

Silks Farm Nursery School

Christmas Matters

December 2007



Introduction

Christmas Matters, something a bit different! This is a short information bulletin providing details on Cambridgeshire events, games to play with your children over the holidays and the recipe for Pam's yummy Christmas Bakewells.

All that remains for us to say is happy Christ-

mas and for those of you who are off work, enjoy your well deserved break!

Local Christmas Events - not to be missed!

14th, 15th & 22nd December '07 - Twilight Flying at the Raptor Foundation Centre, St. Ives Road, Woodhurst (only a 2 minute drive from Silks Farm Nursery School).

Enjoy an evening of amazing flying and dinner at The Raptor Foundation Centre. Since October 2002, the centre has laid on some "Twilight Flying" sessions, giving people a chance to see some of the owls flying in the dark. Over the summer, the centre continues with evening flying events, though not in the dark. These events are proving very popular and, due to constraints of their dining area, places are limited, so advanced booking is advised. The cost for the show without dinner is £6.50 per person. For further information, please call 01487 741140.

The centre provides a rescue service, 24 hour care and rehabilitation facilities for injured raptors. They provide a permanent, caring environment for raptors unable to return to the

wild, and are committed to increasing rare species, sharing knowledge and information on the medical treatment and rehabilitation of raptors.

The Raptor Foundation is permanent home to over 200 birds, comprising 40 different species of raptor which includes Buzzards, Hawks, Kites, Harriers and Falcons.

The centre also offers educational services to schools & other groups and can provide courses in all aspects of falconry & ownership of birds of prey.

15th December '07 (10am to 4pm) - Christmas Decorations Workshop,
Peckover House and gardens, north Brink, Wisbech, North Cambridgeshire.

Join the demonstration and workshop at Peckover House in Wisbech, and use seasonal foliage and decorations to create your own fes-



Local Christmas Events (continued)

tive displays.

The workshop costs £25 and booking is essential.

Peckover House is an attractive Georgian town house in Wisbech, North Cambridgeshire. Peckover House was built c 1722 and bought at the end of the 18th century by Jonathoan Peckover, a member of the Quaker banking family. Given



to the National Trust in 1948, its elegant façade hides panelled rooms, Georgian fireplaces with richly carved overmantles and ornate plaster decorations.

At the back of Peckover House is a 2 acre garden which includes a beautiful walled garden with summerhouses and an orangery.

15th & 16th December '07 - Cambridgeshire Christmas Food Drink Arts and Craft Fair, London Road, Godmanchester.

Have family fun and entertainment at the working craft market situated at the Wood Green Animal Shelter in Godmanchester. Accompanied children under 16 years go free. For more information please call Tel: 01223 306655.

Did you know that Wood Green Animal Centre is Europe's busiest animal rescue and re-homing centre? The charity takes in over 6,000 animals a year and has set national standards in animal care.

16th December '07 (2pm to 5pm) - FPPNR Christmas Birds and Music, Little Paxton, St Neots.

Call 01480 406795 to find out about joining the short walk to see some of Paxton Pits Nature Reserve winter visitors, then enjoy seasonal refreshments and Christmas Carols back at the Visitor's Centre.

There is no charge for this event, but the centre would appreciate donations.

Paxton Pits Nature Reserve is an extensive complex of gravel pits surrounded by scrub and woodland. There are a proliferation of birds who visit Paxton Pits. Large numbers of warblers in spring and summer and the highest population of Nightingales in Cambridgeshire (25 singing males in 2000). There are over 60 breeding species, including Kingfishers, Grey Herons, Little Grebes and one of the largest inland Cormorant colonies in the UK (c. 100 nests). The shingle islands

on two of the lakes make Paxton Pits one of the most important sites in the Ouse Val-

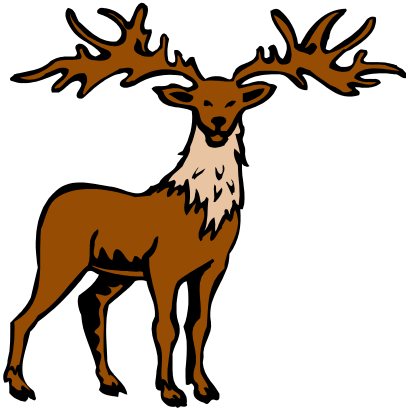


*From everyone at
Silks Farm Nursery School
Merry Christmas.*

Local Christmas Events (continued)

ley for breeding Lapwing, Redshank, Ringed Plover and Common Tern (with Oystercatcher breeding occasionally).

