

YOU WILL NOT BELIEVE WHAT SANTA CALLS HIS LITTLE HELPERS!

# RGView

*Festive fun*



**The best way off  
the naughty list**

Read more inside

## **Revealed: what's in your dinner and much myrrh**



**SLEIGH YOUR  
WORKOUT  
THIS WINTER**

**HOW TO  
LOOK FAB-  
YULE-OUS**

**THE PEOPLE  
WHO HAVE  
XMAS AT  
NEW YEAR**



Vreugde met die feestyd/feesseisoen

Поздравляем с праздниками

**Felices festes** Priecīgus svētkus

Julhälsningar

佳節快樂

**Joyeuses fêtes**

Gleðilega hátíð

Fijne feestdagen

Karácsonyi üdvözet

# Season's greetings

Ugodni praznici

Glædelig jul og godt nytår

Gerų švenčių

Vianočný pozdrav

ريخب متن أو ماع لك

楽しいホリデーシーズンをお過ごしください

Vianočný pozdrav

**Häid pühi**

Příjemně prožité svátky

새해 복 많이 받으세요

सीजन्स ग्रीटिंग्स

Γιορτινές ευχές

**Buone Festività**

Beannachtaí na féile

**Boas festas**

**Życzenia świąteczne**

**Frohe Feiertage**

Sarbatori fericite

Felices fiestas

节日问候



Happy holidays

We're confident you noticed from the festive front cover that it's approaching the time of year when shops and bellies overflow with Yuletide cheer. Before that happens, we want to share with you this special, festive fun issue of RGView: your community magazine.

We welcome one and all, in many languages as you can see, to flick through this lighthearted take on RGView and find out what the season means to some of your peers, as well as how to keep fit, stay green, healthy and be more mindful this season. We hope you'll enjoy the festive redecoration, fun stories, and that the opportunity to share some of the jokes on the back page happens at your next staff get-together.

We'll be back early next year with a more familiar RGView, bringing you more news of the great things the University has been up to.

Have a very happy holiday and a wonderful New Year.





# "What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more"

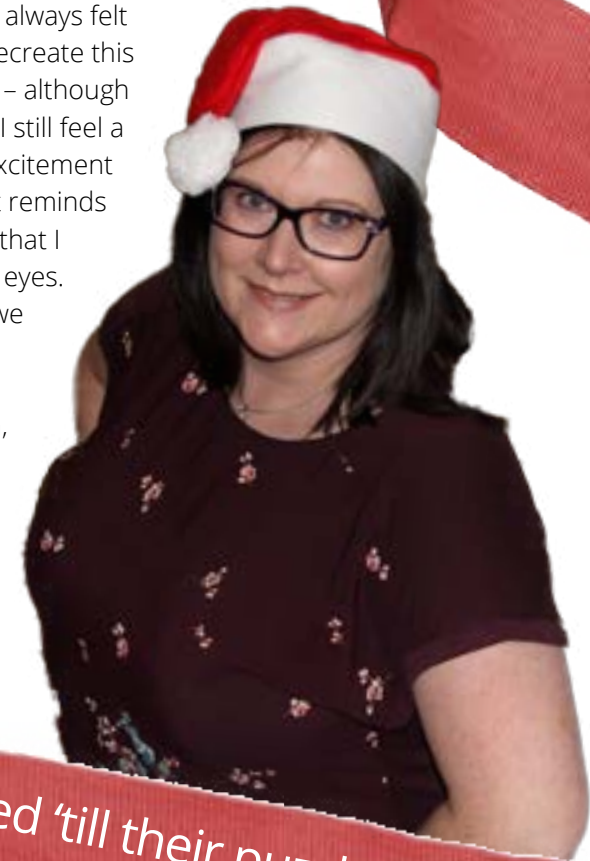
**Sean Brosnan, Digital Content Manager**

Christmas is all about spending time with family and catching up with friends for me. Playing board games and watching lots of films are two of my favourite things to do, while as a big fan of football, there is no shortage of games to watch. Santa hasn't visited my house in a while but my son was born earlier in 2018, so this year I will be making efforts to ensure the chimney is swept and food laid out in preparation for his arrival.



