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COMMUNITY NEWS AND LOCAL BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Oct 2013



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Are you getting into the swing of things now that October has arrived and the kids have returned to school?

Have you renewed your gym membership, got back on that bike, enrolled in a Spanish class, booked zumba sessions? Have you gathered the fruits from your garden and had a jam making session?

Autumn is sympathetic to domestic industry and renewed active creative endeavour. In the pages that follow you will find a number of fun activities for the whole family. Choose from the Steam Spectacular, Pumpkin Trail, or try your hand at Table Tennis, to name a few. There are also free tickets available to Aire Valley Mag readers if you fancy going to the Antique Fair (see page 10.) Whatever you do, have a great October.



Liz Barker, editor @LocalGlobalGirl

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Say you saw it in the Aire Valley Mag!

Autumn by Jo Longbottom



Autumn orbited October skies
And tinted fields and forests gold.
Stole across
And crisped the grass
And made the once young Spring's bright leaves
Look old.

<>

Amber, ochre, golden, red,
Her cape,
She leaves a little silver tinge
Of bitter frost
Around her in her realm,
The pale landscape.

<>

Her long, fine, misty morning cloak
Cobwebbed,
Wafts coolly
'Cross the moors and sky and hills,
And silently rolls out
A burnished blanket
Bronze...
And still.

<>

Something chilled her heart
'Gainst summer's warm blue skies.
His greens, the pinks,
The sunny yellow blooms
She now defies.

<>

Perhaps it was a lovers tale.
Love lost?
And gentle Spring and Summer
Sadly now
Must pay the cost.

<>>><<>

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For the promotion of Health & Wellbeing by Cath Bromwich



Raspberries, jellies, jams and crumbles. I grieve leaving all the savoury greenery of the spring foraging

season, forgetting the diversity of the produce of the autumn. Plums, rowans, blackberries, apples, quince, crab apples, elderberries and the treasured raspberries are just some of what a keen eye can find at the turn of the season. And basically you can do the same things with them. Mainly preserving and crumbles with a few variations. I will put a few options of recipes on my face book page for you as well as a bit of information about pectin (see below).

There is a lot of fun to be had too. A friend and I spent a happy evening with a campfire and made blackberry cordial, crumble and rowan jelly all on a charcoal fire..yes even the crumble! One of the challenges with making preserves is knowing what to jelly (straining the juice of stewed fruit before boiling with sugar), and what to jam. Simply put I jelly anything that has too many pips like blackberries, and also I find rowan (to be served with mutton or game) is best jellied. However if you jelly you often could do with putting some apple or crab apple with it for taste, and maybe also pectin, and these are less easy to find. Having enough pectin in the fruit is also a challenge. This is the ingredient in fruit that encourages setting. Some fruit has more pectin than others and there are various solutions to increase pectin levels. However if you just find a few fruit, especially the delicious wild raspberries, then this months' recipe is useful: Raspberry Drizzle Cake for a handful of berries. You will find wild raspberries down less used lanes, in the same places as blackberries but less abundantly. They are much smaller than the commercial variety but far tastier. They have leaves that look very like blackberry leaves but they grow

on straight canes. Their season is nearly over but I have been enjoying them so get out quick! I wanted you to know about them! Their fruit are red with lots of little fruitlets, like blackberries, but when you pick them they come away leaving the 'plug' behind. Like many autumn fruit they are best eaten as simply as possible, from the bush being best.



Cath Bromwich, a Silsden resident, is a cookery teacher and forager with a background in health promotion. Her livelihood includes foraging, general and health-related cookery for different conditions such as diabetes and coeliac disease. For more information, or to pass on your stories and recipes, contact Cath at www.facebook.com/ourchoicefoodsforaging

Cath's Raspberry Drizzle Cake

150g butter, 150g sugar, 150g self-raising flour, 3 eggs, about 1 handful raspberries, a couple of table spoons sugar, 1lb loaf tin, baking paper. Oven at 180 OC, gas mark 4.

