

Create, Inspire...Tea?

& Tinsel! - 2020 Christmas Issue



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Welcome to the second rather special Christmas edition of Create, Inspire, Teaand Tinsel.

This edition introduces a few more of the fab Motivators, starting with the first introduction to Natalie, a lady full of character and fun who constantly makes us smile with her crazy antics. Steve Gathercole has given us an inspirational look into his world of drawing, airbrushing and pyrography. Do look at the links to his amazing work. Amy has shared her gorgeous Robin with us and Kayla Hassell's cat has been busy helping her too. Angelina is our talented young member producing some incredible drawings, and it's been fun catching up with Michelle as she continues to start her business having hung up her dusters. And... I'm sure you will enjoy reading the interview between Vicki and Evie, where not too many of my secrets were given away :)

It has been an odd crazy weird year but it's been super discovering the amazing art talent within the group and how creative we can be with zoom. I know many of you enjoy the dogs tummy rumbles and snores during my live draw sessions... at least it feels as if we are all together in the same room.

Have a wonderful festive season, stay well and happy drawing.

Bonny, Vicki & Evie.



And a very Merry Christmas from the Motivator Pups! These are the lovely new members of Charlotte's family, who is another member of the infamous Motivators group! She has 10 puppies in total, all full of Christmas spirit! More Christmas Pets to come on page 4!



Xmas Pets

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We've also got some cheesy Christmas cracker jokes dotted around throughout the magazine! We hope they give you a tickle or at the very least an eye-roll! Answers on page 15.

What better way to start the Christmas issue than with your adorable Christmas pets! Thank you so much to everyone who sent a photo in, we have loved receiving them! If you have an adorable pet photo that you'd like to see in a future issue, please send it to Vicki Evans at vickiartfun@gmail.com



Jane Pooley's Hungarian Pumi, Betty



Kelli Jackson's Tortoise Bentley



Natalie Holding's Cocker Spaniel, Nessie



My name is Amy and I'm a 32 year old hobby artist based in Kent. I've lived here all my life, and I absolutely love the outdoors and nature! I'm currently completing the North Downs Way, hiking gives me so much inspiration for my art. Drawing animals is my passion, and I love to try and capture individual personalities. I began drawing with coloured pencils around two years ago, steadily building my skills and embracing each learning curve I come across.

Thank you so much for including my latest piece in the magazine! With Christmas looming around the corner I wanted to create something with a festive feel, and what bird represents this time of year more than Mr Robin Redbreast!

I have predominantly used coloured pencils for my previous drawings and wanted to try something different, so I took the plunge and decided to give pastel pencils a try. So behold, my first attempt at using Derwent Pastel Pencils, on Clairefontaine Pastelmat card. Very much out of my comfort zone, and after watching many YouTube videos, I started by

creating a base layer of colour quite roughly. I then blended this initially using cotton ear buds, but found my fingers did the trick a bit better. After around five or six layers of building and blending, I then went in with the finer details. This is a small piece, measuring 4.5 X 6 inches, and I couldn't create the detail I'm used to with pencils using the pastels. This will likely go down to my inexperience with pastels! However, I love how easy it is to layer the light over darks, and the Pastelmat is wonderful for building up layers and creating depth. I've created a much softer feel for this drawing, trying to portray a gentle style and embracing the warmth that pastels create. I hope he brings some Christmas joy your way! (Oh also to add that the photo was used with permission from Linda Hargrave!)

You can find Amy on Facebook and Instagram - [@amyclairefineart](https://www.instagram.com/amyclairefineart) - Amy is also a member of The Motivators! Meet Natalie on page 12!



Christine Brander's Horse, Ollie



Jane Pooley's Hungarian Pumi, Henley



Carolynne Winchester's Cockerpoo, Pepper



Fabrizia's Siria



Pearl Blandin de Chalais's Coco



Fabrizia's Lux



Q: Why did the turkey cross the road?

From Dusting To Decorations by Michelle Bowman - Part 2

Meet The Cutest Helper - Elphie the Grey

Vicki Evans: Hi Michelle I can't believe where the time has gone since we first talked! You have now been working as an artist at home for nearly 5 months ... how are you enjoying it?

