



THE WREN

NEW Christmas products and decorations from Jennyruth

We have developed a new range of products for Christmas this year including cards, decorations, garlands, wreaths, hearts and trees.

Inspiration for our designs comes from us all here at Jennyruth as well as from outside. Our inspiration for the tree cards came from a visit to 'Art from the Heart' in Harrogate where Dyan designs her own papers. From her Christmas tree paper came the design for our wooden tree decorations.

Oliver was able to recycle last year's Christmas cards to make a new design of card, which have already sold out.



We love the shapes of hearts and have used these throughout many of the new designs.

We were given the idea for rag wreaths by another exhibitor at the Menwith Hill craft fair; Rachael spent a day tying up strips of Christmas materials to test the idea.

Since then Kirsty, Jamie and Darcy have all been busy knotting material and making our Christmas rag wreaths.



Ryan has been busy sponging and decorating the letters for the 'Merry Christmas' garland.

If you are still in need of something for Christmas do pop in at our Open Afternoon on Thursday, 17 December from 1.30 to 4pm. (More details about our Open Afternoon on page 7)

New Links with Roecliffe School

In September Beth and Oliver visited Roecliffe Primary School on behalf of Jennyruth Workshops to give a talk to the school children. This was followed by a return visit from 24 children to the workshops to have a tour round and to join our workers in making an Autumn card.

Beth and Daniel took charge of teaching the 'spongepaint' technique, while Oliver demonstrated the cutting out, using the scroll saw. Faye helped the children to colour the backgrounds. All children were able to take away their own cards.

"The children were great to work with" (Beth)
"I enjoyed showing how to use the scroll-saw" (Oliver)

It was fun doing the sponging—the children's hands got covered in paint" (Daniel)



Our workers teach Headteachers from local Primary Schools



Above:
Chris
working
with David



To the right:
Ryan
working
with Judy

Eileen from the Diocesan Education Team had asked us recently if we would do a workshop with headteachers from local primary schools. The idea was that our workers would teach some of their work skills.

Fri 13 Nov was the day—8 headteachers, together with Eileen and her colleague Elaine, came to Jennyruth for a painting workshop.

After Beth and Chris welcomed them and told them a bit about Jennyruth Workshops each visitor was paired up with a worker and given a work coat. They were shown how to paint and sponge the wooden stars. While the paint was drying the workers gave their headteachers an individual tour around the workshops. After a hot drink and biscuits everybody finished their stars by sponging and threading them with a silver thread in order to turn them into a decoration, which our visitors took home with them.

Everybody had a fantastic and uplifting time!

Our visit to the Cone Exchange at Bettys and Taylors

Chris Powell, who is one of our trustees, invited us to use a room at Bettys Cookery School when we didn't have electricity at our premises a few weeks ago. Besides working on our items we also had the chance to visit 'The Cone Exchange' at Bettys and Taylors which was founded 8 yrs ago by Chris. It is an amazing scheme where a huge collection of beautiful recycled items are on sale which can be used for arts and crafts. People from Bettys and Taylors as well as organisations from the community like Horticap, Henshaws, Jennyruth and many more collect anything that isn't used anymore like waste card + paper, stamps, mobile phones, paper clips, cuddly toys etc. which go to Chris. He and his

helpers from the community turn that into money by selling it to Oxfam or by turning it into beautiful art and craft items and displaying it for sale at the Cone Exchange. The proceeds go back to the community and to other good causes supported by Bettys and Taylors.

So, we were happy to help Chris on that day with cutting waste card from the factory into various shapes like leaves by using a special machine.

Did you know that Chris is also called "Capitan Rummage?"

We had a very educative day!

Out and about

As you would expect we were out and about a lot in the past few months. We changed our display which seems to be very popular with people—they can look at and touch more things and we were able to bring all our new items: Here is a summary of where we have been:

Canteen sales:

We went to various organisations like Bettys in York, Harrogate and Northallerton, Spot On, CPP, Selby College, Wolseley and the Harrogate Skills for Living Café at West Park United Reformed Church. Everybody made us feel very welcome and our new as well as our standard items found many customers.

Shows:

For the first time we took part in the **Nidderdale Show**. Both Phe and Janet arrived very early at 8am to set up the stall. Peter, Oliver and Jonathan turned up soon after that.

The day was a great success, it was very busy. Jonathan enjoyed it as there were lots of livestock - cows, sheep and pigs. This took him back to his time as a shepherd on the Isle of Skye. Oliver enjoyed walking around looking at all the old tractors and the vintage cross cut saws.