Line the loaf tin with baking paper, Cream the sugar and butter in a mixing bowl until paler in colour than when you started, Break eggs into a jug and beat to break up, Mix eggs into butter and sugar mixture very slowly, if it curdles add a spoon of flour, Once all the egg is added use a spatula to fold in the flour and then half the raspberries, Scrape mixture into tin and bake for about 45 – 60 mins until firm to touch and cooked through, While cake is cooking mix remaining raspberries and 2ish tablespoons of sugar together This mixture will 'weep' and become liquidy. When you are happy that the cake is cooked take it out of the oven and drizzle the mixture over the top. Leave it to cool in the tin. Eat on its own or with cream.

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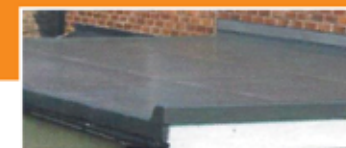
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Friday and Saturday nights the lights are dimmed and the candles lit; the room transforms into a lovely bistro with an ever changing menu to incorporate the best seasonally available ingredients.

Diners have the option of bringing their own wine or beer (with a small corkage fee) This is proving to be an attractive feature especially popular with local people. It is advisable to book a table in advance for the bistro, especially parties of six or more.



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Whether it's a lingering Sunday morning coffee with the newspapers, a light lunch with friends, or a cosy evening meal with your partner, The Cookhouse is becoming the 'go to' destination in Haworth.

Proprietors Tania and Kevin are delighted with the feedback from customers. They have had stunning reviews from Trip Advisor and social media since opening earlier in the year. The pair have successfully transformed The Cookhouse into a modern tearoom, balancing a clean elegant interior with a friendly and welcoming ambiance. Customers also think the quality of the food being served is outstanding.

The Cookhouse is a tearoom by day offering a full lunch menu including a sumptuous traditional afternoon cream

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EAST RIDDLESDEN HALL GHOST

During the 19th century East Riddlesden Hall on the outskirts of Keighley boasted over 20,000 acres of land. During this time it was tenanted to farmers who worked the land and produced wheat and barley crops as well as a variety of livestock. East Riddlesden Hall is a home of legends and lore with a history dating back to 1100 BC, this is just one of its stories...



During the late 1800's when Queen Victoria was on the throne East Riddlesden Hall was host to eight families who all lived within its walls and farmed the land. The house was stuffed to the rafters with children, animals and many generations of families all living under one roof.

One of the hard working sheep farmers who lived at the hall was a proud father to two children. The children could often be seen in the grounds or helping their father in the fields or mother in the house. Edward the younger of the two children loved to play by the pond, look at the ducks and try to catch some of the fish to put on the families table for their supper.

Edward was five when he slipped into the pond and unable to swim he drowned. He left behind a devastated family who never recovered from their young sons' death. Today you can visit Edward's grave at Morton Cemetery on Bradford Road.

Now this tale isn't one that heralds from a dark and stormy night, we think Edward can still be found at East Riddlesden Hall.

Often you can hear the laughter of children around the grounds, but someone likes to play on the swings in the playground. Staff and visitors often report the swings moving back and forth on a day when there is no wind and often the ducks can be seen flocking to an unknown person at the side of the pond.

Could it be Edward that still remains or some other past resident of that hall?

Shelley Hollingdrake

Community and Learning Officer
East Riddlesden Hall





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POWER LOOMS, LATHES AND BICYCLES

When the Tour de France started in 1903 Keighley was a busy manufacturing town, famous for its Textile and Engineering products. Not only making cloth for the home market, our cloth and textile machinery was exported all over the world. Because of our empire Britain had a capture market worldwide.

These factories and foundries used coal to provide the power they needed. Coal however caused smog and air pollution and when the bicycle came along many of the workers realized that this was a way to escape their environment and get out into the countryside to get "fresh air" into their lungs.

Keighley because of its proximity to the Yorkshire Dales was blessed with easy access to Skipton - the "Gateway to the Dales" and in a matter of minutes the pollution of the West Riding mill towns could be left behind. As a result, at the start of the 20th Century, Keighley became a hotbed of cycling with clubs springing up overnight. Keighley Cycling Club was one of the largest in Yorkshire, founded in 1884 and by 1891 it had 86 members including 8 ladies, they built a clubroom, which still stands to this day at the top of Cavendish Street. It could accommodate 200 members with storage for cycles underneath.