Michelle Bowman: Well, it's been interesting haha! It started off well and I was full of confidence and excitement for what was to come. I loved the drawings and they were flying out! Then a couple of drawings that I just didn't enjoy really pulled the rug from under me and doubt and low confidence set in. I tried to plough on through thinking it would sort itself out. Eventually one night I put up a post asking how others beat this feeling and was anyone in the same boat? The response was overwhelming and it was so good to hear I wasn't the only one. The support really helped me and Bonny phoned me and made what I had built up in my head seem much less of an issue than it had to be. She stressed how important it is to stay positive, so from then, everytime I have a blip, I try to stay positive, think of how far I've come and just calm down! I think alot of us can relate to always striving for perfection and sometimes it can put unbelievable pressure on us. So yes, I am enjoying it, but also learning things about myself and how to deal with things positively!

V: Are you able to separate time drawing and with the family?

M: It's a work in progress, but it's working, slightly?! I will draw when the kids are in school, try to draw when they're not at school, and if it's a miserable weekend and no one wants to do anything, I will draw! We usually set aside one day to do something together, and we loan a little pony who we see 3 times a week. He's great fun but I do often wonder how people manage their time efficiently, there will never be enough hours in the day for me! Maybe I could with better time management, another thing I am learning about myself that needs work!

V: What are you working on right now?

M: I have just yesterday finished a lovely mare 'Delta' for a Christmas present. She was a tricky one as I know the girl that owns her and in her pictures she looks a beautiful bright bay, but the one I was sent she's rather dark. I'm very happy with how she turned out though, the lightening was lovely!

V: Do you have any special commissions for Xmas?

M: A large almost full sheet of a horse and two black dogs. They did at one point suggest Xmas hats on all of them but (thankfully) we're not going with that idea haha! I may break out the pastels for underlayers on that one, I find them so helpful for large scale, and especially black dogs!

V: Do you have any special Xmas traditions in your house?

M: Well, when we put the tree up, we drink lots of mulled wine and eat mince pies. So when the kids hang the baubles in all the wrong places, glitter is everywhere and anywhere and there's 90s foil stars hanging from my cat tree... I won't care! Unfortunately my kids both are at that age now where they are doubting Santa, but I will still be creeping into their rooms at 2am to leave their stockings, then ho ho ho'ing back to bed. Possibly full of mulled wine... I adore Christmas and just being with family and cannot wait, its been a grim year and it's something I'm looking forward to even more than previous. Everyone deserves an amazing Christmas this year.

V: Will Santa be bringing you art materials ... if so what's on your wish list?

M: I don't think I can wait for Santa this year, some of my pencils are little nubbins at the minute so I should really get my self in gear and get an order in. I love polychromos and Pablos, my two absolute favorites, and so complimentary to work with. I have tried a few other pencils and not many compare for me so luckily for my bank balance I've overcome pencil buying addiction. It's a real thing! Maybe a weekly planner should be top of the list though haha!



The first time little Elphie and I met was 3 years ago on a brisk Fall morning. My wife and I were on a small road trip to Mannheim, driving to meet up with her previous partner. During their separation she had taken their shared cat but had now decided that having a pet didn't fit her busy lifestyle.

We arrived, enjoyed some small talk and eventually made our way back to the car with a crate holding what resembled a small grey cloud. The ride home was fairly quiet. My wife occasionally spoke about Elphie's character as I nervously glanced at the large yellow eyes glaring at me from the back seat. Something told me that this cat somehow knew I was a dog person.

The first year was educational. Elphie taught me who was in charge and at what times I should feed her. It was also my first year living in Germany, so I suppose we were both going through a culture shock of sorts. The only thing we had in common was rushing to greet my wife when she came home from work – Elphie always got there first.

The second year, I learned how to speak conversational German and found that cat snacks were a great way to this baby gargoyle's heart. During dinner, I would let her eat a bit of my ham and "accidentally" leave the coffee cream out on more occasions than I should have. Soon thereafter, I began waking with a yellow eyed grey lump on my chest, waiting patiently for breakfast time.

So it's 2020 now and changes are abundant. I started a small business as a fine artist and illustrator – the guest bedroom slowly became an art studio and what was once a little gray shadow is now my studio cat. She keeps me from working too long and thinks the art desk is a shared commodity between us. I learned that I'm not just a dog person. One thing that hasn't changed in our relationship?

