

# THE COLUMNS

by pupils; for pupils

HSD's Newsletter: Issue 97

With only one more week to go until the Christmas holidays are finally upon us, there's been lots of excitement these last few days. The Christmas concert at the Caird Hall was a musical spectacular, with music from the school's many cocurricular music groups. For 5th and 6th years, Christmas House Choir rehearsals are underway, with all manner of festive tunes decking the school's halls, to varying levels of proficiency. Throughout next week, there'll be all manner of dances and parties across the schools, filled with merriment and semi-competent ceilidh dancing. Academics aren't being overlooked in school though, as prelims draw ever-closer, UCAS deadlines seem to approach all-too rapidly, and everyone seems extremely stressed about just around everything! Hopefully, this week has been as exciting for you as for everyone else, and you enjoy the tasteful collection of articles within this week's Columns as we approach the ever-looming Issue 100...



Editor, Izzy



# SIR JOHN WEDDERBURN

David Wedderburn

Sir John Wedderburn of Ballindean was a Scottish landowner who made a fortune in the sugar plantations of Jamaica, where he used slaves as part of the production process. Sir John is a particularly infamous ancestor of mine, and in many ways Sir John personifies Scotland's links to slavery and its legacy which we can still see around us today. Sir John was best known for the famous court case *Knight vs. Wedderburn* which established that to own a slave was illegal in Scotland.

Sir John did not set out to be a sugar plantation and slave owner; he fell into it by circumstance. His family backed the Jacobites and, following their defeat at the Battle of Culloden (1745) by the Hanoverian Army, he was forced to flee the country. Following the battle, his father was found guilty of treason by the Crown and was beheaded at the Kennington in 1746. Sir John, along with his three brothers, fled to Jamaica (in the West Indies) where they set up sugar plantations, which were very profitable due to the high demand from industrialised Britain. Unfortunately, sugar plantations at that time used slaves who were captured from countries in West Africa and then forcibly transported in horrific slave ships to be sold in countries like Jamaica where there was huge demand for their labour. For those that survived the inhumane journey, they would then find themselves sold into slavery to work on plantations, like those owned by Sir John and his brothers. The working and living conditions for slaves on the plantations were harsh and many were treated very badly, although as slaves were expensive to purchase, many plantation owners kept them in good condition in order to extract better labour out of them.

Sir John made a considerable amount of money from the production of sugar which was booming as part of the "triangular trade" and demand in Scotland as it industrialised. He did have a favourite slave, called Joseph Knight, who was his personal valet who he taught to read and write and dressed him in fine Western clothes. After many years as a plantation owner, he accumulated an exceptional amount of wealth on the backs the slaves he exploited; he was able to return to Scotland which was becoming more politically stable and prosperous as it industrialised. He received a pardon from the Crown and took back his father's title. He was able to purchase a large estate between Dundee and Perth called Ballindean. On his return he also bought Joseph Knight with him. Whilst it would appear Sir John treated him well, Knight was still regarded as his slave, but at this time slavery was illegal in Scotland. Joseph Knight used his education and knowledge of the Scottish legal system to successfully take Sir John to the High Court in Edinburgh where he eventually achieved his freedom in a famous landmark court case known as *Knight vs. Wedderburn*, in 1778.

Sir John's story is symbolic of Scotland's connection to the Atlantic Slave Trade. In many ways, I symbolise the historical links that connects Scotland to slavery. As Dundee industrialised, and as part of the British empire, there was huge market for sugar, which most people would not associate with slavery. However, it made Sir John a wealthy man and brought wealth and prosperity to Dundee. Slavery was very much a dark side of Scotland's history, but it is encouraging to know that after a period of time that slavery was abolished, and the Knight vs. Wedderburn case was a pivotal moment in the fight for freedom of the individual. Sir John Wedderburn and his brothers' graves can be found in the Howff in Dundee, and I have been to visit the graves and it was a daunting experience to see the gruesome history of my ancestors.





# Drakeford Steps Down in Wales

Jack Mitchell

On Wednesday, exactly five years after his premiership started, the Labour First Minister of Wales announced that he would be stepping down in Spring next year. This announcement comes after a year of woes for Mark Drakeford, after sadly losing his wife of 46 years, Clare, and recently seeing a significant decrease in popularity.