The club started to organize runs on a regular basis at first to local beauty spots such as Gargrave, Otley, Broughton, Kirkstall Abbey, Bolton Abbey etc. In 1987 they became more adventurous and unbelievably considering the state of

the roads, the heavy bikes, no gears and plunger brakes, they rode to Blackpool via Clitheroe and Preston then onto Morcambe returning to Keighley via Settle. These were indeed "giants of the road"

1891 was the first road race in Keighley to my knowledge - 50 miles with the riders finishing covered in mud and they had to be hosed down at the finish.

1892 Annual Sports Day - attended by 3,000 people, despite bad weather. Prizes worth £80 were on offer.

1895 saw the first cycling death on Keighley roads. The former vice-president of Keighley Cycling Club aged 34 years was killed at Sandbeds; he was in a collision with 2 men racing their flat carts at night without lights. 120 cyclists walked in his funeral

procession and the clubhouse flag was flown at half mast. A tribute was printed in the Keighley News.

1903 (and this is the weirdest thing of all) Albert Hunter cycled backwards from Skipton to Keighley into a headwind in 50 minutes. He overtook 45 carts, 29 cyclists, 1 motor car and 2 road engines. A week later a rider from Selby broke his record doing the same trip in 40 minutes and 34 seconds but he had a tailwind - UNBELIEVABLE.

So whilst cycling in Europe was moving forward in England *we were busy going backwards.*

(I am indebted to Ian Dewhirst for the above information and thank him for letting me use it.) And so, as you can see, Keighley has always been a cycling town!

Frank O'Dwyer #TDFFrank @worththetour



The WORD is getting out...

A new mystery story is unfolding right before our very eyes out on the wild Bronte moors.

You may have been intrigued by the sight of some strange 10ft high numbers which have appeared up on the hillside between Oxenhope and Penistone Hill. Well - the supersized signage - created in iconic Hollywood style - is appropriately heralding a sporting spectacle of epic proportions coming to our area next year. You've guessed it - the **Tour de France Grand Depart.**

That's the only clue we're able to give for now - apart from the fact that all will become apparent over the coming weeks and months. So keep a close eye on the hillside and see what transpires.

If you think you've spotted a change - or maybe you believe you can solve the mystery - why not write down what you've noticed or even take a snapshot and share it on Twitter using the hashtag #worththetour.

Worth the Tour is a community-led group formed to rally support for the Tour and the 100-day cultural festival leading up to it. The aim is to champion projects and activities which will create a legacy for Keighley and the Worth Valley for years to come.

By working together every effort is being made to maximise the benefits. To see that residents, visitors and cyclists all have a fantastic experience. We also want to ensure that businesses and the local economy prosper as a result of this once-

in-a-lifetime opportunity.

When WTT met in the newly refurbished Damside Mill in September the room was buzzing with ideas.

Project Hollywood, mentioned above, is being developed with the WEA (Workers Educational Association) and NEET (Northcliffe Environmental Enterprise Team) in partnership with Worth the Tour.

Tour D'Art is an educational & engagement project, creating pieces to be displayed along the route, with schools and community groups invited to create their own artwork as their showcase and personal welcome to visitors. A pilot project with Rough Nook assisted living community in Keighley features an 8x4ft



canvas created with Haworth-based artist Vic Buta in the style of 1930s tourism posters. The Worth the Tour website www.worththetour.org will provide a focal point for

everything going on in our area.

A workshop for businesses will offer advice on how to make the most of the opportunity.

There's so much more - and we'll update you regularly in this magazine. You can follow developments on Facebook Worth the Tour or @worththetour on Twitter. Or if you'd like to get involved, as an individual or group, come to one of our public meetings or email info@worththetour.com

The next WTT meeting is being held October 7th at 7pm Central Hall, Alice Street, Keighley All Welcome

The room is available from 6.30 for coffee, tea, and networking

www.worththetour.org.uk

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The winner will be selected from all correct answers received by Oct 20 2013

Last month's winner was Terry Carter.

