

KEYHOLE

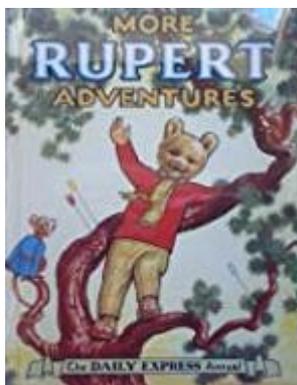
KEEP YOUR HOPES ALIVE

DECEMBER 2021 COME SINGING NEWSLETTER

Dear Come Singing Friends,

It's that time of year again, whether you love it or just manage to get through it without too much fuss, there's no getting away from the fact it's Christmas! This dark, cold month is brightened by the twinkling lights on Christmas trees, and windows and gardens and sometimes whole streets are lit up to cheer us. It certainly is beginning to look a lot like Christmas: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KmddeUJJEuU>

How it has changed from the 1940/50's though! Who remembers being given Rupert Annual books and tins of assorted toffees? Usual presents for ladies would be a box of handkerchiefs, bath cubes or maybe scent, and for gentlemen, Old Spice aftershave and a pair of socks. Some essential treats to eat during the Christmas period were 'eat-me' dates, tangerines, mixed nuts and a tin of shortbread. There's a recipe further on if you have time to make some shortbread biscuits but be warned, they are very morish!



Here's a brilliant quiz all about Home Cooking from Heather:

This being a season of food and feasting, here are a few songs about home cooking to get the digestive juices flowing! Fill in the gaps - answers at the end.

1. Starting with simple comforts: 'A cup of coffee, a and you' was a Gertrude Lawrence and Jack Buchanan hit.
2. A Norfolk delicacy, but it crops up in the Northumbrian folksong, Dance to your daddy.
You shall have a fishy on a little dishy
You shall have a.....when the boat comes in.

3. What pasta topping was lost when somebody sneezed?
4. Where's the best place to find jambalaya, crawfish pie and filé gumbo?

5. When children are ill, the best medicine is...

*Put on the skillet, slip on the lid,
Mama's gonna make a little
That ain't all she's gonna do,
Mama's gonna make a little coffee, too.*

6. It may be bad for our teeth, but we always seem to link love and sugar!

*My boy
You made my heart go giddy-up
You are as sweet as candy.
You are my sugar dandy*

7. Sometimes a little of what you fancy does you good - Peter Sellers certainly thought so.

*Eat your minestrone, Joe! Eat your macaroni, Joe!
No wonder you're so boney, Joe, and skinny as a rake!
Well then, give us a bash at the me muvver used to make!*

8. The Hollies hit 'Do you love me?' mentions food - sort of a dance involving pummelled spuds?

9. Harry Champion had no time for 'clean eating'!

*Don't live like vegetarians, on the stuff they give to
parrots
From morn till night, blow out your kite
On.....*

10. Yes, we have no bananas, but can you name a couple of other things that *are* on the shelf?

Answers on the back page.



Delia Smith's Shortbread Recipe:

Ingredients – 110g (4ozs) softened butter, 50g (2ozs) caster sugar, 175g (6ozs) plain flour.

Directions Pre-heat the oven to 150c (gas mark 2) and lightly grease two baking sheets.

Beat the butter until soft, then beat in the sugar followed by the sifted flour.

Start to bring the mixture together using your hands until it forms a paste

Lightly dust a surface with caster sugar and then roll it out until it's about 3mm (1/8inch) thick. Cut the biscuits to the shape you want, I chose a star cutter, then place them on the baking trays.

Cook for about 20-25 minutes. Cool the biscuits on a wire rack, dust them with caster sugar if desired. Store them in an airtight container to keep them fresh.

I love this poem by John Cotton, it's all about the build up to Christmas from a child's perspective:

A Week to Christmas

Sunday with six whole days to go,
How we'll endure it I don't know!

Monday the goodies are in the making,
Spice smells of pudding and mince pies baking.

Tuesday, Dad's home late and quiet as a mouse
He smuggles packages into the house.

Wednesday's the day for decorating the tree,
Will the lights work again? We'll have to see.

Thursday's for last minute shopping and hurry,
We've never seen Mum in quite such a flurry!

Friday is Christmas Eve when we lie awake
Trying to sleep before the daybreak.

And that special quiet on Christmas Morn
When far away in Bethlehem Christ was born.



O Little Town of Bethlehem: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJggspx57C0>

I had a surprise when I was sorting through the Christmas paraphenalia boxes last week, I discovered a box of unopened crackers. Hopefully we'll get a chance to use them this year but the most important thing is to remain safe so they might have to wait yet another year!

