

CHRISTMAS 2022 EDITION

LIFE, LOVE & MEMORIES



**MEMORY
LANE**

PUBLISHED BY AGE UK OLDHAM



Welcome to our last Newsletter of 2022. Our regular readers will know that our aim is to provide something for everyone to enjoy whilst helping to bring back memories. It's impossible to please everyone so we try and make the newsletters as varied as possible. If you have any comments about any of the articles we would welcome them, obviously compliments are always good to receive but all comments would be welcome.

If you have any short stories or anything you would like to share with us, please get in touch. We do, however, stress, that we don't publish anything political, or may cause offence to others. We want our newspaper to remain light hearted. We leave the serious stuff to the professionals.

Thank you to everyone that has contributed over the last twelve months and for all the wonderful compliments we have received.

On behalf of the Life Story Team
Joan Holmes (Editor)

CHRISTOPHER BIGGINS - English Actor and Television Presenter



Christopher Kenneth Biggins was born in Oldham on 16 December 1948 to Pamela and Bill Biggins. He has a brother named Sean.



Sean & Christopher

As a baby, he moved to Salisbury, Wiltshire, where his father ran the family business, Middleton Motors. His father later owned an antique shop and bric-a-brac store, also in Salisbury.

Christopher with his late father



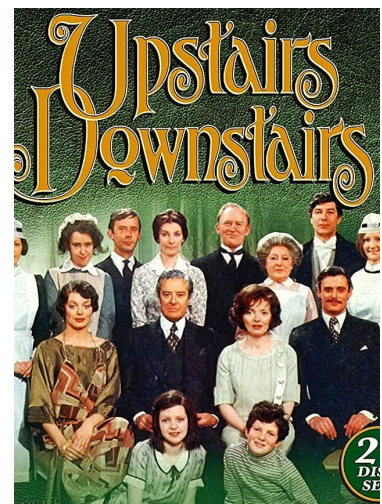
Old Vic

Biggins had a very happy childhood and his earliest memory is of 'sitting in a pram in Salisbury just laughing'. He enjoyed school where he received elocution lessons and he also participated in local drama groups. Aged 17 he started working at Salisbury Playhouse performing there in his first pantomime before moving to London's Old Vic.

One of his earliest TV roles was in 'Upstairs, Downstairs' Series 2 in 1972. He appeared as the regular character 'Lukewarm' in the situation comedy 'Porridge, (1974-1977) starring Ronnie Barker.



Lukewarm on the right with the red arm band.





He played Nero in the BBC's version of 'I Claudius' in 1976.

The following year he appeared in 'Poldark' as the Reverend Osborne Whitworth.



On children's TV he had a regular role as Department Store Owner, Adam Painting in 'Rentaghost' (1978-1983).



In 1997 he had a leading role in 'Phoenix and the Carpet.'

In 1999 he became the subject of 'This is Your Life' when he was surprised by Michael Aspel at the Theatre Royal, Brighton.



He took part in the 7th series of 'I'm a Celebrity Get me out of here'. In 2007, he was voted the winner of the show on 30th November 2007.

On 15th February 2009 he took part in an episode of 'Celeb Come Dine with me' winning £1000 for his chosen charity. In 2011 he starred in the 2nd Series of

'Celebrity Five Go to...' in which the celebs go to South Africa.

Appearing on the 'The Celebrity Chase' in 2013 he was the first person in the list of the show to answer all six questions correctly, while going for a higher offer.



In 2014 he took part in 'Celebrity MasterChef' returning in 2020 for a Christmas Special.

Theatre roles have included the Baker in 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat' and Herod in 'Jesus Christ Superstar'. He spent eighteen months at the London Palladium, in the stage adaptation of 'Chitty, Chitty, Bang, Bang'.