**Lynne Brien, PA to Vice Principal for Research**

For me, the festive season means family. I have fond memories of Christmas when I was growing up and it always felt so magical. I tried to recreate this with my two sons and – although they are now adults – I still feel a glow when I see the excitement in children's eyes, as it reminds me of the excitement that I would see in my son's eyes. Every Christmas Eve, we would watch *Miracle on 34th Street* with Richard Attenborough, whilst wearing new pyjamas and sipping hot chocolate. Treasured memories of a magical time!



**Katie Baxter, Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery**

I love buying Christmas presents throughout the year, but it's an annual ritual to save some for a shopping trip when the lights are on and the decorations are up. Despite sounding cheesy, there is a real change to something in the air. Part of the anticipation comes from seeing Christmas adverts on the telly and the inevitable tear that comes from watching the John Lewis ad. I also enjoy commuting in the car more, as I blast my usual Christmas playlist to get me in the spirit!

Everyone seems to be in a better mood, although, perhaps this is due to the anticipation of a little well-deserved holiday time! It's the perfect time to relax with family and friends and share the festive cheer.



**Dr Chris Yuill, Senior Lecturer, School of Applied Social Studies**

I was born on Christmas Day – hence my name of Chris. It was going to be Noel, a popular name that year – yep, the same year as Gallagher – but that would have been far too seasonal. Holly was chalked in had I been a girl, which, given my surname of Yuill, would have been instant playground misery as a kid. But, I like being born on Christmas Day. There's a nice symmetry in growing one year biologically older at the end of a calendar year. It makes it easier to measure time. Did I get less presents as a child? No. My dad was a sales rep for Airfix!



Five RGU staff "puzzled and puzzled 'till their puzzlers were sore" to ponder the meaning of Christmas.

For me, the festive season is a time to stop and enjoy the magic for a moment. It's a chance to spend time with family, put work to the side and remember what is important in life. I still get that excited feeling I did as a child when I wake up on Christmas morning, and even though the experience of Christmas changes as you get older, those feelings of nostalgia stay with you. We live in a pretty hectic world and I think that taking these moments to enjoy time with the ones we love is hugely important.

**Dr Rachael Ironside, Senior Lecturer, School of Creative and Cultural Studies**





# Icy you in that very pine jumper

*By Madeleine Marcella-Hood & Dr Pauline Bremner, Lecturers in the School of Creative and Cultural Business at RGU and Irina Bogdan, Stage 3 BA (Hons) Fashion Management student.*

**Winter wishes from staff and students at the Fashion Place! We hope you're all looking forward to your Christmas break.**

The warm Aberdeen summer is behind us and wasn't it wonderful! We love our autumn-winter styles here in Scotland and there are some trends we're really excited about this year.

## Modesty dressing

The shops are quickly stocking up on party wear, but hemlines have dropped and the sleeves have lengthened, catering beautifully for our cold Scottish climate. These loose-fitting styles make dressing for Christmas parties more comfortable (more room for dinner?) and easy – reducing the need for additional garments like jackets and cardigans. Midi skirts and dresses are available on the high street in a variety of prints from floral to polka-dot to animal print.

## It wouldn't be Christmas without a jumper

Christmas jumpers have been back on the scene in a big way since 2012. They originally became fashionable in the 1980s, which perhaps explains why they are attractive today among nostalgic consumers who seek to reenact their retro Christmas past. There are some lovely styles in the shops, available in bright and more muted tones. Now might be a good time to dig out last year's jumper, or if you've resisted so far, this might be the year to buy one.



## A very merry Craftmas

Christmas time brings out the creative crafters and a team of 3D Design students from Gray's School of Art has pulled together some top tips for those looking to get involved in the various craft fairs on at this time of year.