The 69-year-old announced his decision in a live speech at 11am, with the intent of waiting for a leadership contest to finish and a replacement to be appointed before stepping down. It is understood that this is due to finish by March, in time for the Spring recess of the Welsh Parliament, or Senedd. Mr Drakeford has led the country through the COVID pandemic and the ongoing Cost of Living Crisis, as well as a Welsh nationwide election in which he won 30 of the 60 seats in the Senedd, with the nearest competitor, the Conservative Party, winning only 16. Despite winning such a high number of seats, he missed out by just one seat on gaining a majority, which has proved a problem throughout his stint as First Minister. Wales has remained relatively untouched by nationalist parties compared with other UK constituent countries after Drakeford's sizeable victory over Plaid Cymru, who are seeking Welsh independence. Despite his seemingly-strong popularity, there has been a recent policy decision that has defined his leadership: 20 mph zones. Nearly all of these zones are in towns and the limits have been reduced from 30 mph. This may sound like a relatively minor policy – which in effect it is – but reading the comments left on his resignation speech video, it's clear that it has been this plan that has left him an unpopular figure. Most of the Welsh people are against the strategy to combat road accidents in towns, which was instigated in mid-October.

The Welsh First Minister has been a social worker, an academic and the Member of the Senedd (MS) for Cardiff West since 2011, taking over from the late former First Minister Rhodri Morgan, for whom he was also a special adviser. He was appointed First Minister in 2018, after a Welsh Labour leadership contest in which he was victorious. It is thought that the front-runners in the race to replace him are the Education Minister Jeremy Miles and the Economy Minister Vaughan Gething, who was runner-up in the leadership election that made Drakeford First Minister.

Both Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Labour Leader Keir Starmer paid tribute to him in their opening speeches at Prime Minister's Questions, which started just minutes after Mr Drakeford had finished his resignation statement. Rishi Sunak thanked the Welshman for his years of public service and Keir Starmer praised his Labour colleague, calling him a 'true titan' of Welsh and Labour politics. Drakeford's Conservative counterpart, Andrew RT Davies, also sent him his best wishes. All of those who paid tribute to the Welsh Labour leader included in their speeches references to his gentle yet serious character. These are traits that I noticed when I had the pleasure and privilege of meeting Mr Drakeford during the Summer. I too wish him well with his retirement after a life of service.

# Figure Skating: 2023 Recap

Izzy Clark

It's that time of year again - the time of year when I ramble delusionally about figure skating to a small audience! This time, I'm going to try and be a little bit more approachable.

## Grand Prix Series Final Winners Results (Beijing)

Womens - Senior: Kaori Sakamoto (Japan), Junior: Mao Shimada (Japan)

Mens - Senior: Ilia Malinin (USA), Junior: Rio Nakata (Japan)

Pairs - Senior: Minerva Fabienne Hase/Nikita Volodin (Germany), Junior: Anastasia Metelkina/Luka Beruleva (Georgia)

Ice Dance - Senior: Madison Chock/Evan Bates (USA), Junior: Leah Neset/Artem Markelov (USA)

## My Season's Highlights (So Far)

Women's Short Program - Loena Hendrickx (Belgium) skating to House Mix. Loena's music choices are always certainly inspired, and her short program this season is no exception. It's fun to see senior (17+) skaters breaking free from the typical classical selections and going wild.

Women's Free Program - Kaori Sakamoto (Japan) skating to Wild Is The Wind/Feeling Good by Lauryn Hill. My favourite free program of any discipline this season, and one of my favourite of Kaori's programs, ever. Though I personally believe nothing will ever be greater than her medal-winning Olympic free skate, this is a pretty close contender.

BONUS: Mao Shimada (Japan)'s short program to Americano by Lady Gaga. I love her skating, I wish they'd let her do her triple axel in the short program too.

Men's Short Program - Juheon Lim (South Korea) skating to Your Song by Elton John. I love programs set to Moulin Rouge - they are a guaranteed way to get me invested in your career, and this junior skater I've never heard of before did exactly that with his short program. I don't tend to watch the mens' discipline, but I tuned into the Junior Grand Prix Final and was hooked.