Biggins has also performed in numerous pantomimes at various venues in the UK. In 2017 he received the 'Lifetime Achievement Award' at The Great British Pantomime Awards. His film roles include 'The Sex Thief' (1973), The Rocky Horror Picture Show (1975) and the Baker in the 1999 Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.



Known to all his friends as Biggins he was married to Australian Actress Beatrice Norbury from 1971 to 1974. In an interview following his 2007 'I'm a Celeb' triumph he was remarkably frank about the highs and lows of his life. He told how he struggled with his sexuality before his first gay encounter at 25 and finally came out 24 years later. He and former wife Beatrice, have remained friends and are still in touch although she lives in Sydney.

In 2006 he married his long term partner Neil in a civil ceremony at Hackney Register Office.



During the good times Biggins threw lavish champagne parties for showbiz pals including Joan Collins, Shirley Bassey and Cilla Black and enjoyed lavish holidays in exotic locations. In 1990's he hit rock bottom, when he was forced to declare himself bankrupt. His partner Neil stood by him ploughing his own money into the house so they were able to keep their home. Biggins worked extremely hard and was able to clear his debts within the year.



Celebrating his 60th Birthday with Cilla Black and Joan Collins



With Shirley Bassey



With his hearty laugh and flamboyant personality, at the age of 74, Christopher Biggins remains a well-loved character who still performs in Pantos.



Sue's Christmas poem:

THE TURKEYS' REVENGE

Christmas was approaching and the turkeys were quite scared
There was a rumour going round - the stuffing was being prepared
So they gathered in the meadow away from prying eyes
Tyrone was the 'foreman' in charge of all the guys



He perched upon his soapbox and called them all to roost
He knew he had to calm them and give their morale a boost
He said "Okay let's make a plan let's keep it nice and steady
I don't know how you all feel but I'm not 'oven ready'

We've got to bite the bullet and really make a stand
See if we can avoid our fate which is currently being planned"
They made a big decision, they had to get it right
They'd make a bid for freedom in the middle of the night



As darkness fell they all met up as owls began to hoot
When suddenly a spotlight lit up their escape route
All at once the stampede ceased as they all came to a stop
They'd sadly left it much too late and they'd been caught on the hop



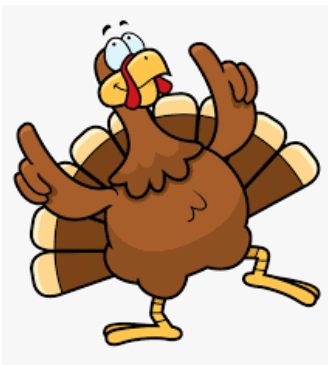
The farmer intercepted, he'd got wind of their plan
He stood his ground, resolute, a very determined man
"What do you lot think you're doing trying to break free?
You'll never make it out of here, you all belong to me"

He turned around to Tyrone his hand clasped on his gun
Saying "You really should be nervous it's just me and you now son"
Tyrone puffed his chest up high as leader he had clout
But his wattle was aquiver as he stared the farmer out

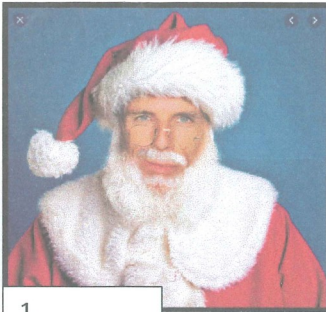


Suddenly there was a rush, a stampede of turkey feet
The boys enclosed the farmer, the circle was complete
He tried to make a run for it but the turkeys pinned him down
They trussed him up, turkey style, and left him on the ground

He knew he must surrender, he didn't have a choice
He was well and truly gagged and he didn't have a voice
The turkeys danced around him full of joy and glee
Glad he now knew how it felt to be a Christmas turkey!



Quiz provided by Viv White... Do you know who's hiding behind the beards?