- 1. Don't try to make or do too much.** The festive period is already an extremely busy time, so try to plan ahead and aim to make a little each week.
- 2. Team up with a friend/fellow creative.** Most markets will allow you to share a table so you can split the stall fee and there is less pressure.
- 3. Don't undersell your work.** You might worry that people will find it too expensive, but it's important that you get a fair price for all the work.
- 4. Plan ahead and be prepared.** Think about what you will need on the day and ask the organiser exactly what is provided. Have a plan for your table layout, pricing and what you will say to customers.
- 5. Most importantly, have fun!** This is your chance to make something you love and to present yourself to the public as a designer for perhaps the first time. So, make something you are passionate about and proud of.

The students are holding a Christmas market on Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 December at Ruthrieston Community Centre from 10am to 4pm, selling a range of ceramics, glass, jewellery and Christmas products. Proceeds from this market will go towards the fundraising campaign for the exhibition at New Designers in London.







# Going Green for Santa Claus

## The best way off the naughty list!

**If you're looking to avoid Mr Claus's naughty list, a great way to start is by taking some small steps towards a greener Christmas. RGU Go Green has shared its top tips to help you avoid this winter's waste while still having a happy holiday.**

The best way to start is by following Santa's example: he makes a list and checks it twice. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery and a sure way to get into his good books. Make a list before you go Christmas shopping and do your best to stick to it. It will help you avoid impulse buys of food and the 'little bits' that you don't really need but get because they're on sale. In the long run, a list that you stick to will save you money and cut down on waste.

The greenest of elves have access to a workshop and you do too. RGU Go Green's Kaim Shop runs a Christmas workshop where you can learn how to make your own decorations by upcycling items you already have in your home. If you've children, what you learn there will double as a fun festive activity to teach the kids crafty ways to make decorations.

It's the season of giving and it wouldn't be Christmas advice if we didn't talk about gifts. If you're really looking to be in Saint Nick's favour then buy pre loved. You may just find some unique and interesting gifting ideas

from the charity shop of your choice, and you'll be helping that charity at the same time – two ticks on the nice side of the list.

If you want to make a lasting impression with a gift, wrap it in something unique: a nice

Ultimately, the greatest gifts create lasting memories where more worldly goods may not stand the test of time. This can be done with a carefully curated photo album, a subscription to an online streaming service or tickets to see their favourite band in concert. Giving access to