The answer was: Keighley Rugby Club

Google Earth ©



				2	8	3
	4	8	3	7		1
				9		6
	2		3			5
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9			1			7
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	7		4	3	9	6
	9	6	2			

Sudoku

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Bring Him Home...

Never more so than now, in my life time, have our armed forces been of such concern to the civilian community. Following recent conflicts and the work of veterans charities, people are acutely aware of the risks faced by service personnel and the impact on their loved ones. Little wonder then, that the Military Wives Choir performance in Haworth was a sell out weeks in advance.



To have stood amongst 350 members of our community singing 'Jerusalem' was a deeply moving experience that I shall never forget. Haworth Parish Church was the ideal location to host the evenings entertainment, which included a raffle and auction, all in aid of SSAFA (Soldiers,

Sailors, Airmen & Families Association). To look around and see so many familiar faces supporting such a worthy cause was quite overwhelming.

During the evening members of the choir, which included serving military personnel, stepped forward to provide personal testimonials about their life and what the choir means to them. These were particularly poignant, especially the young army doctor. While her husband is currently deployed in Afghanistan, she cradled her baby son as she sang. For many the choir is a support group, an opportunity to make friends easily, to share worries and fears, highs and lows, but most of all bringing them unity. An

inspiration to our community.

For me, the most memorable part of the evening was a rendition of Les Miserable's 'Bring him home'. Sung with such heartfelt emotion, as many of their partners are still deployed in other parts of the world, I don't believe there was a dry eye in the room. They delivered a superb performance throughout and were given a standing ovation at the finale. A moment I will cherish.

The evening itself raised £5,242 taking the total including the proceeds from Haworth's 1940's weekend to a staggering £18,787.28 for SSAFA, the charity that provides lifelong support for our forces and their families.

Terry Grayshon, SSAFA Chairman in West Yorkshire, commented 'The people of Haworth have taken SSAFA to their hearts. They have helped raise a phenomenal amount which will help SSAFA carry out our work throughout West Yorkshire. The wonderful people of Haworth have, by raising this fantastic amount, shown their support to the members of our Armed Forces. It is an incredible amount of money to have been raised and we are so very grateful'.

Cllr Nikki Carroll
(photography courtesy of Ian Palmer)

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BEHIND THE SCENES at the museum



sewing box and the sisters' samplers will be on show in our Research Library and locals will have the chance to see the Brontës own needlework first hand. Sadly in September the weather was not so kind when members joined our Collections Manager, Ann Dinsdale, for a walk from the Parsonage to Ponden Hall – the house that Emily used as Thrushcross Grange in *Wuthering Heights*. Ponden Hall was home to generations of the Heaton family, and it is claimed that incidents in their family history contributed to the plot of the book. The owners, Julie and Steve, gave a personal tour of the house including the magnificent library, which still has the same shelves that Emily used as she was researching her novel.

Come along to our event in October if you are a member, or if you would like to know more about the Brontë Society and what they do.

This month has been full of exciting changes at the museum as we have welcomed four new staff members and two new interns! Look out for next month's article when our new Arts Officer, Louisa Briggs, will be giving a *'Behind the Scenes'* look at the new **Contemporary Arts Programme**.

Ann Sumner
Executive Director,
Brontë Parsonage Museum



This summer at the Brontë Parsonage we launched a brand new group for local people: the West Yorkshire Brontë Society. The Parsonage is run by The Brontë Society which has members across the world including in the USA, Australia and Japan. Until recently we didn't have a group for the very area that the Brontës themselves loved so much. Almost 10% of our current members live in West Yorkshire so the summer saw the start of a programme of events for those members and other local people who are interesting in joining the Society.

Our grand launch took place at an evening Garden Party for Emily's birthday in late July. Following drinks and nibbles, members were treated to a tour of the garden and a look at Emily's artefacts in the Research Library. In mid-August, on a beautiful summer's day, I met with fifteen members at East Riddlesden Hall to look at the amazing 17th century needlework pictures and casket on display there.