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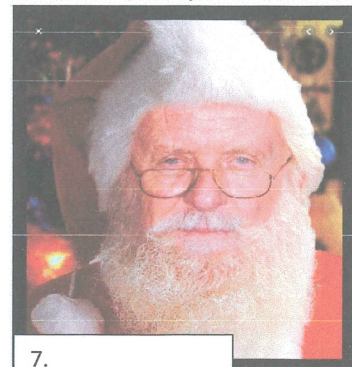
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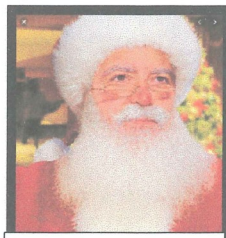
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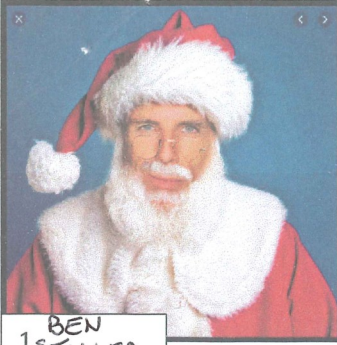
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Answers to Page 7



1. BEN STILLER



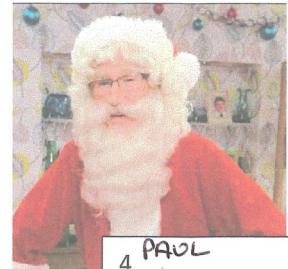
2. HESTON BLUMENTHALL



5. TOM HANKS



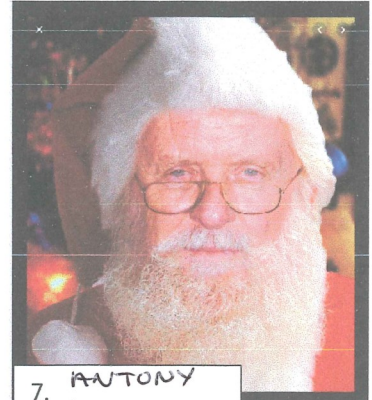
3. MORGAN FREEMAN



4. PAUL O'GRADY



6. ROWAN ATKINSON



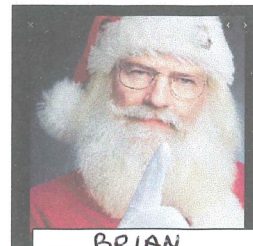
7. ANTONY HOPKINS



8. PHIL TUFNEL



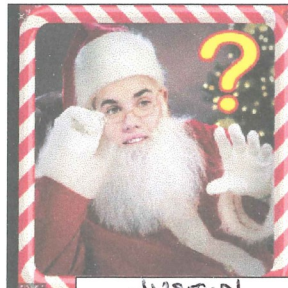
9. GEORGE LOONEY



10. BRIAN CRANSTON



11. ROBIN WILLIAMS

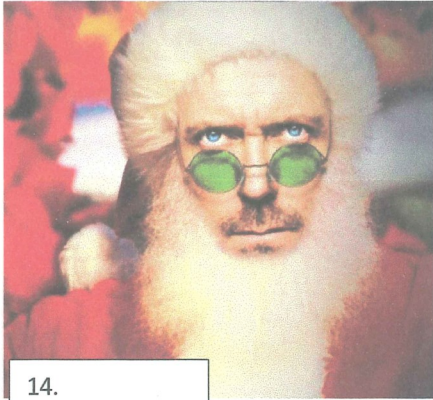


12. JUSTIN BIEBER



13. BEAN CONNERY

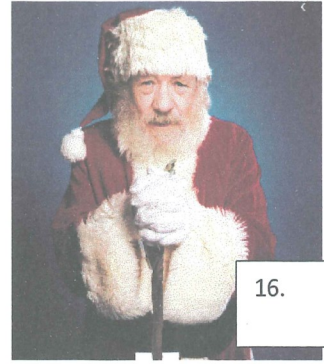
More Santas for you to Guess..



