

Hunt for treasure at library

TREASURE hunts and book doctors are among the activities available in Cumbria's libraries as part of National Libraries Day today.

The national celebration of libraries will see a number of Cumbria County Council's libraries highlight services to the public.

Across many of the libraries staff will be dressing up as book doctors and giving free 'consultations' to the public, recommending books they might like to read. There will also be book cafés in selected libraries where the book doctor will be consulting.

Activities in the county's libraries include:

■ Carlisle - all day - a showcase of services with a treasure hunt competition, and book doctor sessions for adults and children;

■ Distington on February 14 from 2pm to 4pm - a community event to 'share the love of libraries' with Distington club for young people.

■ Moorclose, Workington from 10am to 11.30am - coffee morning with the Friends of Moorclose Library group;

■ Penrith from 10am to 4pm - a book café with a book doctor on hand to consult, and offer help on other library information. Free refreshments.

■ Workington, between February 9 and 28 - blind date with a book - check out a specially wrapped book from the display, take it home, unwrap it and enjoy. Fill in Rate a Date slip by March 15 to be entered into a prize draw for a pair of cinema tickets donated by Plaza in Workington.

■ Workington, February 10 from 1.30pm to 3pm - Children's Valentine's Day Activities drop in.

■ Workington, February 12 - 4.30pm to 5.30pm - teenage picture and music quiz, free entry, with prizes to be won.

■ Workington, February 15 - 3pm to 4pm - half term family quiz, free entry, with prizes to be won.

A592 closed for works

THE A592 at Gowbarrow, east of Aira Force, will be closed for four nights from tonight for essential works.

From 9pm to 6.30am between tonight and February 13, essential works will take place to renew a culvert under the road surface and repair the roadside embankment.

Outside of these times the road will be open under traffic light control.

A diversion will be in place to take motorists along the A592 to Rheged, the A66 to Troutbeck and the A5091 to Aira Force junction with the A592, and vice versa.

Gung Hey Fat Choi! (that's happy new year)

Cumbria's Chinese community will be celebrating their new year tomorrow. Reporter Pam McClounie finds out about the tradition and the start of the Year of the Snake

Gung Hey Fat Choi or Xin Nian Kuai Le! That's Happy New Year in Cantonese and Mandarin. Cumbria's Chinese community will celebrate new year tomorrow with many joining friends and family for a meal and others heading to Newcastle to join in the celebrations there.

The Chinese zodiac follows a 12-year cycle, each of the years being named after an animal. The Chinese believe that people born in a particular year take on the characteristics of the animal associated with that year.

Chinese people generally wear something bright to celebrate new year, like red or orange clothing. This brings good luck.

Families usually gather around a round table and share food.

They fill dumplings with chicken, pork and other meats. A steamed fish is usually on the table as part of the celebrations and children are given red pouches filled with money.

This week, children at schools in Cumbria, including Brook Street and Bowness-on-Solway Schools have been learning about the tradition.

Piu Lee, a freelance artist and arts educator from Carlisle, helped children at Bowness-on-Solway School make dragons and shadow puppets in a day of craft and art activities yesterday.

Piu, who was born in the Year of the Tiger, said: "I tend to keep Chinese new year celebrations quite low key. I usually get in touch with family and friends at new year and wish them well. I still have family in Hong Kong but I don't get to see them often these days."

"Chinese New Year is a big national holiday in China. We give each other lucky red packets which are nicely decorated and usually contain sweets or money. Elders give them to their juniors so I usually get one from my grandparents and my parents."

"The new year meal is a chance for everyone to get together. It



Strings attached: Artist Pui Lee visited Bowness-on-Solway School to work with pupils and celebrate Chinese New Year. Tom Blackledge and Finley Wind-Leonard with puppets they made

includes a new year cake - which I don't usually eat - and also fish, oranges and dumplings."

Chris Redhead runs the Great Wall Gifts and food shop on Market Street in Carlisle.

He said: "Dumplings are big for new year and we make a variety

here including beef, pork, lamb, duck, shrimp, vegetable and chicken. They are mixed with Chinese spices and at new year thousands of them get eaten. Our food is traditional Mandarin Chinese.

"New year in China is a bit

different to here as it's not a big night out. It's a meal and a big get together.

"The celebrations usually last for about two weeks with a festival and fireworks. Laws on fireworks are quite strict but they are allowed to let them off at new year."

Mr Redhead said his shop had been busy with schools and Scout and Brownie groups buying fortune cookies and lanterns.

He said: "We also sell the little red packets that Chinese people give as gifts."

The closest celebrations to Carlisle take place in Newcastle tomorrow.

There will be traditional dragon, lion and unicorn dances at the Chinese Arch on Stowell Street from approximately 12.30pm.

