



THE FORUM

December 2021

Issue 75



We are certainly living through some trying times. A situation that no one could have predicted three years ago.

No doubt for some people this Christmas will not be as they had hoped or planned for but in true British spirit we have to carry on as best we can.

As the numbers are still high please make sure you wear your face mask when out and about especially where there are a lot of people around. Keep your distance and wash your hands regularly.

For most of us these instructions are now second nature.

Remember Christmas can be good even if there is a shortage of some commodities.

There is no rule that says you have to have turkey for Christmas Dinner. After all it is only an over sized chicken.

You don't have to have Christmas pudding. Fruit crumble is just as good.

Brandy butter forget it, custard or ice cream is as good and much easier.

The most important thing about Christmas is to enjoy yourself and count your self very lucky if you are spending it with family or friends. Not everyone has that luxury.

On behalf of all the Trustees, we wish you and yours a very merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy New Year.

Not the answer to loneliness we know, but at 6 pm on Christmas eve stand up with a glass or cup in your hand (whatever is your tippie) raise it up and say Happy Christmas everyone.

If we all do that at the same time we will in a way be sharing each others company for a short time.

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FORUM

NEWS *But*



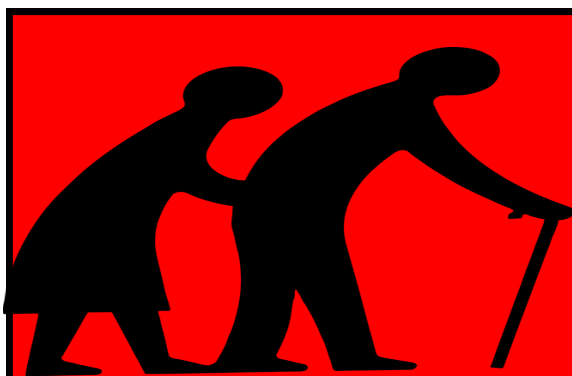
GUESS WHAT

We are gradually coming back. Great news.

Market Drayton held their first meeting at the beginning of October, They got together to discuss the way forward for their Forum. Everyone who attended was very keen to get things up and running.

Wen and Whitchurch cannot hold meetings at the moment because their venue is out of action. However, Betty and Helen attend the weekly market in Wem Town Hall, offering information and details of what is on etc. They have lots of leaflets and would love you to pop by if in the vicinity.

Shrewsbury are hoping to meet up within the first two weeks of November for coffee or lunch , They were going to meet in October but unfortunately half-term and illness got in the way.



*I do not mind getting old
But sadly
My body does not agree with me*

**FOLLOWING THE NEW RULES COMING IN, REMEMBER
MASK, DISTANCE, WASH HANDS REGULARLY**

WINTER



According to the weather reports, media reports and general comments, we are going to have a hard winter. On top of which we have covid and Brexit.

It is therefore important that we prepare ourselves as much as possible.

1. Make sure you have your flu jab and also your booster covid jab when offered.
2. Make sure you have enough medication to cover you over the Christmas and New Year break.
3. Make sure your fuel is topped up whether it be oil, coal or logs.
4. Make sure your mobile phone, if you have one, is always charged up.
5. Make sure you have some tins of soup, beans or similar in stock in case you cannot get out.
6. Make sure you have one hot meal a day and keep warm. Wear several layers this will keep you warmer.
7. Make sure you have a working torch and some candles in case of power cuts.
8. Most importantly make sure you stay safe

WINTER GARDENING

The days may be getting colder and shorter but there are still jobs to do in the garden.

- Insulate your outdoor containers.
- Raise pots off the ground to prevent waterlogging.
- Lift parsnips after the first frosts.
- Check stored potatoes and remove any that are rotting. Use hessian sacks to store potatoes as this will allow the crop to breathe.
- Check stored onions and garlic and remove any rotting bulbs immediately.
- Plant currant bushes and bare root edible hedging plants while they are dormant.
- Plant raspberry canes now.
- Tidy up strawberry plants, cut off any dead leaves and remove runners.
- Prune pear and apple trees between now and February. Do not prune plum trees now as they will be susceptible to silver leaf fungus—wait until mid-summer
- Cut a few stems of holly with berries for Christmas. It is early but do it before the birds eat all the berries. Stand stems in a bucket of water in a sheltered spot where birds cant take them
- Encourage the birds into your garden. Our feathered friends will keep pest numbers down and bring joy on a bleak winters day.
- Start thinking about next year and order your bulbs etc.
- Once all done—enjoy your rest..