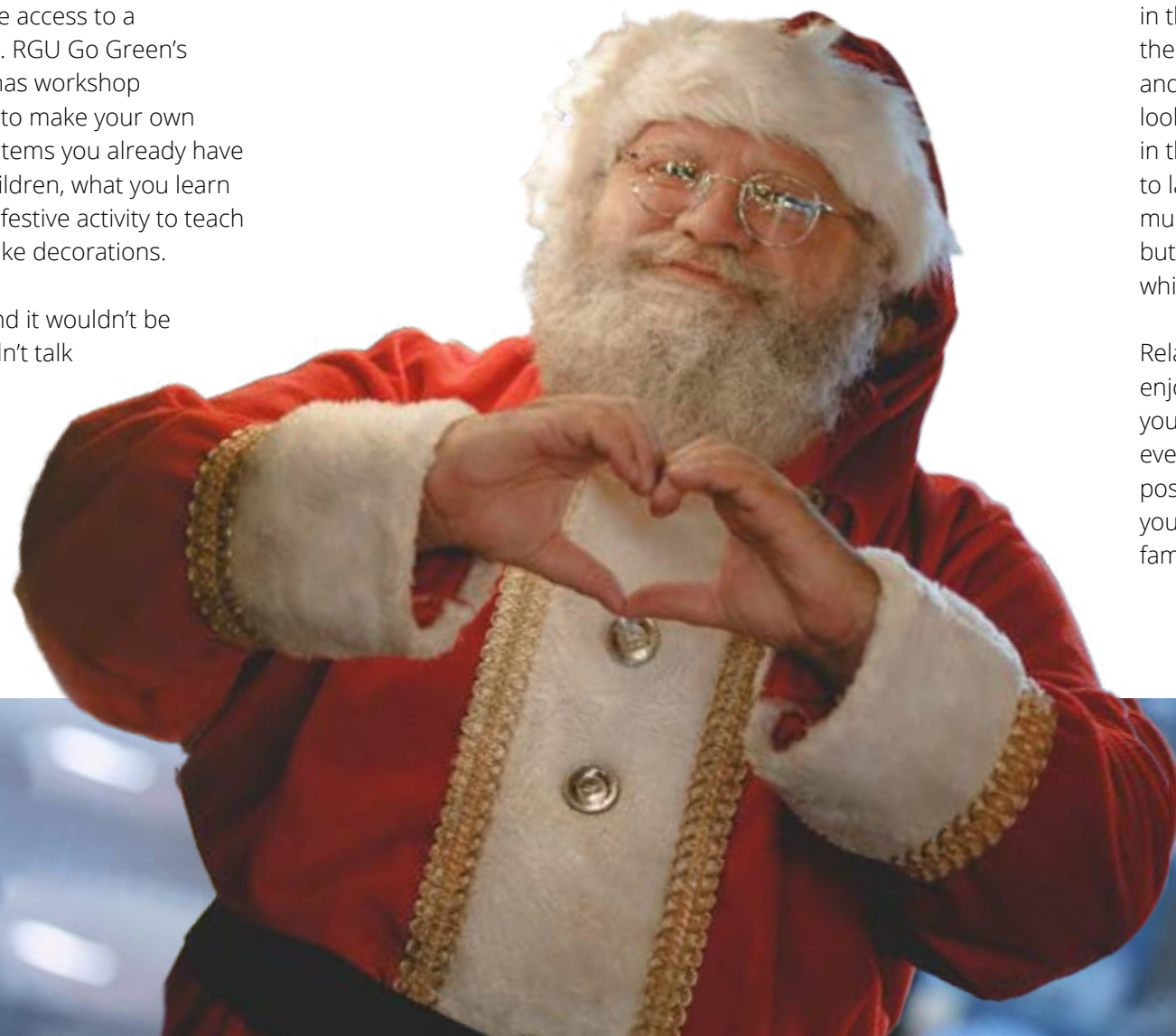
## *Make a lasting impression with a gift*

scarf, a good tote bag or a fabric wrap. Make it something that the person receiving the gift will want to reuse or cherish for themselves. It's nicer than wrapping paper and it won't get thrown out after first use.

classes and short courses is another way to gift someone skills or inspire hobbies that could last a lifetime.

Christmas can be expensive, hectic and even a bit pressure fuelled. It's easy to get swept up in the consumerism that ramps up towards the twenty-fifth as people fill the roads, shops and car parks all seeking those perfect gifts or looking to create that special meal they've seen in the latest Christmas ad. A lot of waste heads to landfills as a result and the air is that much murkier. There is no Christmas miracle solution, but we can all enjoy ourselves just as much while being a shade greener.

Relax, recycle and – if you're lucky enough to enjoy the space – maybe even plant a tree that you can decorate with your friends and family every Christmas. It's one of the easiest ways to positively affect the environment, it guarantees you a spot on the nice list and is something your family can enjoy for generations.





# An ode to improve your elf

*Facts supplied by Lecturers Harriet Young and Lindsey Masson. Poem by Jack Stott*

I'm about to introduce to you  
Some Christmas tips for dinner.  
Be satisfied with the fact  
That they may just make you slimmer.

Try preparing your own gravy  
Using granules from a shop.  
It's much healthier than meat juices,  
And ensures your heart won't stop.

