

# Newsletter

WINTER 2009 - SPRING 2010

PinksbyPost



The Website has been a great success and there is no doubting the number of new customers who have found us that might otherwise not have used us. Also there are a number of our existing customers who find using the web a convenient method of placing orders. You still like to phone up from time to time and we really like that. There is no substitute for personal contact.

P.O. Box 440  
Newton Abbot  
Devon TQ12 9DU  
**01803 872361**

If you have been a customer for twenty years and go to the web site you must register as if you are new. At the back end here in the office we will know who you are and tie the order up with your old records.

This year the summer has been a little kinder to us and we didn't suffer from 'thrips' as we did last year; the little monkeys make a mess of the flower heads and cause untold damage to the flower when it opens, we never know about it until the flowers are delivered which is not good.

We have added some new lines to the online ordering process in the form of small gifts that might help you out at Christmas time. We have very attractive Pen Sets for ladies and gentlemen, ladies Handbag Mirrors and Pill Boxes for those like me who have to remember to take medication on a daily basis! We also have a wonderfully elegant single stem flower vase, made by the glass blowers at nearby Teign Valley Glass. It looks really stunning with a single rose or one or two of our Freesias, a lovely gift. We also mourn the loss of our near neighbours who made the Devonly Mint Belgium chocolate. They hadn't enough volume to continue through these difficult times, so we thought that we should try another small business in the South Hams who have been going for several years. Their Chilli Chocolate, I must say, is quite different and not every one's cup of tea (but it does grow on you). Worth a try, if you know someone's tastes well! We still have the delicious truffles from Browne's of Okehampton which can be included with flowers.



We move on to Christmas Deliveries and one of the main reasons for the letter. We would urge you to get your orders in early as we are likely to run out of flowers as we draw near to the last posting date what with the pressure of difficult winters etc.

With best wishes,

*Malcolm and Delia*

## LAST POSTING DATES FOR CHRISTMAS

**Sunday the 20th of December** for Christmas

We are closed until the Monday the 4th of January (we are away on Holiday during that period so the office will be shut)

## NEW YEAR DATES TO REMEMBER

**Last posting for Mothering Sunday** (14th of March) is 11th of March

**Last Posting day for Good Friday** (2nd of April) & **Easter Sunday** (4th of April) is **Wednesday the 31st of March**

**Last Posting for Fathers Day** (20th June) is **17th of June**

Please book early to avoid disappointment during the Christmas period we may have to shuffle the deliveries around if the post is fickle! **Remember you can book orders as far forward as you like, it avoids forgetting those special dates!**

[www.pinksbypost.co.uk](http://www.pinksbypost.co.uk)

# Agnes "Aggie" Weston

## AGNES WESTON AND THE ROYAL SAILORS' RESTS

Agnes Elizabeth Weston was born on 28th March 1840, the daughter of a barrister. In 1845, her father retired and the family moved from London to Bath. She was educated at private schools, including preparation for confirmation from a priest, the Reverend James Fleming curate of St Stephens Church Bath, whose leaning was towards Christian evangelism and his teaching left a strong influence on the young Agnes. Initially called Aggie she enjoyed writing and loved to ride and swim and mirrored her father's love of astronomy and geology.

After leaving school, she began philanthropic work that suited a young lady of her station and also began to speak at temperance meetings. She learnt to write tracts for the promotion of the temperance movement. She and her sister converted an old shop into a coffee bar, largely at their own expense, for the troops to enjoy quiet company, home made food and drinks, a writing room and games room. It was not free, because Agnes was convinced that to value it, the men had to pay. The bar also held Christian meetings, giving her a chance to share her faith with the soldiers of the 2nd Somerset Militia brigade.

The venture was highly successful, but had its critics. She was accused of giving the men ideas above their station and her parents were criticised for allowing their unmarried daughters to mix with soldiers. Officers perhaps, but not soldiers.

When they were posted away, she kept in touch with some of the soldiers by writing to them. In 1868, one of her letters was shown to a troopship steward who remarked that it would be nice to receive such a letter. Agnes was told about the steward and she also began writing to him and others. This started off her career in sailor welfare.

In 1873, sailors who corresponded with Agnes were paid off and she went to visit them at Devonport, Plymouth. She met Sophia Wintz and they became good friends and later fundraising partners. Agnes joined the Royal Naval Temperance Society and was allowed to visit sailors on warships and talk to the crew to promote temperance. Later it was suggested that she open a temperance house near to the dockyard gates. After discussing it with Sophia, they decided to undertake the project. Through meetings all round the country, they were able to raise enough funds to buy a house outside the dockyard at Devonport and open it up as a hostel for sailors. It was opened in May 1876 as the first "Sailors' Rest". It was immediately successful since it offered a place to eat and drink as well as beds for the night if required. Although intended as a temperance house for the promotion of the movement, it was not confined to those of similar views and all sailors were welcome to make use of the facilities. Lectures were arranged as well as religious services and there was the chance to sign the "pledge" to refrain from drinking alcohol.



The success of the Devonport Sailors' Rest led to a similar project being opened in Portsmouth in 1881, to provide baths, lodgings and recreational activities and facilities. Agnes and Sophia felt that these facilities would help to combat alcoholism in the sailors and keep them from causing mischief on the streets. They also opened Rests at Portland and Sheerness, but found the prospect of organising four establishments too much. The Rests were intended to be self funding once they had been set up through public subscription. Soon they were able to house 900 men at Devonport and 700 at Portsmouth. To add to the satisfaction gained from the success of the Rests, several pubs had been closed and demolished due to lack of custom.

Agnes became known as "Mother" Weston as she was constantly concerned and interested in her sailors' welfare, while being forthright on her views on their drinking habits. She was also known by the name "Aggie". The work of Agnes and Sophia was becoming more publicly known and in 1895, Queen Victoria endowed a cabin to be used as a Sailors' Rest in Devonport and allowed the use of Royal Sailors' Rest to be given to the whole institution.

Agnes did not neglect the sailors at sea. Where she had previously written letters to individual sailors away from home, she now printed a monthly letter to sailors for distribution among the ship. This rose to a circulation of 60,000 by 1918. She also published a journal 'Ashore and Afloat' to encourage Christian beliefs, behaviour and temperance amongst sailors.

Agnes was created a Dame of the British Empire in 1918. However, she died shortly after receiving this award on 23 October 1918 at Devonport. She was buried with full naval honours. In 1940, a frigate was named after Weston-Super-Mare and this became known in the fleet as "Aggie-on-Horseback".

Her Sailors' Rests continued to operate up until the turn of the twenty-first century, when a fall in custom has led them to be closed.