(The Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution)

AT THE HEART OF THE FARMING FAMILY

Our locally based teams understand farming's many complex challenges. Our role is to listen and support individuals and families, helping them to identify the root causes of issues and assisting them to find ways to move forwards with increased resilience. The sooner people contact us the sooner we can begin to support them with their journey to find solutions.

If you currently work in farming, are unable to work due to illness, accident or disability or have retired, then we can support you. We also assist family members.

We offer guidance, advice and will introduce you to other providers if you require support and we are unable to assist directly. We provide advice about benefits, wellbeing Support, financial grants and professional training,. If you require financial support we'll complete a quick financial assessment with you, however most people with limited savings or on a low income with usually qualify.

Established by Royal Charter in 1860 our work continues to make a significant difference to thousands of farming families.

Ongoing support from the wider farming community, fundraisers and our corporate partners is fundamental to ensuring that RABI can continue to fund the important services we provide.

Every penny in every pound donated goes out the door in charitable support. This ;means all fundraising activity makes a real, measurable difference. Our vision at RABI is that no member of the farming community will ever have to face adversity alone.

RABI Case Studies 2021

We assisted a retired farm worker who has dementia. He lives with his daughter in law and grandchildren (one of whom is deaf). His son had recently passed away. This had caused disruption to the family's finances and they were in arrears with the rent on the privately rented property with court action being threatened. The situation was causing a great deal of stress and anxiety to the household. We were able to assist with a one off grant for £3,000 which cleared most of the arrears and allowed them to be more financially resilient and much less stressed.

RABI assisted a farmer when her husband died, We were able to provide benefits advice and a grant for the funeral costs. This was particularly helpful as she also had the farm bills owing and a lower income due to Covid restrictions. Our assistance meant she was able to see a way forward while dealing with her grief and she felt she benefitted from having someone outside of her friends and family to talk to.

A retired farmer called our helpline as he was forced to do two cleaning jobs in order to make ends meet and was suffering with poor physical and mental health. We have helped him to claim relevant benefits and shown him how he can manage financially. He is now working his notice for both jobs and we will be helping him to claim Pension Credit, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit . We are together researching other ways for him to occupy himself including the Men's Sheds project.

A gentleman referred to us had recently been made bankrupt and lost his farm and home. He wanted to re-train so he could drive dump trucks etc. so he completed a Training Grant Form and RABI agreed to fund the training. He passed the course and has found work already. Additionally we supported him throughout the re-training process with food vouchers to help with day to day living expenses.

If you are concerned about someone please encourage them to give us a telephone call. However, you can contact us on their behalf.

Helpline 0808 281 9490

Email: help@rabi.org.uk

General enquiries 01865 724931

Email: info@rabi.org.uk

Visit: www.rabi.org.uk



I left my heart in San Francisco
I left my knee in Timbuktu
I left my little wooden leg
Hanging on a little wooden peg in
The cloakroom at Dublin Zoo.

I left my teeth on Table Mountain
High on a hill they smile at me
When I come home to San Francisco
There won't be very much of me.

As sung by
Spike Milligan



**It is far better to keep your mouth
Closed and let people think you are
A fool, than to open it and
Remove all doubt.**

Mark Twain

Between
The earth and sky above'
Nothing compares to a grandparents love.

WE'LL EAT AGAIN ***(WAR TIME Christmas)***

CHRISTMAS PUDDING WITHOUT EGGS

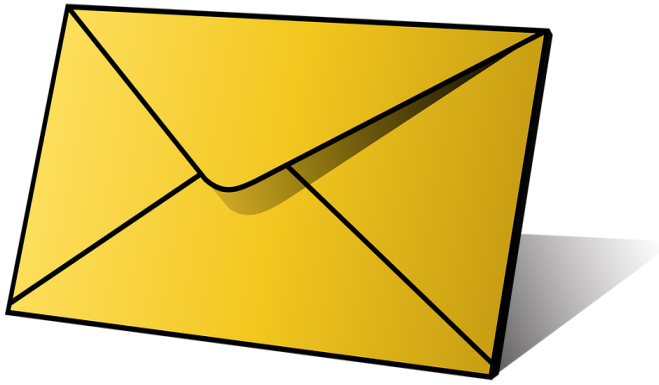
Mix together 1 cup of flour
1 cup of breadcrumbs
1 cup of sugar
Half cup of suet
1 cup of mixed dried fruit
1 teaspoon of mixed sweet spice
Add 1 cup of grated potato
1 cup of grated raw carrot
1 level teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda
dissolved in a tablespoon of hot milk
Mix all together and turn into a well
greased pud-
ding basin.
Boil or steam
for four hours