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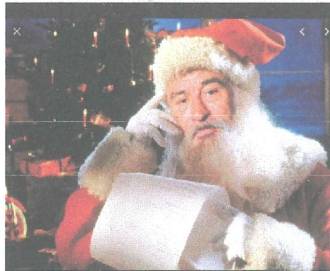
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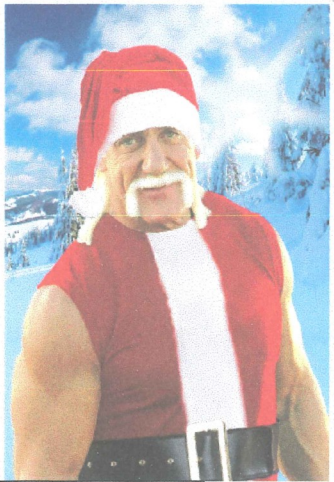
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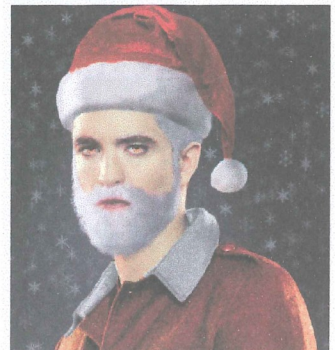
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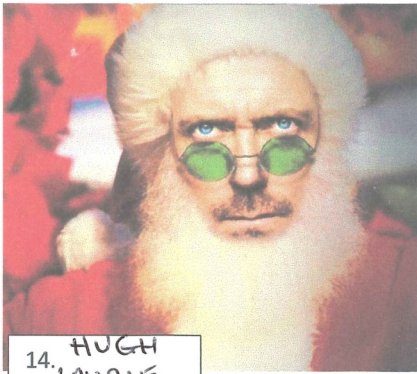


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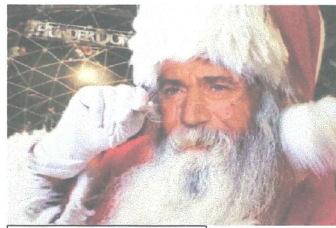


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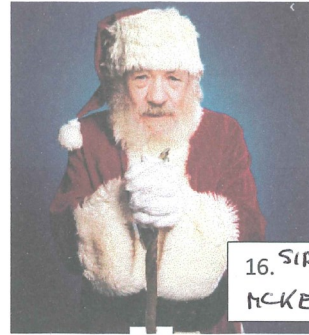
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14. HUGH LAURIE



15. MEL GIBSON



16. SIR IAN MCKELLEN



18. BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH



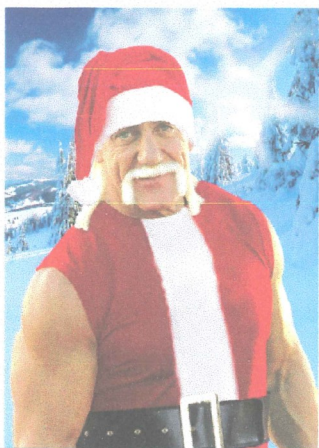
17. ED SHEERAN



19. MILEY CYPUS



20. ROBERT DE NIRO



22. HULK HOGAN



23. KING CHARLES III



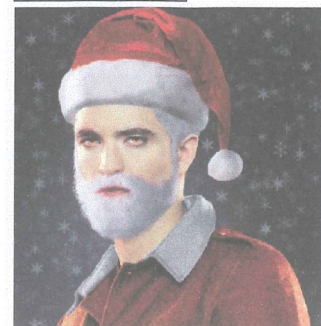
21. JACK BLACK



25. CLINT EASTWOOD



26. RICHARD GERE



24. ROBERT PATTISON

THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS CAROL

Most historians believe that the 'Twelve Days of Christmas' carol started out as a "memory-and-forfeit" game in 1800s England. These types of games were played by British school children and the rules were simple: When it's your turn, you repeat all the previously sung lyrics and add the next one. If you can't remember a verse, you owe your opponent a "forfeit," which was usually a kiss or a piece of candy.