If you must have your gravy  
Like the French would say "au jus",  
Pour a jug and wait a while.  
Scoop the fat from atop the brew.

Speaking of fat, inspect your meat.  
Trim the bits off that you find.  
Your arteries will thank you.  
And you'll earn a smaller behind.

Make room for veggies on your plate,  
Even Brussels sprouts that make you toot.  
A third is about the right amount.  
You could even have some fruit.

When cutting carrots and tatties,  
Don't make them all that small.  
Your cooking will be healthier  
With less oil used overall.

You see, tiny cuts of vegetables  
Have too many sides to soak.  
They absorb more fat while roasting.  
And lead you towards a stroke.

Thanks for cringing your way through this,  
You've clearly nothing better to do.  
But, we've yet to cover creamy sauces  
and butter,  
From the big thing that goes moo.

I'd really rather you wouldn't slather  
Bovine secretions across your food.  
At least try low fat alternatives,  
Especially with your Christmas pud.

Above all don't feel too guilty  
About the things you choose to chew.  
It is, after all, Christmas time.  
I guess you should be merry, too.

# It's not just the turkey that will be stuffed

Aramark provides catering for the University and puts together the Christmas offering in many of the campus's buildings. It anticipates more than 1,500 lunches will be served across the season. Here's a sneak peek at what it takes to fuel RGU's festive feasters with some Christmassy weight comparisons.

Gravy powder  
15.04kg

Three wise men would need 353,882 drops of frankincense oil to balance out this gravy.

Roast potato  
230kg

The equivalent of three cubic metres of freshly fallen snow, or 230 million snowflakes.

Roast turkey  
244.8kg

The same weight as three and a half Mariah Careys singing about what they want for Christmas.



Peeled potato  
10kg

Similar in mass – and shape – to 454 robin redbreasts.

Pigs in blankets  
280kg

That mass would instead wrap every last member of RGU's non-academic staff in a Christmas jumper, with 70 remaining should anyone spill a mulled wine.

Parsnips  
100kg

Enough to feed Dasher and Dancer and Prancer and Vixen, Comet and Cupid and Donner and Blitzen for three days.

Keep an eye on the pages of EatRGU to see more information about the Christmas menus.

aramark







# A couple of Christmas cultures

As Christmas approaches, RGView takes a look at how the holiday is celebrated in different cultures. A special thanks to RGU's Culture Exchange Network.

## Russia

Christmas in Russia is celebrated quite differently: it falls on 7 January rather than 25 December. This is because the Orthodox Church in Russia follows the Julian calendar. Also, Russia's communist past means that even today Christmas is not celebrated by everyone.

Nevertheless, most Russian's celebrate the New Year instead. It's common to see New Year celebrations begin in the second half of December and for companies and schools to host parties. The New Year is celebrated with friends and family and often with lots of traditional dishes such as conserved vegetables, potatoes and mandarins.

## Mexico

On the four weeks prior to Christmas Eve, we celebrate by organising parties called Posadas. Family and friends get together to sing Christmas carols, break piñatas, eat traditional Mexican food, and drink fruit punch. On Christmas Eve, people will go for a family dinner where the typical dishes are turkey, romeritos (seep weed and shrimp in mole sauce) and cod.

We also celebrate the Three Wise Men, called Los Reyes Magos on 5 January. It's more common for kids to receive presents from them rather than Santa Claus, but there are many lucky kids who receive presents from both. Families gather on that day to eat Rosca de Reyes: a cake decorated with figs, cherries and other dried fruits. Curiously, a tradition is that bakers hide one or more small figurines in the cake known as Niño Dios. Whoever cuts the cake and finds a Niño Dios has to pay a tamales dinner for everyone else on 2 February, which is known as Dia de la Candelaria.