Men's Free Program - Kevin Aymoz (France) skating to Bolero by Maurice Ravel. I despise Bolero. It is, without question and without exaggeration, my least favourite piece of music, ever. Despite this, I am also a Kevin Aymoz fan, and this routine might convert me into at least a Bolero- tolerator. No promises.

BONUS: Adam Hagara (Slovenia)'s short program to Another Love by Tom Odell. I worry that in the next few years this song will become the next Coldplay of the figure skating world (overdone as heck), but for now, it's still great to watch people skate to it.

Pairs Short Program - Maria Pavlova/Alexei Sviatchenko (Hungary) skating to Another One Bites The Dust by Queen. Pairs, like Men's, is a discipline I don't really watch, but I can at least appreciate how difficult it is. I really like this program, and think that Maria and Alexei did a great job at the GPF after being called up as alternates.

Pairs Free Program - Violetta Sierova/Ivan Khobta (Ukraine) skating to Bird Set Free by Sia. I first saw these two last season at Junior Worlds, where they got bronze, and have been moderately invested in their careers ever since. This is such a lovely program, and I really like their artistic elements.

BONUS: Anastasia Vaipan-Law/Luke Digby (Great Britain) skating to Survivor (cover by 2WEi). I feel morally obliged as a Dundee resident to support these two, and this program, biases aside, was really good. Great job, guys!

Ice Dance Rhythm Dance - Lilah Fear/Lewis Gibson (Great Britain) skating to Sweet Dreams by Eurythmics. One of my favourite programs of the season, regardless of discipline, and my 3rd- favourite Fear/Gibson program (they have a lot of good ones). This is also one of my favourite songs, and to see my favourite skaters do it justice on a high-level international level is just wonderful.

Ice Dance Free Dance - Mariia Pinchuk/Mykyta Pogorielov (Ukraine) skating to Vogue and Frozen by Madonna. I love free dances that don't take themselves too seriously, and this is a great example. The use of modern dance elements and complicated lift entries make this an easily- rewatchable and exciting program.

BONUS: Madison Chock/Evan Bates (USA) skating to a mix of Queen songs. These two never put anything less than 100% into their routines, and I also really appreciate Madison's unique costume designs.

Hopefully, everyone will still be in good condition for the competitions in the new year, and we'll get to see some improvements and finessing to some already brilliant programs!

# Welcome to the Debate, Pal!

Maisey Lafollette

In many families, including mine, every year there is an ongoing lighthearted debate about our favourite Christmas movies, ranging from Miracle on 34th Street, Elf, A Christmas Carol, The Grinch and Die Hard!

Die Hard is a famous movie from 1988. The main character, a police officer named John McClane (Bruce Willis) is visiting his family in California on Christmas Eve. He goes to his wife's workplace (Nakatomi Plaza) which is having a Christmas party. Hans Gruber (Alan Rickman) and his gang attack the building wanting \$640 million. He takes over the building and John uses guerrilla tactics against them trying to save the building and the hostages. The local police and FBI interfere from the outside but at the end of the day John is the hero saving the employees and defeating Hans Gruber. This probably doesn't sound like a Christmas movie, but many people argue that it is. So who's right?

Is Die Hard a Christmas movie?

The naysayers main arguments against the film being a Christmas movie is it's too violent and inappropriate to be a Christmas movie. According to Disney + the movie is for people 16 and older. Most Christmas movies are aimed for everyone to watch, mostly children. It has several inappropriate references for young people. They are right about the movie being violent with several gun fights. There is a lot of blood from the hero and villains with many deaths and injuries. The most famous line in the movie is swearing.

To advertise Die Hard for Disney +, Alfie Boe made a parody song giving several reasons for Die Hard being a Christmas movie. It takes place on Christmas Eve at a Christmas party, John McClane's wife is named Holly which is often associated with the holiday. At the beginning of the movie, sleigh bells are ringing and John wished Merry Christmas when he lands at the airport. There are twelve criminals that attack Nakatomi Plaza which could be referencing the song 'Twelve Days of Christmas.' The word Christmas is said 18 times, there is also a Santa hat and the words Ho-Ho-Ho on the first bad guy to be killed. At the end the movie plays the famous Christmas song 'Let it Snow.'