These were beautiful pieces that showed off the needlework skills of young girls – an important part of their education. Over tea afterwards we heard about the Brontë sisters' samplers and the lessons their aunt gave them in sewing. This will be followed up by an event for members on Saturday 26 October when Charlotte's

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www.worthvalleymag.co.uk www.airevalleymag.co.uk



Thurs 10th Oct 10.00am - 1.00pm
Crosshills Library and Customer Services Centre, Main Street, Crosshills. Feel Good Drop in Taster sessions and information on: relaxation, healthy living, clubs and sports. Tips on things to do to make you feel really good. Free session Tel 01609 533659 for more details.

Fri 11th Oct The Big Night Out
Skipton Town Hall A variety show for all the family, featuring regional and local acts. Raising money for The Yorkshire Air Ambulance. Tickets £8 for adults, £5 for under 16s, in advance. Tel: 01756 792879. email: info@markettownmedia.com.

Fri 11th Oct -Sun 13th Oct
Oktoberfest Low Street and Church Green, Keighley. Come along to Low Street and Church Green for various market stalls and entertainment.

Fri 11th Oct -Sun 13th Oct Keighley & Worth Valley Railway Autumn Steam Gala. Special trains will be running over the weekend from Keighley Station and throughout K&WVR.

Sun 13th Oct The Oxnop Singers present "Our Kind of Music" Choral ballads, show tunes, gospel and popular classics, with **guests The Silsden Band.** An entertaining night for all. **7:15pm at Oxenhope Community Centre.** Tickets £5 including refreshments, in aid of Airedale Hospital's Endoscopy Unit. Tel. 646158 or 647434 for tickets (or available on the door)

Mon 14th- Sat 19th Oct The Unexpected Guest - Keighley Playhouse Thriller by Agatha Christie. A stranger arrives at a Mansion to find the owner shot dead and his wife nearby



with a gun....More info visit www.keighleyplayhouse.co.uk

Weds 16th Oct & Sun 20th Oct East Riddlesden Hall 1 pm - 4pm. No additional charges. **World War Two Crash Site** join East Riddlesden Hall volunteer David Wadsworth, for a fascinating walk to a genuine World

War 2 air crash site. This is sure to be a very insightful, engaging walk which we are extremely excited to be putting on. Walkers will be required to drive to the start of the walk. Car sharing is possible, for those without transport.

01535 683806, shelley.hollingdrake@nationaltrust.org.uk

Tues 22nd Oct until Sat 26th Oct Keighley Victoria Hall Whistle Down the Wind Keighley Amateurs Musical presents 'Whistle down the Wind', please contact Box Office on 08456 252550 to book your tickets.

Thus 24th Oct (every 4th Thursday in a month) **Steeton Flower Club** - Meetings held at **Sutton Village Hall at 7.30pm.**

Thurs 24th until Sun 27th Oct KWVR Beer & Music Festival Local breweries including: Copper Dragon, Old Spot, & Timothy Taylor. Enjoy real ale with friendly folk on one of Britain's finest heritage railways. The main Festival Bar will be located inside the Exhibition Shed at Oxenhope. Sample Real Ales, bottled beers, perrys, ciders, spirits and soft drinks. Entertainment

all weekend, with live music adding to the festival atmosphere. Trains run late into the evening on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, connecting with trains on the national rail network to Leeds, York, Sheffield, Skipton and beyond.

Fri 25th Oct Skipton Town Hall Join Chris Bannister on his return from Colorado performing his show **The Music of John Denver.** Hits including Anni's Song, Leaving On A Jet Plane, Take Me Home Country Roads and many more...Tickets from Skipton Tourist Info Centre, www.chrisbannister-musicofjohnDenver.com tel: 07973802637 email: ten64productions@live.com

Sat 26th Oct Aireville Park Skipton Start time 1.30 pm. Navigate a terrifying 10km zombie infected course. Separate 5km junior zombie course Negotiate the most fiendish zombie obstacles around the course. Try and avoid the hungry, blood thirsty, virus spreading zombies. Enjoy the post event zombie party, licensed bar, live music Dress up in your best zombie outfits. Top prizes for the most creative outfit worn. www.zombiesurvivalrun.co.uk.