Elphie is still the boss!

Written by Kayla Hassell



Kayla Hassell is an American fine-artist and illustrator, based in Germany. Her work can be found on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter via [@Hassellarts](#).



Q: What did the sea say to Santa?



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Airbrush, Pyrography and Coloured Pencil

by Steve Gathercole



Hi there, my name is Steve Gathercole an amateur artist always looking to explore different artistic media. I was born and grew up in East Anglia on the Norfolk Coast, later on in life I moved and settled down in Somerset, having always lived in small rural villages wildlife was always around me and soon became the main subject of my artwork. I was always reasonably good at drawing during my school days but went into Engineering for 15 years then took a career change and moved over to I.T for the next 25 years and worked towards my goal of early retirement at 55 to pursue my hobbies of which Art is the main attraction, I also have a couple of classic cars I tinker with and like to build Kit Cars.

I reached my goal and retired at 55, soon after my wife bought me an Airbrush Kit to try, this led to an exciting adventure in the world of Airbrush Painting eventually over the next 4 years my skills developed to a reasonable level even managing to sell commissions, appear in a couple of magazines and won a local Artist of the year competition. I was then

introduced to the world of Pyrography, (my daughter bought me a kit for Xmas), I quickly become fascinated by the technique of burning Art on different types of wood, again I was soon able to reach a skill level I was happy with and was comfortable switching between the two media. Another birthday came along and I received a set of Polychromos Coloured Pencils, with the help of Bonny Snowdon's excellent Patreon and tutorials I am now progressing very well with coloured pencil Art.

Although the different media my seem completely different, there are actually a lot of common techniques which has made the transition to each a lot more straight forward than you might imagine, even a some of the tools are the same.

Airbrush: I use transparent acrylic paint thinned to spray though a Badger Krome Airbrush, after transferring the ref using transfer paper, projector or grid method, I work from light to dark building up the layers with light



Airbrush Heavy Horses

passes each time changing colours as required to 'mix' the tones on the paper, working from light to dark the whites and highlights are preserved (just as with coloured pencil trying to put white over dark doesn't work), or established with a Slice blade or eraser. Textures are applied during layers again using the Slice tool or eraser. The Airbrush is adjustable so that I can spray a line as thin as a pencil line or up to about 2" wide, shading is easier than with coloured pencil and I am not limited by the tooth of the paper it is possible to just keep on layering layers of paint irrespective of the substrate. So as you can see the techniques of building up layers for depth, erasing and using the Slice tool to remove pigment are very similar to coloured pencil.

Airbrush, Pyrography and Coloured Pencil

by Steve Gathercole

Pyrography: Wood burning Art has been growing in popularity over the years especially with new innovations in the tool available. I started with a simple 'Soldering Iron' type tool with different shaped tips, which when hot enough would burn the wood in a controlled manner just as if you were drawing with a pencil. I have now progressed to using a wire tip burner which is a purpose built machine, the advantages are quicker to heat up and cool down, finer control of the heat and a multitude of shaped tips available which helps greatly with intricate detail and shading. Just as with Airbrush and coloured pencil you work from light to dark preserving the highlights gradually increasing the heat over subsequent layers to achieve depth. Different types of wood are used but lighter woods are best for the contrast such as Sycamore, Lime Wood, Basswood, Birch or Birch Plywood.

Coloured Pencil: By the time I was introduced to coloured pencils both airbrush painting and pyrography had taught me skills and techniques which gave me a head start in my learning curve. I found Bonny's tutorials very early on and quickly joined the Patreon so with Bonny's help I have progressed quite well in the 4 months I have been learning to use coloured pencils. I have really been 'drawn' into the world of coloured pencils and enjoying every minute, in fact I think this is my favourite medium and certainly seems to have a much larger following.

How do I fit all this in my daily schedule you might ask? Although I have retired early my very supported wife still works so we have an agreed routine where I paint, burn or draw each morning in my studio, my studio is actually a summer house in the corner of our garden, then afternoons are occupied with housework and getting evening meals ready. My faithful border collie 'Chip' keeps me company all day, he even has his own space in my studio.