Is Die Hard a Christmas movie?

In my mind, Die Hard is a Christmas movie, I look forward to watching it every year. Whether you enjoy watching reindeer, elves, Scrooges or Christmas miracles, enjoy some screen time and join in the debate— is Die Hard a Christmas movie

# ‘SUB ROSA’

Aoife Stewart

Repeated symbolism within written works can be one of the most interesting things to look out for, drawing comparisons between texts thematically which otherwise might go amiss. ‘Sub Rosa’, Latin for ‘under the rose’ is a literary motif implying malicious secrecy under the disguise of beauty. Its origin is grounded in mythology – coming originally from the ancient Egyptian god Horus, representation of childhood silence, which was then misinterpreted in Ancient Greek mythology, allowing the creation of Harpocrates, the god of secrecy and silence. The connection with flowers – roses in particular – was introduced through the myth of Harpocrates. Harpocrates is bribed by Eros with a rose to keep the secrets of Aphrodite.

This idea, too, shows itself within literature. If you have studied Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, perhaps you remember Lady Macbeth’s warning to “look like the innocent flower, / But be the serpent under’t”. The image is used to warn Macbeth to hide his malice and ambition beneath a welcoming demeanour in order that he might murder King Duncan. The same image appears in the myth of Hades and Persephone, where Persephone is captured from beneath the earth by Hades, while admiring flowers. And in the William Blake’s *Songs of Innocence: Holy Thursday*, where the evils of institutionalised religion are hidden by the children as “flowers of London town”.

This romantic and more whimsical understanding has morphed this idea, too, into a symbol in political and religious contexts. In Roman times, when roses were hung from the ceiling, those ‘under the rose’ were sworn to secrecy. This idea stuck, seeing banquet-halls in the Middle Ages decorated with rose-incorporated architecture causing those beneath to be bound to an oath of silence. Rose imagery was then used to decorate knights’ shields, urging them to be both gentle as well as fierce. And in religion, too, this imagery continued; roses becoming a common symbol in Catholicism, with roses carved into confessionals to signify the secrecy and privacy of conversation.

Even to this day, the idea of ‘Sub Rosa’ is still very relevant. As well as having been integrated into common language, legally, ‘Sub Rosa’ cases refer to the use of secretive surveillance methods in attempt to confirm legal accusations - proving useful particularly in workers' compensation claims.

This phrase's classical origin has been taken hold throughout history, and has shown how particular meaningful motifs are favourites within politics, religion, and literature.



# Doctor Who Returns! (SPOILERS)

Charlie Grewer

The doctor who 60th Anniversary specials ended on Saturday with ‘The Giggle’. It was the third in a spectacular lineup of episodes starring David Tennant and Catherine Tate which started with ‘The Star Beast’ on the 25th of November, two days after the show's actual 60th anniversary. The episode was based on the 1980 comic published in Doctor Who magazine and centred on the cute alien Meep (who turns out to be a villain). Miriam Margolyes is wonderful as the voice of the Meep, doing both cute and terrifying wonderfully. Meep crashes to earth and meets the family of ex-companion Donna Noble, who has met the doctor again after 15 years. They are pursued by the Wrarth warriors until the doctor works out that the meep is evil. He plans to destroy London in order to launch his spaceship. The episode also reintroduces the paramilitary organisation UNIT, which has been helping the Doctor battle aliens since 1969.

The second special was named ‘Wild Blue Yonder’ and saw the doctor and Donna stranded on a spaceship at the edge of the universe. Oh, and two creatures are on board who have taken their shape. And there’s a creepy little robot walking slowly down a very long corridor. Tennant and Tate are spectacular in their double roles and make up nearly half the cast. The special has some terrifying moments but also some... interesting CGI. This sort of episode with doctor and companion stranded somewhere works well in the middle of a season but as an anniversary special it lacks the punch you’d expect. And due to the secrecy of the episode (almost no footage or photos were released in the early trailers) many were expecting an older doctor or previous companion to turn up. Of course, in the end, Bernard Cribbins reprises the role of Wilf for sadly the last time in a heartbreakingly beautiful scene, but somewhere expecting Matt Smith to turn up. Ah well, you can’t please everyone.