Sat 26th Oct until Wed 30th Oct & Sat 2nd & Sun 3rd Nov Poor Man's Pewter East Riddlesden Hall 10.30am - 4 pm. Can you follow Captain Wrecks hidden trail to unlock the secret of the dead man's chest? Collect the captains

coins to solve the puzzle, then throw other budding pirates off the trail by learning to make fake pewter. More info contact Jennifer Campbell, 01535 607075, jennifer.campbell@nationaltrust.org.uk

Sat 26th Oct to Sun 3rd Nov Pumpkin Trail at Bolton Abbey 10am-4pm Free event (normal estate admission applies) Join in this spooktacular week of half term fun. Can you find all the hidden pumpkins through Strid Wood? As you wander along the woodland walk, keep a look out for low flying witches and see if you can unravel their magic spell. Finish back at the Cavendish Shop to enter the free **prize draw!** Suitable for pushchairs and wheelchairs. Dogs welcome on a lead.

Sat 26th & Sun 27th Oct Spooky Goings On In Haworth! Halloween Weekend Sat at 3pm Parade of Dragons. Sun at 3pm Parade of Ghouls.

Thurs 31st Oct Cavendish Pavilion, Bolton Abbey will be holding a **Halloween Party with party games and food from 4.30pm - 6pm.** For more information about this event and to book contact the Cavendish Pavilion on 01756 710245

Sat 2nd Nov Sutton Village Committee's Bonfire & Fireworks Display - Up Crag Lane off Croft Hill, Sutton. Gates open 6pm. **Bonfire Lit approx 6:30pm.** Followed by Fireworks Display. Hot Food & Drinks available. Enquiries to Christine - 01535 636639.

Sutton Village **New Years Eve Party @ Sutton Village Hall** With Live Act One Stop Boogie and DJ. A Night Tickets £25 Contact Christine on 636639

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CHOCOLATE AND PUMPKIN CAKE



The pumpkin season in the UK is sadly short, dictated more by halloween than culinary requirements these days. But even if you only ever buy it to carve into a gruesome face to put fear into passers by, then don't throw away the bits in the middle this year - use them as an excuse to make this decadent chocolate cake. The sweetness of the pumpkin and the crunch of the nuts, combined with the smooth rich indulgent topping will bring little moments of delight to Halloweens, and a dreamy smile to the most ghoulish of nighttime pranksters.

For the cake

- 200g dark chocolate
- 150g butter
- 3 eggs
- 250g soft brown sugar or light muscovado
- 250ml cold water
- 3 tsp vanilla extract
- 250g plain flour
- 3 tsp baking powder
- 100 - 150g grated pumpkin
- 100g chopped pecans or walnuts

For the topping

- 250g icing sugar
- 25g melted butter (about a tablespoon)
- 100ml double cream or cream cheese
- a dash of whisky or rum (optional)
- a sprinkle of cinnamon

Line a 20cm square cake tin with baking parchment and heat the oven to 180C (160C fan)/350F/gas mark 4.

Break up the chocolate and melt together with the 150g butter - either in a microwave or in a bowl over a pan of hot water.

Beat the eggs and brown sugar well until they thicken and lighten in colour, and then beat in the melted chocolate mixture.

Now beat in the water and vanilla a bit at a time (its supposed to be runny) - then sift in the flour and baking powder, and beat again. Stir in the grated pumpkin and nuts and pour into the cake tin. Bake in the middle of the oven for about 60 mins - but check after 50 as it may well be cooked. (you can check by poking a barbeque skewer in the middle and see if it comes out dry)

When its cooled, melt 25g butter, beat in the icing sugar, cream (or cream cheese) and alcohol if using, spread over the top of the cake and leave to set. Sprinkle with cinnamon and a bit of grated chocolate if you have any left. Yum!

Sudoku Solutions

1	5	9	4	6	2	8	3	7
6	4	8	3	7	5	2	1	9
7	3	2	1	8	9	4	5	6
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9	1	3	4	7	8	5	6	2
2	5	1	7	3	4	8	1	6
3	8	6	1	9	2	4	7	5
1	4	7	8	5	6	2	3	9

Crowfield

They are holding council meetings demonstrations in the angry air picket the October sunlight. Flakes of burnt paper fall towards the stubblefield.

Adrian Henri



Keighley prepares to join global network of Fairtrade communities.