The North East Chinese Association will have an exhibition of Chinese costume, food, arts and crafts from 11am to 4pm on Stowell Street.

There will also be a Chinese market and fairground on Bath Lane and Thornton Square from 11am to 5pm.

At 12pm there will be the chance to see the auspicious Eye Dotting Ceremony of the new Chinese Dragon on the Bath Lane stage as he is awoken from his slumber to the sound of firecrackers.

Between 12.30pm and 4.30pm there will be a spectacle of performances and demonstrations with the lion dance arriving to distribute Lucky Money at about 4pm.

The Chinese Centre on Westgate Road will also have zodiac readings, calligraphy, foods, card and calendar making, fortune telling, lucky draw and games.

There are also activities in the children's marquee on Thornton Square from 11am to 5pm and events in Dance City on Temple Street.

For more information www.newcastlegateshead.com/chinese-new-year/events



Firey fun: Bowness year one pupils, from left, Henry Armstrong, Matthew Crozier, Freya Stokes, Warren Harrington and Charlotte Bell with their Chinese dragon

LOUISE PORTER



Expert eye: Pui Lee watches Dean Aziz, Jack Morton and Alex Cox making a dragon



Cut-out: Anna Paisley and Jack Morton with their puppets

The year of the snake



In the Chinese zodiac, the Snake is listed after the Dragon, but its place and its significance as a symbol of worship is far less than that of the Dragon.

It carries the meanings of malevolence, cattiness and mystery, as well as acumen, divination and the ability to distinguish herbs. In some places, people believe that a snake found in their court can bring delight.

During Spring Festival, people like to paste onto their doors and windows the paper-cut 'Fu' character (happiness), combined with a snake

twisting around a rabbit onto their doors and windows as a popular pattern indicating wealth.

Strengths They often have a good temper and a skill at communicating but say little. They possess gracious morality and great wisdom. They are usually financially secure and do not have to worry about money.

They have tremendous sympathy for others and would like to take actions to help their fellow human beings.

They are determined to accomplish their goals hate to fail. Although they



look calm on the surface, they are intense and passionate. They have a rich source of inspiration and understand themselves well. They are people of

great perception. Women under the sign of the snake do well in housework but are irritable.

Weaknesses They are likely to be jealous and suspicious. They should be cautious about what they discuss with others, as it might cause them to lose friendship and opportunities.

They tend to overdo things. They prefer to rely on themselves and have doubts about other people's judgment. They are courteous with polite manners, but they can be headstrong. They are fickle and

usually have problems in relationships or marriage problems.

1. Ideal compatibility with: Ox and Rooster.
2. More or less compatible with: Rat, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep.
3. Absolutely incompatible with: Tiger and Pig.
4. Lucky colours for the Snake: Yellow, Red
5. Lucky directions for the Snake: Southwest, Northeast
6. Lucky numbers for the Snake: 2, 4, 7, and 9.
7. Monday is the lucky day of the week for Snakes.

NEWS BRIEFING

£125 court bill

PENRITH: Fraser John Soutar, of Barraclough Fold, Glenridding, has admitted permitting a vehicle to be parked in a car park without a valid ticket.

Magistrates in Carlisle fined him £60, ordered him to pay a £15 victim surcharge and £50 costs.

Charity ride

COCKERMOUTH: Cyclists who raised more than £100 for Cumbria Community Foundation will help launch this year's Jennings Rivers Ride at Cockermonth School tomorrow.

More than 80 people across the county have received a coveted Yellow Jersey to mark their fundraising achievement and a group of them will ride out to celebrate this weekend.

This date for this year's Jennings Rivers Ride is Sunday, September 15.

Library closure

WIGTON: The library will be closed from Monday until February 25 while a new office for a registrar is built.

The registration service will start later this spring.

ON THIS DAY

1855 The "Devil's Footprints" appeared in snowbound South Devon - 100 miles of cloven hoofprints, eight inches apart in a single line and measuring four inches by two

Pancake lunch

MONKHILL: A pick-up-a-pancake lunch takes place in the school room today from 12pm to 2pm in the school room at Monkhill Methodist Church.

There will be savoury and sweet pancakes and a vegetarian option. The pancakes are £2.50 and all proceeds go to church funds.

Fire in chimney

ASPATRIA: Firefighters dealt with a chimney fire at a detached house in Oughterside, on Wednesday night.

They prevented any damage to the property.

Coffee morning

CARLISLE: A coffee morning takes place at the Wignton Road Methodist Church today from 10am to 12pm. Proceeds will go to the Circuit Charity Project Mission Partners in Togo.

Film screening

BRAMPTON: The film club will be showing *Shadow Dancer* (15) tonight in the community centre. For start times and prices visit www.bramptonfilmclub.org

newsandstar.co.uk

COMMENT ON THIS STORY: Email letters@cumbrian-newspapers.co.uk

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