Which brings us straight into special number 3: ‘The Giggle’ sees the return of the 1965 villain the (Celestial) Toymaker. They even slip in some colourised clips of the surviving fourth episode of his debut serial. Actor Neil Patrick Harris takes on the part of the nefarious puppet master and he excels in the role, be it dancing along to ‘spice up your life’, putting on a puppet show for the doctor or casually saying how, when asked what happened to the crew of the big laser he’s taken over, he thinks their still falling. This episode is not for kids. The toymaker turns people into marionettes and brightly coloured balls, in addition to what may be the creepiest killer puppets ever. In the episode the toymaker has implanted a signal in the first television broadcast and now everyone has access to the internet (in the episode) it activates and the human race goes mad. Of course, it was all leading up to the 14th doctor’s regeneration but no one expected this. After being zapped by the toymaker’s laser, the doctor regenerates. But this time he doesn’t die. Instead, another doctor comes out of him. (I’m not explaining it fully here, watch the episode). The new doctor is played by Scottish actor Ncuti Gatwa and pleasingly, instead of him just turning up at the end, he’s there for most of the third act. No regenerative crisis, no memory loss, just 25 minutes of the 14th and 15th doctor acting superbly. The toymaker is defeated after losing a game of catch (credit to the director who managed to make it exciting) and the 14th doctor decides to take it easy for a bit and settles down with Donna’s family. The 15th doctor, on the other hand, goes off in the Tardis to a whole new universe of adventures.

These three specials are largely a breath of fresh air for the show after a mixed few years under previous show-runner Chris Chibnall. While Jodie Whittaker was superb as the 13th doctor, poor dialogue, poorly developed characters and convoluted plots greatly hampered the era and the show’s popularity dropped significantly. These episodes however seem to have rekindled Doctor Who’s greatness of old. ‘The Star Beast’ became the largest TV launch of 2023 and viewing figures have only slightly dipped across the three episodes.

We’ve already got a trailer for the upcoming Christmas special, ‘The Church on Ruby Road’ and a musical number from the special entitled simply ‘The Goblin Song’ which focuses a lot on the goblins talking about eating babies. Charming. Joining the 15th doctor will be his new companion Ruby Sunday and the released shots of the doctor dancing in a kilt look wonderful I can safely say that doctor who is back. Here’s to the next anniversary in 2033

# Edinburgh Christmas Market

Roena Seenarine

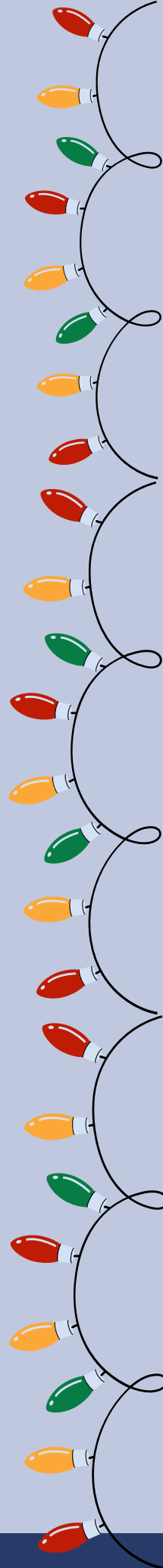
The Annual Christmas Market that takes place in Scotland capital has so much to offer including fun rides, interesting stalls and delicious food. This year it opened on the 17th of November which is when a lot of Scots will argue marks the beginning of Christmas, it will remain open until the 6th of January next year and I'm sure a large portion of our HSD community have taken the time out of their weekends over the past few weeks to take the train down to Edinburgh to check out the festive fun for themselves.

The tradition first officially began in 1999 when a German market was opened which sold sausages, waffles, pretzels and crafts. Since then, it has expanded immensely now containing funfair rides and live music which are part of what has lead it to now be considered one of Britains biggest Christmas markets. However let's delve deeper into the true origins of this event, Germany's infamous Christmas markets are estimated to trace as far back as the 15th and 16th centuries. So clearly the Germanic people were just a tad more ahead of the game than we were. Now as you would expect, Dresdner Striezelmarkt, the earliest known German Christmas market looked very different to what you see in Edinburgh. I mean, it was 1434 for goodness' sake. In fact, compared to all the sweet Christmas treats that we are spoiled with now the humble sale of pottery, meat and baked goods might not even sound festive to us at all.