Since February a community wide campaign including business people, residents, faith groups, schools and local councillors have been working towards achieving Fairtrade Town status.

This has involved a range of activities and events raising awareness of the benefits of Fairtrade to producers in developing countries and the range of Fairtrade products available in the town. By choosing to support Fairtrade, Keighley can add it's voice to demands for a trade system that puts people, not profit, at the heart of the transaction.

By choosing a Fairtrade product each time you go shopping you are making a positive contribution to building a better world for all of us.

The application was submitted in September and we hope to celebrate achieving Fairtrade status during the towns Christmas celebrations.

TOP TECH TIPS by Michelle Thompson at CloudFree IT

When you move house it's standard procedure to take your final readings from the meters, call the utility companies concerned and advise them of your new address. On moving in day you call them again with the readings at your new home, and that's it. Job done, often with no interruption to service.

Not so with broadband, as we found out recently. With no such thing as a 'broadband meter' on your property, it must be sooo difficult for the ISPs to determine where one person's liability ends and the new occupant's begins. (Apologies for the sarcasm there, folks). Actually, I'm sure they have enough clever technology that they could meter the usage very easily if they wanted to, and maybe they would one day, if only they hadn't made unlimited broadband so darn popular!

Generally when you move out they switch the phone/broadband off. When the next person moves in, they request for it to be switched back on, if they want it (yes, kids, there are still some people who choose not to be permanently attached to the web).

Disillusioned with the service we'd had at the old house in Oakworth (40Mbps? 14 Mbps, actually, and falling...), we resolved to switch provider at the same time as the move. Sadly, switching provider at the same time as your address seems to add a layer of complexity which causes lines of communication to break down.

Our new house had been empty for a fortnight. Both broadband service and the phone line had been disconnected. The ISP used by the previous occupant really didn't appeal. We found a suitable alternative and then waited.

What must be, in reality, a five minute job

to flick a few switches or re-patch a few cables at the exchange seems to take BT Openreach weeks, literally.

No email, web browsing, online gaming, social networking, TV on demand or You Tube funnies. A technological wilderness. Well, almost.

If I reported that adults and kids alike dug out board games, played charades in the drawing room and debated extensively the politics of the day around the dining table, I'd be fibbing.

Old Xbox & PS2 games came out of the boxes that should have been destined for the loft. A bit of 'retro gaming' took place for a while.

As the oldest (and most old-fashioned) in the house I found the near complete absence of tech almost bearable, except that just about every company or organisation that I wanted to inform of our change of address seems to expect you to do it online or by phone and the mobile kept cutting out on me. Gah! Patience wore thin. Our little corner of Cross Roads appears to be a '3G signal desert' when you're on O2.

Nice views come at a price. There was some suggestion that I chose the location on purpose as a way to limit the gadgets. Now would I? :-]

'The Boss' hooked up a different provider's 3G dongle to our router. The very expensive 12GB quota had to do us for a month. We could easily burn that allowance in a day! We got rationing, 21st century style. Strictly no downloads or streaming allowed until further notice, but at least 'no internet access' wasn't going to be an excuse to avoid homework...

So 4 weeks later, we now have unlimited downloads at just over 17Mbps. No fibre available yet, in our 'almost perfect' corner of the village, but, if it was, then we'd certainly expect better than the speed we're getting on ADSL 2+.



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Keighley Table Tennis p18
KWVR p2
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Adrian Butterfield p12

Cobbydale p3

GB Plumbing p12

Sean Middleton p12

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Cavendish Cameras p13

You in Frame p1 & 10

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Aire Valley Mag p29

Property Related

Davies Lettings p29

Hayfield Robinson p19

Whitegates p9

Retail

Cavendish Cameras p13

Crystal Space p4

Elliot May p11

Phillipes p7

Restaurants/Pubs/Food

The Cookhouse p8

C.Bromwich Foraging p6

Roofing

Keighley Flat Roofing p7

Micks Roofing p29

Solicitors

O'Neill p2

Walker Foster p32

Storage

Will Store p13

Transport/Delivery

A1 Vanman p4

Tuition/Training

Elliot May p11

Kip McGrath p5

Leeds City College p15

Photography Tuition p10

Stephanie Spence p4

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