There's also a theory floating around claiming that during a time when Christians were punished for worshipping openly, "The Twelve Days of Christmas" song was used to secretly pass on the ideology of Christianity. Per this theory, each gift on the list symbolises a different aspect of the Christian faith:

The **Partridge in the Pear Tree** is Jesus Christ.

The **2 Turtle Doves** are The Old and New Testaments.

The **3 French hens** are Faith, Hope and Charity, the theological virtues.

The **4 Calling Birds** are the four gospels and/or the four evangelists.

The **5 Golden Rings** are the first five books of the Old Testament.

The **6 Geese A-laying** are the six days of creation.

The **7 Swans A-swimming** are the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the seven sacraments.

The **8 Maids A-milking** are the eight beatitudes.

The **9 Ladies Dancing** are the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit.

The **10 Lords A-leaping** are the ten commandments.

The **11 Pipers Piping** are the eleven faithful apostles.

The **12 Drummers Drumming** are the twelve points of doctrine in the

There are 92 known species of partridges, which are relatives of quail and live in grasslands the world over. Sadly, though, the birds are ground nesters, and **not "likely to roost in pear trees"**.





OMAN

CHICKEN MAJBOOS — SERVES 4 for special occasions

Ingredients:

- 1 whole chicken (3lbs) cut into pieces.
- 2 onions, thinly sliced.
- 5 cloves of garlic,
- 4 green hot chilli peppers, thinly sliced.
- 1 tbsp black peppercorns.
- 1 tbsp cumin seeds,
- 1 tbsp coriander seeds,
- 4 pods of green cardamom.
- 6 whole cloves.
- 1 teasp turmeric,
- 1 bay leaf,
- 1 cinnamon stick,
- 1 dried lime,
- salt.

FOR CHICKEN SPICES:

- 1 tbsp turmeric,
- 1 tbsp garam masala,
- salt,
- olive oil.

FOR RICE:

- 2 cups basmati rice.

FOR GARNISH:

- 4 tbsp pistachios,
- 4 tbsp slivered almonds,
- 4 tbsp golden raisins.

For Method see overleaf...



EQUIPMENT REQUIRED:
A Dutch Oven (cast iron)
Or a strong Dish or Pan.

Jean's recipes from around the world continued...

OMAN



CHICKEN MAJBOOS continued...

Method:

In a large bowl add the rice. Rinse rice, cover with water and let stand for 30 mins.

In the Dutch Oven/Pan add cut chicken, seasoned with salt and cover with 4 cups of water and put on low/medium heat.

In a frying pan add 2 tbsp of olive oil, half of sliced onions and fry on medium heat for 2 mins, whilst stirring. Add garlic, chilli, peppercorns, cumin, coriander, cardamon and cloves to pan. Continue toasting for 2 minutes whilst stirring. Add turmeric, bay leaf, cinnamon and dried lime. Stir for 30 seconds. Add spice and onion mix to Dutch Oven/Pan with the chicken. Stir and cook, covered for 45 minutes. Take cooked chicken out of pan, save the broth, place chicken in large bowl. Drain the rice and add the chicken broth. Cook the covered rice on a low heat for 20 minutes. In a small bowl, add turmeric, garam masala and 2 tbsp of olive oil and mix. Pour spice paste over the chicken and coat each piece carefully.

Garnish:

In a frying pan on med/high heat with 2 tbsp of olive oil, add remaining onion. Cook until onion turns slightly brown. Add pistachios, almonds and raisins and continue frying for 2 mins. Transfer mixture to bowl. In the same frying pan over a high heat, add 1 tbsp of olive oil and add the marinated chicken pieces. Cook chicken for 2 mins each side.

