

Christmas at Havenstreet with Santa

All of us who have contact with children are very aware of the financial pressure put on families over Christmas. Oh for the days when children were happy with one toy, a walnut and a satsuma in their stocking on Christmas morning! But those days have long gone and television and the media now begin advertising their Christmas merchandise from mid – November, and playground talk is around the vastly expensive electronic toys available to those who can afford them. In addition the family Christmas treat has become the norm and so many families are left in debt or feeling they have let their children down.

It is easy for us to pass judgement and talk about returning to the real spirit of Christmas but for those families already facing financial difficulty, stressful relationships, and sickness this can all be the last straw turning Christmas into a nightmare.

It was wonderful, therefore, this year for the Mothers' Union AFIA scheme to be able to sponsor two families to a special day out with Santa at Havenstreet Steam Railway. Arriving at the station they were treated to a ride on the restored Steam Railway, a visit to see Santa with good age appropriate gift, fruit juice and chocolate bar for the children with mulled wine and mince pies for the accompanying adults. There was a magic show, winter market and merry-go- round all thrown in to add to the fun of a full day out.

Hopefully for these two families there was just that little bit more magic this year.