We were pleased to be awarded second place for the 'small business best decorated stand' which we accepted with beaming grins on our faces. We managed to book for next year's show.

ALL of us—workers, staff and volunteers were involved on the last weekend in September as we were at two shows at the same time—**Masham Sheep Fair and Newby Hall Craft Fair**. Both were a success and we all enjoyed being involved. It certainly helped that the weather was good to us.

The setting at Masham Sheep Fair in the market square was beautiful, indeed. We were very pleased to be selected as one of the charities supported by the fair this year. In return we helped with the car parking which was fun! Oliver enjoyed working with Andy and Anne. Obviously he was very good at extracting the car parking fees!

The sales were very good and we met lots of people who were interested in our work.

Ian said that he was very surprised to see Peter, one of our volunteers, dancing with the Morris dancers. Kirsty very much enjoyed helping at her first major craft fair.

In October we went to **Autumn Glory at Harewood House**. Besides running our stall we ran a card making workshop for children to make their own autumn cards.

Menwith Hill Craft Fair was also very successful this year after a few quiet years but we like going to this fair as we are exposed to another culture—working with the Americans and having to deal with another currency—the American Dollar.

Cathedral Gift Fair: This event is always a very busy and successful one—in nice atmosphere at Ripon Cathedral. All our new Christmas items were very popular and sold fast.



Masham Sheep Fair: Oliver is always ready for a joke or a bit of fun.



The Jennyruth team at Masham Sheep Fair

Talks:

Every spring and autumn we are also busy giving presentations to various groups. This autumn we gave talks to the Mirfield Ladies Probus Club, Pateley Bridge W.I., Marton-cum-Grafton W.I. and to the Yorkshire Country Women's Association in Starbeck. The groups often book us more than a year in advance. We love telling groups about our work as the groups are very interested in what we do and they always make us feel welcome. It is important to raise awareness for our work and through the talks more and more people get to know us and our work. Please contact us if your group would like us to give a talk.

Comments from the Chair

Judging from the title of this article you may think that as it is winter this is a cosy story written by the fire with a mince pie and a glass of Port.

Unfortunately it is not. For one thing, I have no heating at the moment and things are a bit bleak; without being an alarmist this can also be said for Jennyruth's finances.

Over the last 3 years it has been my privilege to report on the numerous successes of the charity and in the areas of staff and workers this trend continues, sadly not so with finances. Just like most businesses we are under strain, regardless of the fantastic work of our fundraising team and the many donations that come in. Costs continue to rise in all areas.

The simple fact is that at present we are losing £2,300 per month or £27,600 annually. This is not a situation that the board of trustees can allow to continue; through various lengthy discussions we feel the only practical course open to us is to both raise our daily fees and our placement quota.

To that effect we have recently entered into talks with our providers on both accounts. I will update you on our results as they progress.

The present government has stipulated that it would like to see 48% of learning disabled people in some form of paid employment by 2012. I believe Jennyruth is placed in an excellent position to help.

We operate on a work ethic with official start and finish times and designated breaks. Our workers are trained in all aspects of their jobs, from health and safety, marketing, sales, order processing, manufacture and despatch. To show prospective employers that learning disabled people can fulfil a role in their company is a challenge in itself.

How much more effective will the argument be if we can demonstrate good working practices, time keeping, sickness records and progression -

something most school leavers can not demonstrate. Surely this is worth financing properly. This is where you can help. Whenever you get the opportunity, please 'Sing our Praises'. Fight for the rights of learning disabled people to be treated as us - to go to work paid or unpaid EVERY DAY, to feel appreciated, to demonstrate their capabilities and to feel the sense of achievement at the end of a hard week's work.

Please challenge Social Services, Councillors and members of Parliament, ask them how they aim to achieve their goals without the likes of Jennyruth Workshops and others to help them, and why is it such a struggle to access much needed finance. One second home allowance would fund us for years.

We as a Board of Trustees will continue to further Jennyruth whenever and wherever we can.

We are not going away, just like Christmas, we will be here every year, offering excitement and the future of a better year to come to all.

So pull up a chair, pour a glass of port, warm your feet, take time to reflect on all we have achieved together and all we can achieve in the future.

I would also like to inform you that Revd. Cannon Bob Brooke has retired at the AGM in October from his position as trustee for Jennyruth. I am happy to tell you that we two new trustees: Ian McBride, who has helped us with grant applications since June 2007 and Revd Peter Clement, who is the vicar for Sharow church.