APPLE MINCEMEAT

Make mincemeat go further by lending it
with grated or finely diced raw apples
If you have not been able to obtain
mincemeat then flavour grated apple with
plenty of spices and add a little mixed
dried fruit or chopped cooked prunes or
chopped raw dates.
You then have a pleasant filling for the
traditional Christmas tarts.





MAIL

Are you aware that if you live in a house of multi occupancy you cannot use the Royal Mail service of redirecting you mail.? Multi occupancy includes care homes, residential homes and student lets to name but a few.

We have been made aware of this by one of our members. He is moving from one residential home to another. He duly completed the change of address form and sent it off with the relevant cheque. The cheque was returned to him telling him this service did not apply to multi occupancy houses.

However if you do live in a multi occupancy residence they will allow you the service if your Power of Attorney is activated or if you Die.

We are writing to Royal Mail to verify this and to, of course, protest about it. If correct this is discrimination

We will keep you updated.



LUCKY NUMBERS

Winners of the October draw were:

Mrs. M. McGeever
And
Mr. D. Bateman

Winners of the December draw were:

Mr. & Mrs. Woodger
And
Mrs. E. Hector



Oh Christmas tree,
Oh Christmas tree,
You are so
History.

LOOKING FORWARD TO **SPRING**

I like a splash of colour in my garden in early spring so I pot up a couple of big pots with bulbs. This year I got a bit late to the garden centre and the choice was limited. I bought some small flowered daffodils in bright yellow and another pack of tulips in a range of colours, white, pink and deep purple. Some of the tulip bulbs were a bit manky but I put them into the pot regardless. By late April all bulbs were showing. The daffodils came out first, small flowers on tall stems, all bright yellow. They were gorgeous. Then a few days later there was a white one in the pot! A foreigner! Then a number more of white ones among the yellow. I rushed to look at the packaging but there was nothing there about white. Then it was the turn of the tulips. First out were three lovely white ones, double petalled. Then some mauvy ones came out. I wasn't sure whether these were the purple ones in disguise or the pink! I waited and lastly the final bulbs revealed themselves as pink with a green stripe up the petals. Sadly, it was very stormy overnight and two of the pink ones were broken in the wind. I brought them inside and now we are enjoying their prettiness on the dining table as we eat our means

Spring bulbs are always a surprise. You never quite know what you are getting. I once bought my bulbs from Amsterdam and regardless of what the packaging stated they

All came up either yellow or red. Now I buy them in England and they mostly come up true to packaging. However,, they flower they always provide a welcome splash of colour in the early part of the year usually after a cold winter. Well worth making the effort.

Jan Etchells



Experience
Is the hardest kind of teacher.
It gives you the test first
And the lesson
Afterwards.

Oscar Wilde

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

That may be useful

NHS Helpline	111
Shropshire Council	0345 678 9000
Samaritans	116 123

Keep your own Doctors telephone number by the phone.

Also the number of the person (friend or family) you call in an emergency.

FROM THE ANTIPODES

*(This article has been kindly sent to us by the sister of
One of our Members)*

As another year moves on, I reflect on just how different our lives were a few years ago, prior COVID.

We certainly took for granted that we could take a flight any day of the week, and within 24 hours be on the other side of the planet. Times are very different now.

Although we are one country, Australia, we are in reality a federation of States run by different Premiers and Parliaments, who all make their own rules, overseen by a Federal Government who control the finances and the border. Politicians have decisively closed our borders and strictly control entry to Australia. There are some exemptions, but they are required to spend 14 days in hotel quarantine at their own expense.

There is no international tourism. We are not free to travel from state to state and in some states not to travel more than 10km from home. Each state has its own border controls and where I live, in South Australia, the state borders are closed except for returning citizens, who have to quarantine 14 days in their own home and undergo covid testing.

We have Zero Covid in this state so far. We have had just four deaths and just 916 cases since this pandemic began in a population of just under two million. There has been little disruption to daily life. We have to check in each time we go into a building or shop and we have to wear masks in all public places. We can travel within our own state but not over the borders. We have not been prevented from contact with friends or family nor with using medical facilities. There are restrictions on indoor gathering and a limit on people allowed attending celebrations or funerals but not cricket or football matches!