So, what more does Edinburghs Christmas market have to offer. Well, amidst the beautiful scenery containing the outline of the castle and stunning architecture I'm sure you'll notice the Big Wheel which stands at 46 meters tall and has the honourable title of being Scotland's largest ferris wheel. A seat on this wheel offers a unique view of the city but for those who seek a little more thrill, the Market is also home to an even wider selection of rides including a Starflyer and Helter Skelter.

Now maybe this is less interesting to members of the senior school, or maybe not... But someone very special is also lurking about St Andrews's Square, Father Christmas himself. You can visit Santa's Grotto right up until Christmas Eve, where Santa and his elves are so kindly enriching everyone with a magical storytelling experience. This is however an exclusive club, meaning you must be a member of the "nice list" to attend.

There's also now an unbelievable variety of the different types of foods and cuisines you can try while you're there. Some have criticised the prices of the food claiming that it's ridiculous how extortionate some of them are but hey, you pay for the experience right? I was quite surprised to learn that alongside a Bratwurst and a waffle you can enjoy pizza, kebabs and chicken tikka raps, well at least I thought I was surprised but that didn't compare to my shock of discovering what a "Currywurst" is..



# Pantos; An unrivalled Christmas Tradition

Eilidh Acford

As someone who works in a theatre, I have sat through a lot of pantos, some for even four or five nights in a row. It is a time both loved and hated by theatre workers across the country. Here are a few facts about the key Christmas tradition.

The first concept of pantomimes dates back to the 16th century. It takes inspiration from the old theatre of Commedia dell'Arte. In the 16th century, actors would play comedic stick characters fitted with masks.

Moving into the 1800s, pantos upgraded with more fleshed out characters. The 1800s also saw the arrival of special effects and elaborate scenery. Up till 1843, theatre licensing required all plays to be unspoken. The lifting of the license allowed for detailed scripts and witty puns. Something theatre had desperately been lacking.

It used to be customary for pantomimes to open on Boxing Day, this has since changed and it is now customary to debut the pantomime on the first weekend in December. Pantomimes are often based on fairytales and feature the classic hero, villain, loyal companion and a trusty animal sidekick.

Pantomime dames have been a tradition longer than you may think. Debuting in 1806, the first concept of a dame hit the London stage. Panto dames are traditionally very humorous characters who wear over exaggerated makeup and vivid costumes, often incorporating random objects. They are also known for their somewhat dirty humour just to keep the adults entertained. Today's pantomimes often incorporate current popular music, but a truly enjoyable one will throw in a few classics. A few of my favourite additions have been 'Ain't no mountain high enough', 'Running up that hill' and 'Night Fever'.

I don't believe you can ever be too old for a pantomime, it's family friendly and there's something for everyone. If you're inspired to indulge this festive season here's a list of some of Scotland's best:

'The pantomime adventures of Peter Pan' Festival Theatre-- Edinburgh

'Beauty and the Beast' The Tivoli Theatre- Aberdeen

'Aladdin' – Perth theatre – Perth

Merry Christmas and happy Panto season!!!

# PUZZLE OF THE WEEK

Neil Bhat

Last week there were no entries, so the solution will not be published! If that leaves any of you in suspense, please remember to email @BhatN your solutions.

Fernando the cat has caught a mouse and brought it inside the house. However, it gets away, and hides under one of  $n$  boxes which are in a row. Fernando can check a box at a time. If the mouse is under that box, then he has caught it. However, if it is not, the mouse moves one box to the right or left. Fernando's dinner time is approaching. What is the smallest  $n$  for which Fernando cannot be sure he will make dinner time?

Adapted from a classic problem.....



## EDITORS' NOTE

Well done to the form fours who have recently completed prelims and the form sixs who are just finishing their UCAS! While Christmas is fast approaching (and Hanukkah is already here), it is important to pay attention in these last few weeks of school. Well done to all of the contributors this week, without your articles this edition would not have been possible. For anyone who wants to contribute, please email! Next week is a Christmas themed edition!

Editor Ruby

*Have a fab weekend!*

THE COLUMNS TEAM