Happy Christmas!
Andy Thewlis

-----**STOP PRESS**-----**STOP PRESS**-----

We are pleased to announce that we have been awarded a community grant to run the ASDAN Workright Award here at Jennyruth Workshops.

Workright provides a framework to develop a range of transferable employability skills.

More details to come in our Spring newsletter.

-----**STOP PRESS**-----**STOP PRESS**-----

Jennyruth Workshops' link with Neema Crafts, Tanzania

A few years ago I learned about Andy and Suzie Hart, a couple from Harrogate, who moved to Iringa in Southern Tanzania 7 years ago. Working for Christian Mission Society, they set up a charity called "Neema Crafts", a craft workshops working with people with disabilities.

People with disabilities in Tanzania have a very hard life. There is no benefit system, so without employment they have no way of supporting themselves. Neema Crafts offers employment to around 100 people with disabilities. Their African crafts include weaving, African patchwork and quilting, beading and jewellery as well as paper making from elephant dung. The paper is used for craft cards. They melt glass to make jewellery.

About 2 1/2 years ago I invited Andy and Suzie to Jennyruth Workshops when they were on holiday back in England. I wanted our workers to learn something about people in Africa who have a disability; perhaps we could share our stories and experiences and make links.

Jennyruth and Neema Crafts have kept in touch exchanging newsletters etc. and I agreed that I would make a return visit to Neema Crafts one day. On 6 September this year the date for my visit finally arrived. My daughter Sarah had decided to use her gap year to join me and help out at Neema Crafts as well as help Andy and Suzie with school support for their 4 year old daughter Rosie, who has Down's syndrome. I went for 3 weeks but Sarah is staying on for 9 months.



Metassa using the scroll saw

Whilst I was out there I was able to make lots of friends with the workers and also tell them more about Jennyruth workshops. It was interesting to learn about their crafts and how there were many similarities; for instance their thoughts about how to sell their crafts, ideas on what would sell, but also how they work in their communities helping people understand people with disabilities and appreciate the disabilities as actual abilities. Whilst I was there I was able to use my practical skills to help do some repair jobs around the workshops. I was also able to teach one of their workers how to use a scroll saw so that they could start making some wooden crafts.

My daughter Sarah has settled very well. She has particularly made close friends with a group of deaf workers. This was a tremendous experience for me and continues to be one for Sarah who is staying on until May 2010. Mark

The Harrogate District Volunteer Oscars 2009



Congratulations to all our volunteers at Jennyruth for being nominated for the Harrogate District 2009 Volunteer Oscars. Brenda and Tom went to the award ceremony to represent all our volunteers. Brenda was presented with a special certificate—a rare 'highly commended' - for Organisation of the Year.

These awards, organised by the Ackrill Media Group and supported by the volunteer bureau, highlight the invaluable contribution volunteers make to organisations like ourselves and they give volunteers the recognition they deserve.

Many, many thanks to all our volunteers for their continuing support.

One of our volunteers, Andrea Ainley, received the unsung Hero award for Knaresborough and Boroughbridge for her volunteer services at Jennyruth Workshops, Henshaws, Open Arms in Malawi and Boroughbridge Community Care.

Jonathan completed his walk along the Rob Roy Way

...from Drymen just south of Loch Lomond to Pitlochry in Highland Perthshire and he has a log book to prove it! He went into various TICs and visitor centres to get it signed and can now claim a certificate about which he is very excited.

He rubbed up blisters on the first day but continued manfully along the way, thanks to compede plasters!

Apart from one day of torrential rain the sun shone on us for the whole time and the Scottish scenery was wonderful. In the lovely sunshine and very still conditions, the colours of the Rowan berries and Wild Rose hips were luminescent and Jonathan was keen to spot other wild flowers before me. The way took us past several waterfalls which Jonathan was keen to photograph and listen to the roar which they made.

He is already looking forward to walking the CATERAN Trail along old Drove routes, next year, also in Highland Perthshire.

We would like to thank all our generous supporters who have sponsored Jonathan.

Barrie

This is what Jonathan says about the walk

"It was the hardest walk we have done with very steep hills. We saw red squirrels, black and red grouse and lots of butterflies and wild flowers. We walked along an old railway line – it was the best as I like trains and all the bridges. We walked across a viaduct; it was a lovely walk, fantastic views.

I raised around £2,500 for Jennyruth Workshops. Next year I am walking the CATERAN Trail, again to raise money for the workshops."