As for social media links I do have my facebook page where I post all my work
<https://m.facebook.com/steve.gathercole.12>

I have also recently started an Instagram account
[@steve_gathercole](https://www.instagram.com/steve_gathercole) which I would like to expand.

Written by Steve Gathercole

Thank you Steve that has been fascinating and inspirational, your work is just amazing. Vicki



Pyrography Tiger Clock



Coloured Pencil Monkey





Me at Bonny's Leopard Workshop, Essex, Feb 2020

Vicki Evans: In this magazine I have chosen to interview the lovely Evie who was lucky enough to intern with Bonny.

Hi Evie .. well we planned to do this over tea and cake but zoom will have to do. Even zooms with you are fun though, thanks for being brave enough to agree to this. It seems perfect the interview is with you for this edition as we are doing a little intro to a few of the Motivators !

We had so much fun pulling the first magazine together, I'm really looking forward to this one we've had some laughs with planning it haven't we!

Evie Cobbin: Haha we have, we got very giddy at the idea of a Christmas issue! I think it's fair to say we let our Christmas spirit run wild with this one!

Vicki: So tell us a bit about you...

Evie: Well I'm currently a Graphic Design Student in my final year at Sheffield Hallam University - I didn't start out as a Graphic Design student however, in fact I started university as an Interior Design student, but transferred to Graphics/Illustration after the first year, as I missed the raw drawing and freedom that came with Illustration. Needless to say I like a variety of creative things! My ultimate goal whilst at university was to do a placement/industry year, in fact that was almost more important to me than anything else. So you can imagine my delight at getting to be an intern with Bonny Snowdon! Living the dream!

Vicki: I think many artists were very envious that you got to spend time in Bonny's studio... it must have been a great experience?

E: Oh it was, and I still miss it now. No two days were the same as I'm sure Bonny will agree! But that was what made it so exciting for me, I felt I was gaining first hand experience of the life of a coloured pencil artist and that was invaluable to me. It felt more real than anything I'd done at university (which at times was quite daunting!) but also made me feel much more confident and prepared for life after uni. I really enjoyed the variety of projects Bonny had for me and this in itself improved my knowledge and skills tenfold. I came away from my placement year feeling so pleased and it was genuinely the best year at uni for me.



A photo I took of Bonny - look at the sign!

V: I've seen first hand her pencil organization... has she improved with you being there?

E: Haha well...how to answer this diplomatically! There was one day that I did some reorganising of her pencils...but I don't think much came of it in the end haha! She's rearranged her whole studio beautifully now so perhaps it was me!

V: I know I love tea, but I think Bonny beats my daily total...was it tea and biscuits all day? I can guess it will be only Yorkshire tea...but what are the favourite biscuits?

E: Yes naturally, only Yorkshire tea! Any biscuit will do, the trick is to eat them before the dogs sniff them out! I love tea and Bonny has these superb, almost pint sized mugs that we had a couple of every day! Often Bonny's daughter would be on tea duty if we were working away, bless her!

V: Everyone loves Slipper, Vinnie and New little Nelly - we enjoy their contribution to the video recordings, zooms and studio sessions! You must have some funny stories...any Xmas ones?

E: Oh yes many many funny stories about Bonny's dogs! When I first started she just had Slipper and was getting ready to welcome Vinnie...let's just say I was less ready ha! I don't have much experience with dogs (never having owned a pet myself) but I certainly learnt a lot about big dogs during my time with Bonny! Vinnie's arrival wasn't without drama, but what a funny and lovable boy he is! I remember on walks how he would hop and jump about like a pony, how his ears would always stick up in different directions and how he just grew and grew and grew, until he towered over Slipper! Slipper has so much personality, you can just stare into her eyes and almost feel you know what she's thinking! Together they make quite the mischievous pair, and they both had their share of mischievous moments (Slipper eating mince pies, Vinnie knocking over the projector). I left before meeting Nelly, but I can only imagine she has fit right in with the mischievous studio crew!

V: Did you and Bonny take time out of the studio too, other than walks?