Assemble:

When rice is cooked, take off heat and transfer to serving dish. Top with onion and dried fruits. Finally, add the chicken pieces on top and serve.

In Arabic, Majboos means:

“be engaged”. It is an ultimate dish for special occasions, especially, engagements and weddings.



QUICK CHRISTMAS PUDDING WITH BAKED ICE CREAM

This is a great way of saving time on Christmas Day. The ice cream parcels are better made in advance (at least the day before) and placed in the freezer. The icing sugar on the top caramelises to create a lovely crunchy garnish for the hot Christmas pudding.

Serves 4.

Ingredients:

8 ready-made filo pastry sheets

1 med egg, beaten

4 scoops of vanilla ice cream

Icing sugar

4 x 115g small bought Christmas puddings

200ml brandy sauce

Mint sprigs

Method:

Pre-heat the oven to 220°C/425°F/gas mark 7.

Unroll the filo and cut into 12 x 10 cm (4") squares.

Layer 3 of the squares at slight alternate angles and brush with some beaten egg. Place a scoop of the ice cream in the centre of each filo square, and bring up the sides of the pastry to stick together.

Brush with beaten egg.

If cooking straightaway, dust with icing sugar, place on an oven tray and bake for about 3-4 minutes.

Alternatively, place in the freezer until ready to use (much better).

Meanwhile, place the puddings in the microwave to cook (follow packet instructions) and warm the brandy sauce through on the stove.

Spoon the warm sauce into the centre of the plates and place a Christmas pudding in the middle.

Remove ice cream parcel from the oven and place on top of the pudding.

To finish, simply dust the top with icing sugar and garnish with a sprig of mint.

Serve immediately.

ANIMAL CORNER

This month we look at some of the animals and birds associated with the festive season but not the ones generally associated with Christmas food:

Reindeer:

As the legend goes, Santa Claus would struggle to deliver gifts to children around the world on Christmas Eve without his trusty reindeer. The names of the original crew members are Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, and Blitzen – based on the 1823 poem 'The Night before Christmas'. But another Christmas classic, 'Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer', led to the star of the song being added to the list too.



Robin:

This friendly little bird is often the only animal visible in the garden in the winter months, with its bright red breast offering a welcome splash of colour. But why is the robin associated so heavily with Christmas? They first started to appear on our Christmas cards in the middle of the 19th century, when the first postal workers wore red jackets and were affectionately known as “robins.” The birds on these early cards were often portrayed carrying envelopes in their beaks, or wearing small satchels, out on their delivery round. Our feathered friend still pops up on cards and seasonal stamps to this day.



Squirrel:

The squirrel is another star of our Christmas cards, and a master of overcoming the cold. The grey squirrel doesn't hibernate - it can't store enough energy to survive long periods without food. But the clever animal thinks ahead, burying nuts in the ground in secret stores during the autumn. The nuts are scattered around, rather than stored in a single spot, and are found by smell, rather than memory. Some of the nuts are never found again!



Wren:

The wren plays a part in the traditional Christmas festivities of Ireland, Wales, the Isle of Man and other European countries. In some regions, the day after Christmas is known as '**Wren Day**'.



Polar bear:

Christmas wouldn't be the same without the majestic polar bear. A survival expert, the polar bear has a thick layer of fat underneath its skin to protect it from the cold. Like the reindeer, it has two layers of fur: an outer layer that is thicker to protect the softer, denser inner layer. Although it looks white, the fur is actually transparent and the animal's skin is black – the best colour for absorbing energy from the sun.



Camel: The Three Wise Men, or Magi, are said to have travelled to Bethlehem on camels. The animals are often included in the Nativity scene.



Sheep:

In the Bible, Gospel of Luke, angels announce the birth of Jesus to a group of shepherds who are tending to their flock. Sheep are a traditional part of the Nativity scene.



Penguin:

Penguins are associated with Christmas because they live in cold climates. They are often seen on Christmas cards alongside polar bears and reindeers. In real life this would be impossible, as penguins literally live on the other side of the world to polar bears and reindeers!



