about balance and holding on and letting go of things.



Contact details:

c/o Leek Health Centre, Fountain St
Leek, ST13 6JB (Andy collects mail weekly)

Phone: 01538 528708

Mobile: 07760 138395 (now on a better connection)

Email: info@borderlandvoices.org.uk

Website: www.borderlandvoices.org.uk

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1398672493722468>

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

2023 (Andy)

This year Borderland Voices will be 25 years old. What an achievement. We've survived pestilence (the covid pandemic), flood (water coming my office ceiling on two occasions), fortunately not fire (fingers crossed). But we've also survived moving premises—more times than I care to remember; losing friends—again more than I care to remember. But what shines through is the love and support of the wide Borderland Voices family. Here's to the next 25 years.

New Year message (Mark)

Nothing is so fearful you cannot laugh at it. You can cry too.....

Message for Newsletter (Pauline)

Borderland Voices and all potential members.
I give you a star
Wherever you are
May there be peace, kindness and contentment.



Borderland Voices

25 years of arts for mental wellbeing



The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

Newsletter

JANUARY 2023

A HAPPY NEW YEAR

In-person sessions, Leek Health Centre, **Wednesdays** but **not 4th**

Every Wednesday: 10.30-12.30 Creative Writing;
1.30-3.30 Expressive Art. All welcome.

2023 calendar: hopefully on its way!

Pics: a 'murder' of 'Love-crows'; Xmas **cards** incl. WLA designs;
one **Xmas lunch** table; Pauline's **peace star**; my **bouquet**

Jan art: 11th, 18th, 25th, **BV's Silver Anniversary + AC; 2D + 3D**

Jan writing + Sarah incl. **Changing Towns**, maybe blog/display

R.I.P. 2 members lost in 2022: **Paul Brady** and
David Picken