E: Yes we had all sorts of little trips to places and I was always so grateful to Bonny for letting me tag along, as it meant I got to meet all kinds of people and gain more insights into the life of an artist. We had some nice lunches in places and had a couple of photography days. We even went to a Christmas wreath making workshop, which was loads of fun! Needless to say Bonny is just as talented in her wreath making skills as her pencil skills! It was always nice to get out and about, walking the dogs or visiting the framers, and I count myself so lucky for having been a part of Bonny's team as she was always so generous with her time with me and took such care to make me feel welcome. It was a sad day when I went back home, but I am keen to remain a part of Bonny's life and keep helping her wherever I can!

V: Thanks Evie, been great chatting, good luck with this rather odd crazy last year at Uni !

E: Thank you Vicki!

My handmade Christmas wreath, from a workshop with Bonny's friend in Tadcaster.



Bonny's handmade Christmas wreath - exquisite!





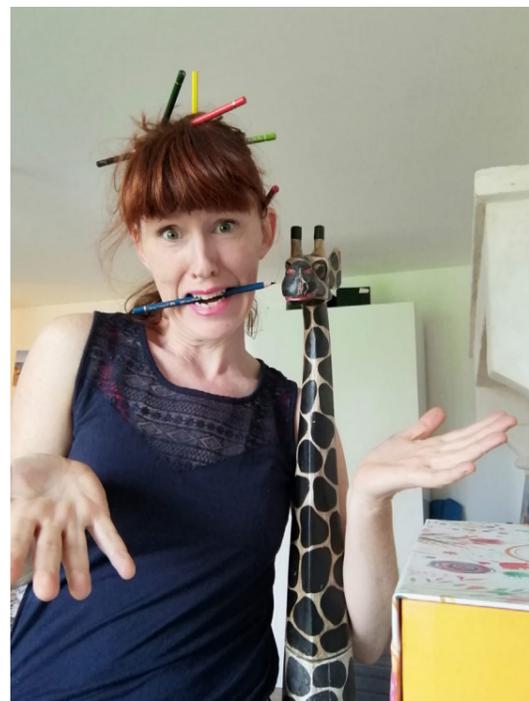
Vicki Evans: In the first magazine I mentioned the Motivators, a group that formed during Bonny's strategy planning workshop. Every day the group continues to inspire, support, cheer up and motivate. It seemed natural to include these amazing ladies as a feature and here you can meet the lovely Natalie

What do you do when you reach 43 with two kids, a solid career and your life begins to fall apart around you? Well, you can either walk into the forest with your beloved Cocker Spaniel and cry about it on a bench for hours (er, actually I did do that...) or pull yourself together and think about what you want to do with the rest of your life (this is where the fun bit comes!)

With £20 in my bank account in a moment of madness I signed up to the last place on Bonny's "Strategy Planning for Artists Workshop" in London, rocked up at the nearest Ibis hotel and started on a course that would actually change my life in many perspectives.... I didn't really know what to expect, but I did know that this was the first thing I had done for myself in over ten years, so my hopes were quite high.

I was nervous, I'll admit, because I really don't know what made me choose to sign up for a strategy course and not just an art course. I had only been drawing for a couple of months, and there was no way on earth that I considered myself an artist. However, after joining Bonny's Patreon group, I began to realise that yes, I would like to learn more about art and the business of art.

The course was way more than I expected. It was an eye-opener and not just because of what Bonny taught us, but also because of the amazing people who also took part.