Vaccines have been available since the beginning of the year but uptake is hesitant in many groups. The South Australian government hope to attain a double vaccination rate of 80% within the month so they can open the state borders by Christmas and we can see our interstate families under strict testing regimes, of course.

It is beyond understanding the complacent way in which we have surrendered our personal freedoms and obey the rules for the greater good.

We look forward to the best time of the year, the Christmas season. In Adelaide this opens with the Pageant, a long procession of clowns, fairyland and nursery rhyme characters through city streets, to the delight of parents and children alike. This is the signal that you can decorate the Christmas tree at home. Nearer Christmas we take our rugs to enjoy the traditional Carols by Candlelight, held in municipal parks and open areas under warm and balmy night skies. There are decorations in the shops and the city streets, culminating in frantic shopping and insane parking in preparation for the big day.

Christmas Day in Adelaide is usually outdoors, whether in the house garden or at the beach. Because this is the summer tradition. The emphasis of Christmas day here is on family reunion and most people aim to gather for lunch or dinner. Bearing in mind the heat, the traditional English dinner is replaced by seafood, lobster and crayfish in many homes. Some families still have the traditional ham and turkey, with European style foods but served with salads rather than vegetables. Not a Brussel Sprout in sight!

We choose both, always meats and roast potatoes but with bowls of salads. I like to serve traditional Christmas pudding but the younger members of the family prefer the Chocolate pudding with fresh strawberries or cherries version. After our meal; the children spend time in and out of the pool, whilst their families relax. The important thing is that we share the day together in harmony.

Then it is over for another year. We don't have Boxing Day celebrations but quite often an extended work holiday into the New Year where the time is spent at the beach or around the pool catching up with friends and relatives..

To finish I thought I would share our traditional Aussie Boiled Christmas Cake recipe, different but easy to make and cook and tastes delicious. (see next page).

May this Christmas season sparkle and shine, wishing you joy and love and peace and hoping you feel this happiness all year around– Merry Christmas.

NB. Susanne Clift sent us this article in late September and all the information about Covid was correct at that time. As we know the situation changes weekly if not daily here and also in

Australia.



AUSSIE BOILED CHRISTMAS CAKE

1 can of crushed pineapple (or pieces chopped)
125 g butter
1 cup of soft brown sugar
1 tbspn sherry
500 g mixed fruit (plus 1 pack of red glace cherries at Christmas)
1 tspn bi-carb soda
1 tspn mixed spice
2 eggs
1 cup plain flour
1 cup self raising flour

METHOD

Preheat oven to 160c Grease and line a 20 cm square or round cake tin with 2 layers of brown paper and then grease and line with baking paper.

Put the unsweetened pineapple (including liquid) butter, brown sugar and mixed fruit into a saucepan. Bring to a gentle boil and simmer for 12-15 minutes.

Remove from the stove and add bi carb and stir in thoroughly (It will go frothy)

Leave the mixture to cool (about 1 hour)

Add the lightly beaten eggs and mix in.

Sift the flours and mixed spice and add to the mixture and stir until combined.

Place mixture in the lined tin and smooth to side. Bake at 160c

Cooking time will vary between 1 hour 30 minutes to 1 hour 45 minutes. The top should be flat, not domed. Test with a skewer. It is cooked when the skewer comes out clean.

Cool in the tin and eat within a week but our doesn't usually last that long!

It is nice to be
Important
But it is more important
To be nice.

MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE.

SHROPSHIRE THEATRE ORGAN TRUST

The Buttermarket, Howard Street, Shrewsbury, SY1 2LF



2022 CONCERTS



Sunday afternoon live theatre organ entertainment

Concerts from 2.30pm – 5pm, Doors Open at 1.30pm

16 January	Phil Kelsall MBE
20 February	Declan Poole
20 March	Alec Walters & Cameron Lloyd
17 April	David Ivory & Bernard Tilley
15 May	Phil Kelsall MBE
19 June	Chris Powell
17 July	Mark Laflin
21 August	Stephen Austin
18 September	Kevin Grunill
16 October	Nigel Ogden
20 November	Alec Walters
18 December	Organists on Parade (organists TBA)

WURLITZER



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01743 872930

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shropshiretheatreorgantrust.co.uk
facebook.com/ShropshireTOT

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