Donkey:

Donkeys are one of the animals most strongly associated with Christmas; Mary rode a donkey as she travelled to Bethlehem with Joseph.



SPORTING GREATS

WALTER WINTERBOTTOM



Sir Walter Winterbottom CBE

Born: 31 March 1913, Oldham.

Died: 16 February 2002, Guildford.

Education: Oldham Grammar School and Chester Teacher Training College.

Married: Ann Richards

Children: Janet, Brenda & Alan

Was an English football player and coach and the first manager of the England National team.

Walter was born in Stafford Street, Werneth, Oldham and trained successfully to be a teacher. After having undergone his training in the Chester Teacher Training College between 1931 and 1934 he then began his teaching career at Alexandra Road School, Oldham. Now settled, he applied himself to sport. He was a centre half who played football for Royton Amateurs and then Mossley where in 1935, he was spotted by First Division Manchester United. He signed for United as a part-time professional in 1936 but continued his teaching career, his Football League debut coming at Leeds United the same November. In his first season at Manchester United he showed great promise, playing 21 League games and 2 FA cup games, appearing as wing half and centre half, although at the end of the season United were relegated. But in the following season he made only 4 first team appearances, his playing career effectively ended by a spinal disease, later diagnosed as ankylosing spondylitis, and he re-joined Mossley in 1938. Whilst still playing for Manchester United he left his teaching position to study at Carnegie College of Physical Education, Leeds. On graduating he was appointed as a lecturer.

During World War Two Winterbottom served as an officer in the Royal Air Force, reaching the rank of wing commander and working at the Air Ministry with overall responsibility for training PE instructors at home and overseas. He was also a guest player with Chelsea and ran coaching courses for The Football Association at grammar schools in London. In 1946 Stanley Rous, who was the secretary of The Football Association, persuaded the FA Council to appoint Winterbottom as The F.A.'s first Director of Coaching and suggested he take on the additional responsibility of being the first England team manager.