Spring and autumn can be good for passage migrants, with Avocet and Black-tailed Godwits annual in recent years. In winter, the Pits play host to large numbers of ducks, especially Pochard and Tufted Duck; Smew, Black-



necked Grebe and Goosander are annual. A Bittern has wintered here for several winters during the late 1990s. Rarities have included Killdeer, Caspian Tern and Red Footed Falcon.

There are a number of nature trails to follow around Paxton Pits and it makes a great place for walking, cycling or jogging.

26th December '07 (11am) - Boxing Day Walk, Hinchingsbrooke Country Park, Brampton Road, Huntingdon.

Feeling guilty, why not work off that Christmas Pudding by accompanying the rangers at Hinchingsbrooke Country Park for a winter

ramble through nature? Hot refreshments are available from the café. For further information, please call 01480 451568.

Hinchingsbrooke Country Park is part of the original Hinchingsbrooke Estate and covers approximately 170 acres including lakes, meadows, woods and grassland.

A former home to the Cromwell Family, Hinchingsbrooke House was built around a Benedictine nunnery and although primarily Tudor in style, it incorporates many different styles of architecture. The house was given to the Cromwell Family by Henry VIII and has been visited by Royalty. Fishing is allowed in the Main Lake and Alconbury Brooke where you will find carp, pike or tench in marked swims. There is a specially designed mountain bike track in the park and lots of pathways to walk or cycle around.

There is also a reconstruction of an Iron Age Village with several buildings depicting what life was like for the Celts 2000 years ago. The Park holds open days where you can experience the ancient crafts and lifestyle of the Celts. Everyone can join in.

The visitor centre provides



There is sure to be an event that suits you and your family!



Local Christmas Events (continued)

some history of the Park and information on Hinchingsbrooke

the centre is a children's play area including zip wire.

wildlife and management. Around

Young children's Christmas games

When planning Christmas games for young children, the options are endless. Make sure you provide room to run, do a little planning and the kids are sure to have a good time.

Santa Says

This is a fun game that all children will love. It is a slight variation on the 'Simon Says' game using the name Santa instead of Simon. Once everyone is ready say a number of orders like "Santa says, touch your toes" or "Santa says bend your knees". Occasionally leave the "Santa says" part off and say the command and see if you can trick your children.

Musical statues

This is a game that the children sometime play at nursery. Play some Christmas music and let the children dance around. It's a great way for them to burn off some energy. Whilst the music is playing, pause the song. The children must freeze like a statue, and anyone seen moving is out of the game. The last one left is the winner. It's a great game especially if all the family participates.

Santa's clues

Young children can play this game providing the questions are kept basic. To play the game a parent provides a series of clues until the children shout out the correct answer. Example of questions are:

Clue: I'm thinking of something big.

Clue: It helps Santa on Christmas Eve.

Clue: It holds a lot of presents.

Clue: It's very fast.

Answer: Santa's sleigh.

Remember - Since these are very young children, don't give clues that are too difficult or beyond their knowledge.

Christmas Memory Game

Show 6 items in a box (shoe box would be ideal) to the children. Ask the children to cover their eyes and remove one or more items out of the box, and then replace the lid. Get the children to open the box. See if they can tell you which item has been removed. This is a good mental exercise for your young ones. The adults will probably find it impossible after a couple of glasses of wine!

*Fun and games for
all the family!*



Christmas Bakewells

These tarts are sure to go down well with everybody. So if you are feeling in a cooking mood over the Christmas period why not give this recipe a go?

As usual, before you start to make this dish, please check that no members of the family are intolerant or allergic to any of the ingredients listed below:

Recipe makes 24 tarts.

Short crust pastry (ready made is fine)

115g of caster sugar

3 eggs

115g cooled melted butter

115g ground almonds

1 teaspoon almond essence

Ready rolled fondant icing

Lemon juice

Mince meat (and we don't mean the animal variety)

Roll out the pastry and cut out 24 circles. Place a circle in each of the recesses of a bun tin, then spoon in 1 teaspoon of mince

meat. Whisk the sugar with the eggs, and then fold in the cooled melted butter. Add the ground almond and almond essence, now combine. Carefully fill up the pastry cases with the almond mixture and cook for 12-15 minutes at 180°C (make sure the oven has been pre-heated) until lightly browned. Finally, cut 24 stars out of the rolled fondant icing and dampen the backs with lemon juice and place over the tarts - sit back, relax and enjoy!



Footnote

Details provided on the events contained in this bulletin are for information purposes only. Silks Farm Nursery School strongly recommends that you telephone the organisers directly to see if the event would be suitable for your family.

Go on make yourself some yummy tarts!



Silks Farm Nursery School, St Ives Road, Somersham, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE28 3ET
Tel: 01487 843525, E-mail: info@silksfarm.co.uk, Website: www.silksfarm.co.uk