

JANUARY 2019

We are looking forward to 2019 and what 2019 has to offer as 2018 was rather challenging with Rik being in and out of hospital whilst having cancer treatment. Rik is now back cooking his 'big breakfasts!' We are very thankful to all the staff at Derriford Hospital who provided such care and attention during his treatment. We saw all the NHS staff work so hard and to acknowledge that we offer a discount to all NHS staff booked through www.healthstaffdiscounts.co.uk NHS We are also thankful to the villagers who were very supportive throughout this period and helped out in emergencies. We thank guests who stayed for all their well wishes and understanding during this trying time.

The start of 2019 has been mild for January and we have had a few days of dry sunny weather. The weather has been good for lovely walks and runs with Merlin. Rik has started making cookies for the rooms and using Auntie Jean's recipe. Auntie Jean is a lovely resident of Holbeton who many years ago ran The Mildmay Colours pub and is a well respected and loved member of the community. If you are lucky you may find a jar of these cookies in your room on arrival.

We are currently putting together The Holbeton Newsletter for February and the beginning of February is busy in the Village of Holbeton. The villagers are busy rehearsing for the Wizard of OZ Pantomime which is now sold out and on 9th February the Holbeton Community Orchard group are having a Wassail event.

What is Wassail we hear some of you say? Well Wassail is an Anglo-Saxon ceremony; it was probably well-established before Christianity spread throughout Britain in 600 CE. Its name comes from 'waes hael', that is, 'be in good health'. The Village Wassail will follow the tradition, common in fruit-growing regions, of blessing the trees. This involves drinking toasts, wishing the trees good health and abundance in the season ahead. Singing loudly, shouting, banging pots and pans, in fact, making as much noise as possible, are essential, not only to waken the sleeping trees but also to frighten away any malevolent beings hiding in the orchard. At 5:30pm, we gather at the Village Hall for refreshments prior to the ceremony. Hot dogs, apple cake, apple juice and mulled cider will be on sale. At 6pm, the Wassail procession, with lanterns and pans, will move to the orchard. If you are here in February the village would love you to join in this ancient and optimistic rite. You may enjoy giving a pot or two a good old bang and to make some noise. It is really a good excuse to drink some cider and have a singalong with The South Hams Singers.

Written by Nicky Cole of The Ivy Barn Bed and Breakfast.