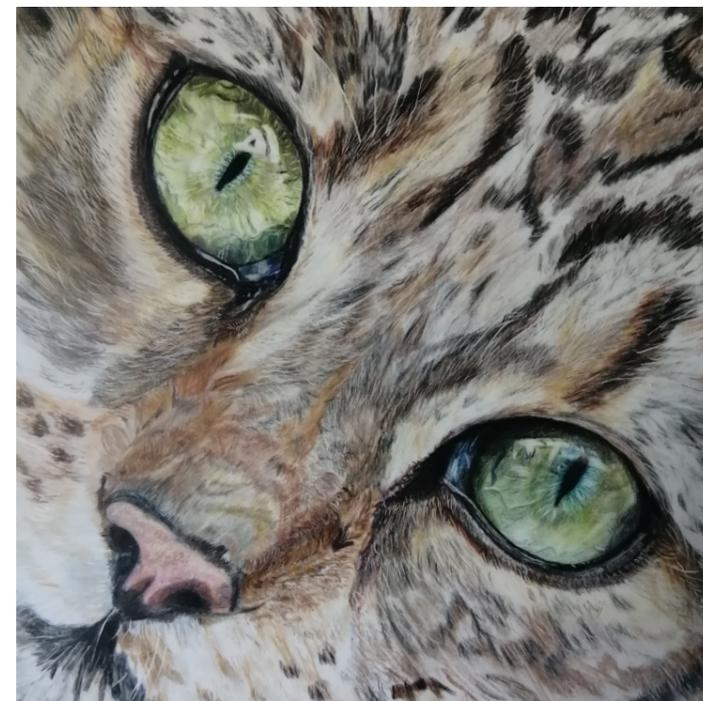


I was expecting to feel out of place, surrounded by competent well-experienced artists (and they all are by the way!) but instead I felt totally part of the whole experience. I left England feeling hopeful for future possibilities and having met some wonderful people who have become friends.

Then Covid struck and we were locked down pretty quickly in France. All this time on my hands and so much to inspire me. I love coloured pencil but I also love acrylic and so I began experimenting with both media and even adding the odd bit of ink and watercolour. After many messy failures, I have now begun to find my very own personal style and I am thrilled to exchange with other artists and perfect my skills each day. Oh my! I just called myself an artist! You see this is what being a Motivator is! We all have our doubts, our feelings of being an imposter, or being not able to do as well as others, but instead of letting those feelings get the better of us, we motivate each other and realise that we all have something to offer.

In these difficult times of social distancing it is so important to be able to share and keep in contact with others across the world and I count my blessings that we do indeed have this possibility thanks to technology and thanks to wonderful groups on social media such as Bonny's.

Written by Natalie Holding - You can find Natalie's work on Instagram, [@natalie_holding_art](https://www.instagram.com/natalie_holding_art) and Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/NatalieHoldingArt>





I was born in China and moved to Australia when I was 8 making english my second language, first being Mandarin. I turned 14 in January this year and have set myself a goal of reaching ultra realism with my art once I reach 16. I have lots of hobbies including music, art and sports but I've always preferred art over anything. I've always loved drawing but only properly start drawing in early April this year due to covid-19, I'm in Melbourne and we're currently in lockdown so that leaves me with plenty of time to draw. All my classes have now moved online which leaves me with a lot of spare time during the day for art. My best subject in school is probably maths or English but it's a close tie with all my subjects. Since I've had so much spare time since April I've drawn over 80 commissions now in homes all around Australia and even overseas. My next project is creating a series of limited edition prints of native Australian birds but first I need to finish my list of commissions. Also thinking of taking a few months off commissions and focusing on tutorials etc. from patreon to improve the quality of my artworks.

Feel free to take a look at my Facebook page and Instagram.
<https://www.facebook.com/AngelinaF-Pet-Portraits-and-Wildlife-Art-101303094980135/>
[@angelinaf_art](https://www.instagram.com/angelinaf_art)



Vicki Evans



& Evie Cobbin

Create, Inspire...Tea? was put together by 'The Bonny Snowdon Pit Stop Team' aka 'The Editorial Xmas Elves'!

Thank you so much for reading our Christmas Issue of Create, Inspire...Tea?. We had loads of fun putting it together and hope it has brought you some festive joy this season. If you feel you would like to share what's inspired you in lockdown, have a cute helper, a step by step, have a budding young artist in the house or just an article to share, email Vicki at vickiartfun@gmail.com. Thank you so much to everyone who contributed to this Christmas issue; we really hope you've enjoyed it and we'll see you in the New Year! Vicki & Evie x

“Art enables us to find ourselves and to lose ourselves at the same time.” Thomas Merton



Christmas Cracker Answers

We really hope you've enjoyed our cheesy Christmas cracker jokes! The old ones are the best!



Q: Why did the turkey cross the road?
A: Because it wasn't chicken!



Q: What did the sea say to Santa?
A: Nothing, it just waved!



Q: What do snowmen like to do at the weekend?
A: Chill!