Did you know that Crackers were first made in about 1845-1850 by a London sweet maker called Tom Smith? He had seen the French 'bon bon' sweets (almonds wrapped in pretty paper) on a visit to Paris in 1840. He came back to London and tried selling sweets like that in England and also included a small motto or riddle in with the sweet. But they didn't sell very well.

Then in 1861 Tom Smith launched his new range of what he called 'Bangs of Expectation'! Legend says that one night, while he was sitting in front of his log fire, he became very interested by the sparks and cracks coming from the fire. Suddenly, he thought what a fun idea it would be if his sweets and toys could be opened with a crack when their fancy wrappers were pulled in half.

The expanding cracker business was taken over by Tom's three sons, Tom, Walter and Henry when he died. Walter introduced the hats into crackers, and he also travelled around the world looking for new ideas for gifts to put in the crackers.

The company built up a big range of 'themed' crackers. There were ones for bachelors and spinsters, where the gifts were things like false teeth and wedding rings! There were also crackers for suffragettes, war heroes and even Charlie Chaplin! Crackers were also made for special occasions like Coronations. The British Royal Family still has special crackers made for them today! Very expensive crackers were made such as the 'Millionaire's Crackers' which contained a solid silver box with a piece of gold and silver jewellery inside it!

And now for the jokes (sorry, but they just must be done!) -

Why does Santa have three gardens?

So he can 'ho ho ho'!

Why did Santa go to the doctor?

Because of his bad "elf"!

What kind of motorbike does Santa ride?

A Holly Davidson!

What did one cloud say to the other cloud?

Is it going to reindeer!

Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fJQgOzkcHjg>

Jingle Bells: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3CWJNqyub3o>

The cracker information above is credited by kind permission to James Cooper, www.whychristmas.com



And now for another quiz – Christmas Hits over the Decades (in no particular order).

1. Let's start with one of the best-known Christmas songs of all time, recorded in 1942 by Bing Crosby?
2. What did Mariah Carey want for Christmas in 1994?
3. What was happening at Brenda Lee's Christmas party hop in 1958?
4. A small lad playing a percussion instrument, first recorded by the Trapp Family Singers but became famous in 1958 by the Harry Simeone Chorale?
5. A song about a weary animal carrying a precious load, first recorded in 1959 by Gracie Fields, and then The Beverley Sisters – followed by many others over the years?
6. What sort of Christmas did Elvis Presley have in 1964? It was first recorded in 1948 by Doye O'Dell.
7. This 1973 Christmas song by Slade is usually playing in every shop you happen to visit?
8. This song about a couple's romance during the winter season was written in 1934 and has been covered by over 200 different artists since its original recording by Richard Himber
9. Written by Bob Geldof and Midge Ure and recorded in 1984 by Band Aid, providing money for famine relief? It's been re-recorded three times.
10. In 2011, Annie Lennox (whose birthday is on Christmas day) recorded a version of which carol by poet Christina Rossetti?

Answers on the back page.

We hope you've enjoyed the Newsletters over the last year but what we would really like is more items coming in from you to keep them fresh and interesting. Please send them to Heather at heatheredwards.music@gmail.com Very many thanks to all who have contributed items in the past, they really are very much appreciated.

Please do make sure you keep yourselves safe, well and warm and we hope you have the best Christmas possible. Here's to a Healthy and Peaceful New Year, we'll be in touch again soon.

Lots of Love and Best Wishes from all at Come Singing.



Home cooking quiz answers

1. A sandwich! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aP-YIZAfNBs>
2. Bloater <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GuPa1Dbz3Uw>
3. My poor meatball <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSbSiRJ9xz4>
4. On the Bayou <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-BQpRqmwM0>
5. Shortnin' bread <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4v5rsEa9vUI>
6. Lollipop <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GgxNgVMcYNY>
7. Bangers and mash <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPYdnkK9Fqc>
8. Mashed potato! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nzqARbXJ5Pg>
9. Boiled beef and carrots <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7mIMIUqAa3w>
10. String beans, and onions, cabbages, and scallions, old fashioned to-mah-to, Long Island po-tah-to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PDd8shcLvHI>

Answers to Christmas Hits:

1. White Christmas. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOkyBqGw2Wg>
2. All I want for Christmas is You. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yXQViqx6GMY>
3. Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vn_I0-3WOk
4. Little Drummer Boy. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DT1fA59oH7Q>
5. Little Donkey. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJaxa9kF7to>
6. Blue Christmas. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6WnnZRSKYs>
7. Merry Christmas Everybody. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BpfHSqLXePI>
8. Winter Wonderland. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gcXSm51UI5M>
9. Do They Know it's Christmas? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j3fSknbR7Y4>
10. In the Bleak Midwinter. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AkyW-qAzfos>



Adoration of the Magi by Pieter Bruegel the elder: O Come, All Ye Faithfull

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q8dgl4-bVPU>