Karaoke

On 3 October we had a Karaoke for the first time which had been requested by many. Barrie, our honorary fundraising manager, was rather sceptical but the evening turned out to be a fantastic night out! We all had so much fun singing, listening to each other sing, dancing and enjoying each others company. Even Barrie enjoyed it when he saw how much fun our learning disabled colleagues were having.

Gavin and Sally from G & S Entertainment played the music created a fantastic atmosphere! At the end of the night they waived their costs as a

contribution to Jennyruth.

Paul Rogers let us use his barn again and generously provided the meat for the barbecue. Sainsburys kindly provided us with food and drink. We managed to raise £702.

Our sincere gratitude therefore goes to Gavin and Sally, to Paul Roger and Family, to Sainsburys and to Brenda, one of our volunteers who initiated this event in the first place, as well as to our volunteers who helped bring it all together on that night.

We are going to do it again next year— Saturday 2 Oct 2010!

Charity year with Sainsburys is coming to an end

It has been a great year—we thoroughly enjoyed the partnership with Sainsburys!

We have been reporting about it throughout this year—Sainsburys let us use their foyer for monthly sales which gave us a fantastic exposure to the general public. They involved us in various events, raised money for us and donated food and drink for various fundraising events which we held this year.

We very much appreciated this opportunity and are sure that we will continue to be in good contact with them.

Thank you, Sainsburys!

From Barrie, our honorary fundraising manager

Unfortunately we still need to work hard at the fundraising in order to fill the gap between our income and our expenditure. We have a fantastic, though small, group of people who meet as a fundraising committee and who bake cakes, set quizzes, run the 100 club, organise bigger events and much more.

We are committed to keep all our members, our supporters and the public informed about our work. That is the reason why we produce a newsletter 3 times a year.

Please will you help us to make more use of our newsletter by leaving it on your coffee table where people who visit your house may see it, or pass it on to friends who may be interested, and if you really do not want to receive it please do tell us, but we hope that you will continue to be interested enough to read it.

I wish you a very Happy Christmas,

Barrie

Coming up:

Christmas Open Day Thursday 17 Dec



Displays of work and live demonstrations



Presentations by our workers



Last Minute Christmas Shopping –we have lots of beautiful new items



Sale of wreaths, seasonal plants as well as planted containers & baskets by the Ripon Walled Garden Scheme



Live seasonal music by the Wetherby Accordians

**Come and join us for a while
Refreshments—mince pies, coffee and tea served
throughout the afternoon**

“Hello, my name is **Gavin**. I’ve been working at Jennyruth Workshops since 7 October. I come on a Tuesday and on a Wednesday. On Mondays and Fridays I go to Ripon Community Link; Thursdays is my day off. I like coming to Jennyruth. I have met some old friends here and made new ones.

So far I have been involved in *woodwork, painting, card making, metalwork and sewing*. I have helped make planters, farm animals, figures for the nativity set, made Christmas cards, rag wreaths and I was sewing a Hessian shopping bag with the sewing machine. A lady, who came to have a look at our workshops saw the bag I made and bought it because she liked it! That made me very happy!

I also have a hobby: I like steam trains.”



Gavin working on Christmas trees

Marc said that he would like to say a bit about himself in our newsletter “I have been coming to JRW since 2005. I come every Thursday and Friday. I make cards, I paint jigsaws and tractor clocks, I do woodwork e.g. make planters, I use the electric screwdriver and drill.

I think the card making is my favourite. In October I went to ‘Autumn Glory’ at Harewood House, we went to celebrate the Autumn and to sell our products. I sold some quizzes and I enjoyed an ice cream. I saw stars and space at the planetarium at Harewood.

I like working with my friends at Jennyruth. I’ve got loads of friends here. I work with different volunteers ,they are really nice”



Marc has just finished painting wooden elephant logos which we use on cards

So many people contribute to the work at Jennyruth Workshops. We are always keen to acknowledge everybody for their input and support. We receive support from so many people and we appreciate that very much. We couldn’t continue our work if it wasn’t for the support of so many people. We would like to apologize should we have forgotten to mention anyone by name.

Mark says ‘No’ to pink!

Girl power is taking over in JRW paint shops—new products include pink hearts, pink cats and now our ever popular giraffe clock has turned pink and is selling well!

Watch out Mark, once we find pink preservative we’ll be taking over the woodwork room.



As we are a charity and like to use your funds sensibly may we take this opportunity to wish you all
**A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS
 AND
 ALL THE BEST FOR 2010**