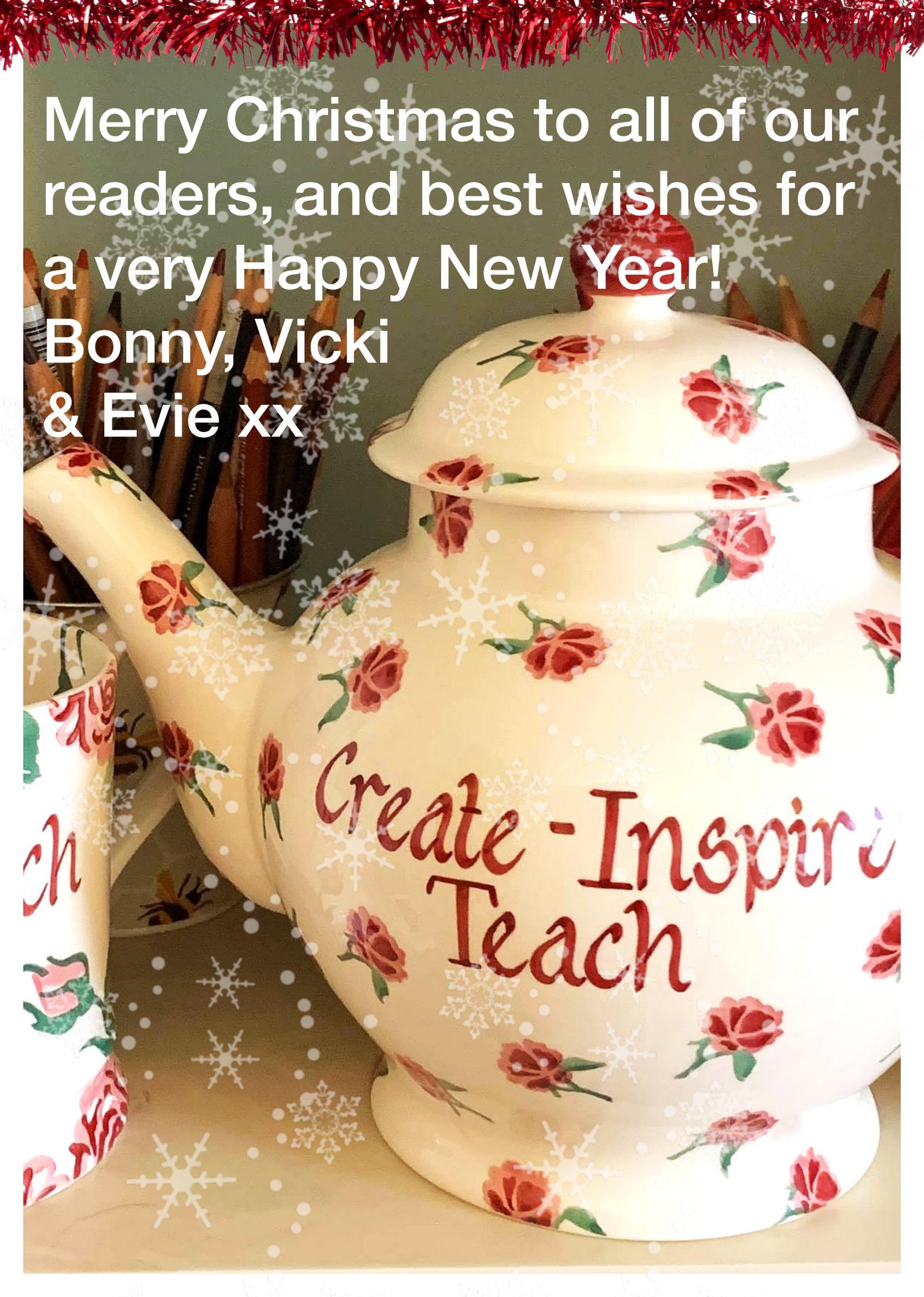
Q: Why are Christmas trees so bad at sewing?
A: They're always dropping their needles!



Q: How does Good King Wenceslas like his pizza?
A: Deep pan, crisp and even!



Q: What do you call a deer who can't see?
A: No eye-deer!



Merry Christmas to all of our
readers, and best wishes for
a very Happy New Year!

Bonny, Vicki
& Evie xx