

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):

Toast (Pauline)

Toast is delicious no matter what you put on it. A favourite for many people is marmite. You either love it or hate it. Then there's jam of course and marmalade. I prefer cottage cheese on toast it's delicious. Grilled toast with cheddar on it is so tasty and honey on toast really hits the spot. Long live toast!

Favourite Board Games (Anna)

Board games have a whiff of nostalgia, Every time you lost and won but didn't care, Sitting by the log fire – the embers a-glowing, A time to capture, savour and share. Answering a question not even knowing whether you were wrong or right, The questions ran deep into the night, We sat and played by the moonlight, Finishing our last bucks' fizz at midnight.

Buttons (Linda)

Fasten up, wrap up tight, put your collar up, do everything possible to cut out that strong northerly wind, biting, slicing at your elderly bones, thank God for buttons.

Seven Days (Tia) Seven days; not enough, the normal months of a year – ok we try to do our jobs and get entertained by other people or pets, but hang on, it's coming to December and it's like life just goes 400 mph! So many responsibilities, not enough time, prepare shopping, gifts to be bought, wrapped, cards to send, visits to be done with friends/family – goodness my poor head's in a spin!! Seven days – certainly not enough especially since we are meant to rest on the seventh day.

Ghost (Linda) "Stop ghosting me", I said, I have had enough of it now, I have tried contacting you through ringing you, messaging you, email but still no response. I have even tried contacting you through a Ouija board and still you ignore me. If you don't respond soon, I will appear in the middle of the night at the end of your bed. That should do the trick!

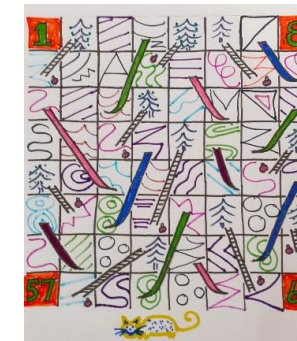
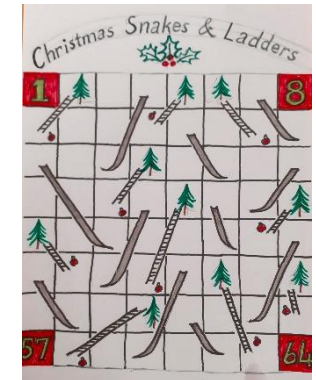
Hook (Jane)

Hook for a hand. It gleamed in the sunlight. The young boy often wondered how the captain had lost his hand. The others told the cabin boy never to ask. But the boy noticed that every time there was a tick tock the captain was never around. Very strange that. Perhaps he got it stuck in a grandfather clock cog he surmised. How very wrong he was.

Buttons (Will)

She licked her hanky and rubbed it on the brass buttons of her jacket; she had only just polished them last night but they'd dulled a little from rubbing against the waxed cotton overcoat she had to put on this morning to protect herself from the sleet that had begun to come down. Once her buttons were shined, she straightened her jacket then the papers within the typewriter and laid her fingers upon the painted metal keys as she began her first day at the Postal and Telegraph Office, helping folk type up letters and notes.

Crazy cat slides + ladders (inverted snakes and ladders); **Twilight market**, selling calendars; **Longest Yarn 2** visit, with tea and cake; we made **table decorations** with WELLIES.



JANUARY DETAILS

You, our participants

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

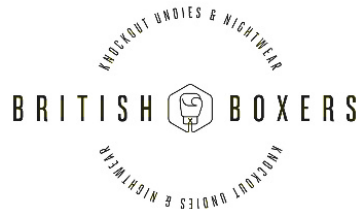
with donations, large and small, in cash and in kind.

Vitally, you are also supporting one another.

Fish and chips (Linda)

Why does fish and chips taste so good? Just the smell of it makes your mouth water. How does that saying go? Five minutes on the lips, a lifetime on the hips? I don't care anymore I am not giving up my fish and chips for no-one.

This newsletter is supported by:



Cathy Bower
PHOTOGRAPHY

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

Fish and chips (Rachel)

I love fish and chips; they are better at the seaside. Every third Saturday my mum treats us to fish and chips from Leek. It is delicious and the fish is good for you, mind you the fish must be cooked in breadcrumbs.

Hooks (Maggie)

Where would I be without hooks?
My tea towel would slide to the floor.
My fabulous winter dressing gown
would not stick to the bathroom door.
How happy am I to have hooks?



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Borderland Voices

28 years of arts for mental wellbeing



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

Wishing you Happy New Year
JANUARY 2026

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: snakes and ladders variant: '**crazy cat**' slides and ladders (climb the ladders to put back baubles the cat knocked off); selling calendars, **Twilight Market**; **Longest Yarn 2** visit (with tea + cake); **table decorations** made with WELLIES.

Jan art: 14th, 21st and 28th **topic to be confirmed** + Andy

Jan 21st: Gordon MacLellan **10am-2pm**. He'll come to discuss with both writers and artists the **outline of the 'happening'**

Face your Fears 'happening': Monday **26th Jan**, Leek Quaker Meeting House, **7-9pm**, run-through **6pm**. Short presentation with words and masks followed by tea/biscuits. **All welcome.**