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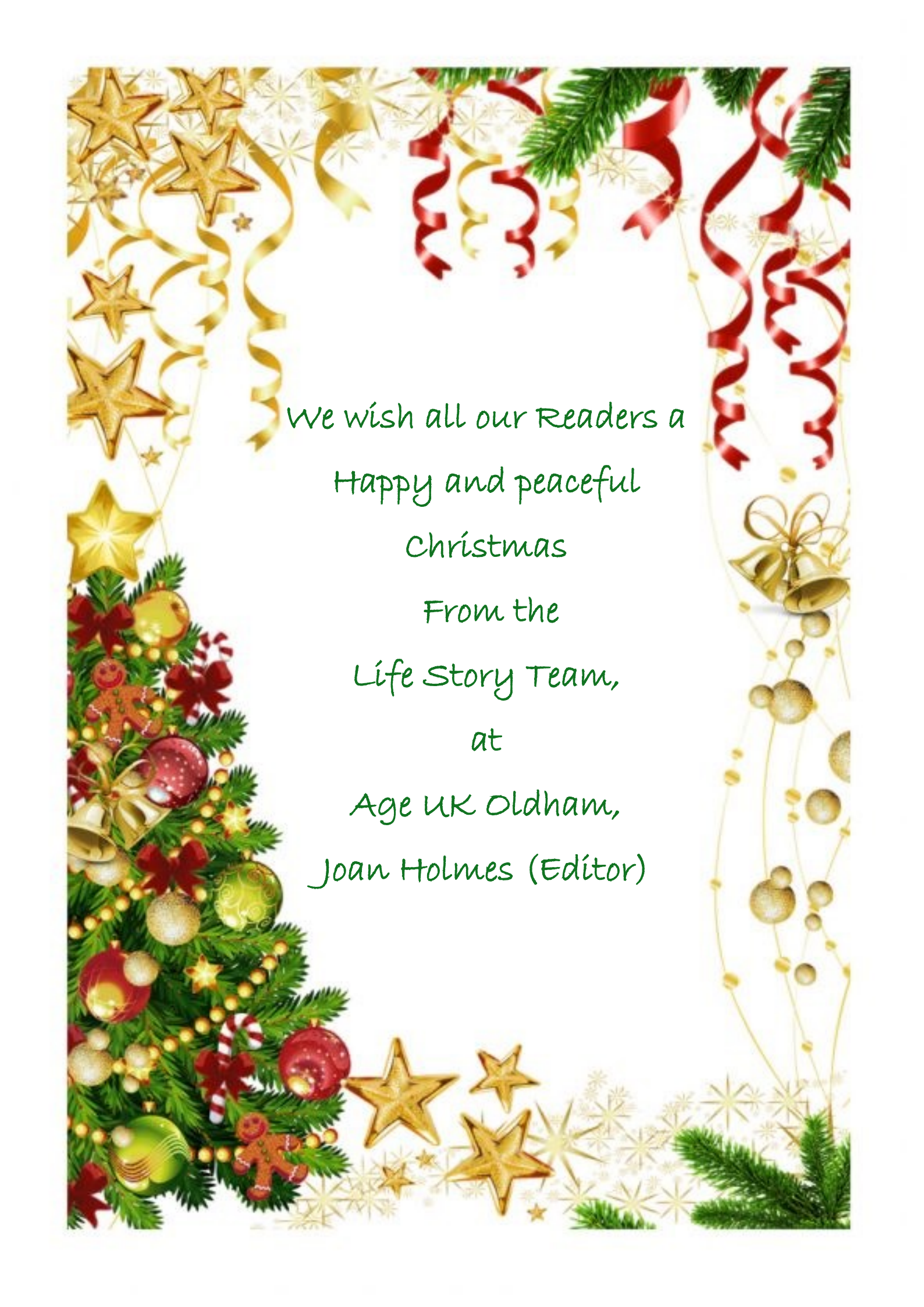
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Winterbottom became the first manager of the England football team in 1946 and F.A. Director of Coaching. He was the youngest and longest serving England team manager. In all matches in which he was in charge, England played 139, won 78, drew 33, and lost 28; goals for 383, against 196. At home England lost six matches in sixteen years. England won the British Home Championship in thirteen out of his sixteen seasons (seven times outright and six times sharing top place). In the World Cup England qualified for the Finals on all four occasions under his stewardship, reaching the quarter finals twice, playing 28 matches, winning 15, drawing 7 and losing 6. He resigned from The F.A. in 1962 to become General Secretary of the Central Council of Physical Recreation (CCPR) and was appointed as the first Director of the Sports Council in 1965. He was knighted for his services to sport in 1978 when he retired. The Football Association marked the 100th anniversary of Winterbottom's birth by commissioning a bust which was unveiled by Roy Hodgson at St George's Park on 23rd April 2013 in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the development of English football.



Roy Hodgson referred to him as the 'Godfather of English coaching'. Sportsmail's Jeff Powell once called him 'The Father of Modern English Football', a phrase which was adopted as the title of a biography that has been published. It has been written by Graham Morse, who married Winterbottom's daughter Janet in 1963 and spent three years scouring old files, diaries, letters and books he retrieved from his father-in-law's study.

Morse regards Hodgson as a 'kindred spirit' of Winterbottom, aware of the broader duties of the England manager and the FA to protect the long-term development of English football and to produce better players and coaches.



We wish all our Readers a
Happy and peaceful
Christmas
From the
Life Story Team,
at
Age UK Oldham,
Joan Holmes (Editor)

**PUBLISHED BY AGE UK OLDHAM
LIFE STORY VOLUNTEERS
EDITOR
JOAN HOLMES**



Life Story

Every life has a story...