*By Lecturers Andrey Kotelnikov and Carlos Moreno Garcia*



# Winter wellbeing is for everyone

*By Dan Warrender, Lecturer in Mental Health Nursing, School of Nursing and Midwifery*

**Mental health is everyone's business, and there are always simple things we can do to improve our own wellbeing. Here are my top tips.**

**Acknowledge your mental health.** While statistics such as "one in four" are intended to normalise mental health issues across the population, it implies that 3 in 4 encounter no problems. It could be argued that the only statistic should be 4 in 4, because we all have mental health, a continuum between wellness and distress which will fluctuate over time. Check in with yourself, and see how you are.

**Find balance.** Consider what you eat, how much you sleep, how much alcohol you drink, and how much exercise you get. These basic things can have an enormous impact on mental wellbeing. Furthermore, be sure and address the work-life balance. Purpose is beneficial, but rest and fun are also necessary.

**Connect with others.** Humans are social animals, and we benefit from being around others. Spend time with your loved ones, or seek to make new connections. Remember that once we establish relationships, we need to maintain them. Maintenance means work, so make time for the people you care about.

**Avoid social comparison.** We are fragile to social comparison, and social media now gives us constant access to other people's lives. These are often a person's 'greatest hits' reel: a filtered and artificial reality where you don't see the bad hair days, the arguments, the disappointment and other moments of struggle. Don't measure your life against other people's highlights.

**Give.** While good deeds should be done for their own sake, the bonus is the growing evidence that it can also have a positive impact on our own mental health and wellbeing. Consider those in need and do what you can to help.



# Festive fitness

By Darren Mackenzie  
and Craig Thain



## Merry HIITmas

Beginners work hard for 20 seconds and rest for 20 seconds. Advanced work hard for 30 seconds and rest for 10 seconds.

- \*Body Weight Squats or Jump Squats
- \*Planks or Dynamic Planks
- \*Marching on the spot or High Knees
- \*Star Jumps with floor touch

Rest 1 minute and do 3 times in total.



Over the festive period it's very easy for diets and exercise regimes to go out the window. However, it is still possible to enjoy yourself while staying on track with your health and fitness goals. The key is to limit overindulgence, while squeezing in some exercise and having some regular meals as normal.

1. Keeping active is tough when the weather isn't great and *Home Alone* is on the telly, but try to move as much as possible. Even try to get the family involved, go on a family walk, ice-skating or even dust down the Nintendo Wii!

2. Plan days over the festivities where you'll go to the gym, go to a class or do a home workout. Make sure that you put this in your calendar. Even better get a friend involved, as you'll be less likely to cancel.

3. When it comes to food and alcohol at Christmas, we ain't no party poopers and wouldn't expect people to not enjoy themselves. We would recommend that you try to forward plan. If you know you're likely to be overindulging in food or alcohol, try to plan more sensible meals around this, such as winter soup or a turkey salad.

4. Keeping hydrated is also very important, especially when drinking more alcohol and eating more food. Try to ensure that you are drinking water regularly between meals and drinks to keep your body happy.

---

Christmas is all about enjoying time with your friends and family, but it's also an important time to unwind and relax.

The main goal during this period is to maintain your current levels of health and fitness, not to lose huge amounts of weight. Hopefully our simple tips can help you achieve this, without the stress of undoing all of your hard work in the gym.

Happy Christmas from The Fit Room







# Christmas crackers



A B C D E F  
G H I J K M N  
O P Q R S T  
U V W X Y Z

He's making a list  
He's checking it twice  
He's gonna find out who's  
naughty or nice  
Santa Claus is in  
contravention of article 4 of  
the General Data Protection  
Regulation (EU) 2016/679

## *What does Santa call his little helpers? Subordinate Clauses*

How long are  
reindeers' legs?  
Long enough to  
touch the ground.

What do you call Rudolph with lots of  
snow in his ears?  
Anything you want, he can't hear you.

I can't get to the chocolates in my  
advent calendar – foiled again.

How will Christmas be different after Brexit?  
No Brussels

How does Good King Wenceslas like his pizzas?  
Deep pan, crisp and even.

