

A close-up photograph of a Christmas tree. The tree is densely decorated with various ornaments, including large white, teal, and purple spheres, and smaller gold and silver lights. A white reindeer figurine with antlers is prominently featured on the right side. The tree's branches are covered in green needles and white snow-like dusting. The overall scene is festive and brightly lit.

Newsletter  
December 2021

...and a merry  
Christmas to  
all...

MERRY

CHRISTMAS

### Christmas Quiz -

Just for fun, no prizes and no Christmas presents - the answers are upside down at the bottom of the last page. No cheating!!

1. When was Christmas first celebrated?
2. If you were born on Christmas day, what is your Zodiac sign?
3. On the 5th day of Christmas my true love gave to me....
4. What is the name for the secular alternative to Christmas commercialism on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December?
5. In the carol, which town is known as Royal David's City?
6. When is Twelfth Night?
7. Name the two all-time best-selling Christmas songs that came out in the USA in 1949?
8. In the Church calendar, what is the season from the end of November to Christmas day called?
9. What do you call a wine that has been spiced and heated?
10. Who banned Christmas? *(No, not Boris last year!)*
11. The Poinsettia is native to which country?
12. Frankincense and myrrh are obtained from what?
13. What is the name of the herb that is used as a magic word in a Christmas pantomime?



14. Name Santa's reindeer - *good luck, there are eight!*

*And Rudolf wasn't one of them!*



# British Orchid Council

~ promoting orchid growing ~

*Wishing you and yours a happy and peaceful, safe and healthy Christmas for 2021. And looking forward to meeting up and catching up with everyone, either in person or by Zoom in 2022!*

*Love to everyone, Helen*

I really can't believe that it will be Christmas in just a few days time now. Somehow, this year it really doesn't seem very festive as yet, but that is probably just me! Here, we have all the decorations up and every Christmas card pinned on the wall. This is something that we do, come what may, every year. So thank you to everyone who has sent cards and well wishes. Here's hoping that everyone will get to spend this Christmas with their families and loved ones and it doesn't get cancelled again at the last minute.

You will notice that a lot of items have been carried over from the last newsletter and we are hoping to address these in the New Year. By which time, the situation regarding Omicron should have resolved itself one way or another. The possibility of orchid shows being affected seems very likely at the moment, which will be disappointing for everyone.

Anyway, enough of this doom and gloom - today is the longest day!!!! Yes, I know I really mean the shortest/darkest day, before someone writes and tells me. I am celebrating, from now on the days will get brighter and evenings longer - and Spring will eventually get here. The orchids will start to perk up and flower again, so there is plenty to look forward to.



*One very confused Stanhopea in my greenhouse which seems to think its summer at Christmas! This is a seedling from a flask and it's only the second time it has flowered. The first time was at Christmas as well.*

*Dave wasn't very impressed with the scent though!!*

*I have no idea as to its identity - can anyone help? It might be good to be able to label it properly.*

## Advance warning!

The next newsletter threatens to be BORING! I have had many requests regarding Brexit and Cites and how these now affect importing plants. While BOC cannot change regulations (however difficult they may be) we are in the process of producing a simple document to try and explain what regulations and costs anyone is likely to incur if they wish to import plants.

The £74 per genus is only the tip of the iceberg regarding costs, and the best advice for anyone thinking of trying to import a few plants themselves is, quite honestly, DON'T!

More next time .....but fair warning, there appears to be nothing simple or straightforward!

There are some important updates that are due in the New Year which include:

1. Photographic competition 2021. This will be run on similar lines to last year, so start looking out your best pictures. Full details of how to enter will be in the next newsletter. It would be great to build on the success from last year and get even more entries. Let's just hope there will not be another lockdown in the New Year.

2. Zoom meeting for delegates date to be confirmed. Due to various illnesses this could not be held and a future date will be confirmed next time.

3. Society details to be completed and returned for the records.

Many societies have changed their committees, delegates and officers over the pandemic. This means that our records are probably now out of date and need to be updated. Your society will be receiving a form by email to complete and return. Please be on the look out for this in early January.

4. Brexit, Cites and importing plants report. More later, see above.

*Has anyone ever used this or anything like it?*

If you remember, this was in the last newsletter, I received the following reply which I hope some of you may find very useful -

*I have an electric sulphur vaporiser, which I used once or twice on a timer, but as it deposited a thick powder all over the leaves, heaters, glass and everything else I abandoned it.*

*It would probably have killed all the bugs but most likely the plants and me as well!*

So be warned and use at your peril!!



Next year 2022

The RHS Orchid Show will be held at Wisley next year.  
25 - 27th March

The show will be held in the new building and promises to be a very good event. We really need to support the show if we want it to continue in future years

More news as I get hear it, in the meantime, check the respective websites.

So, how many of you have heard of Nellie Roberts? She was the RHS botanical artist for many years. For anyone unsure what that means - the RHS botanical artist paints the orchids awarded by the RHS orchid committee. Two copies are painted, one is kept by the RHS for their records and the other goes (I think they have to buy it) to the grower/owner of the orchid.

So if anyone has any details about her, other than the above I would be very interested to receive them, so that they could go into a newsletter. There was an article about her in the Orchid Review some years ago, which may be of interest to some of you. So far, I have been unable to track my copy of it down on the computer. Can anyone send me a copy??

I have just received details of the following fundraising, from Sarah Forsyth, which may also be of interest -

### Grave plaque and house plaque

A commemoration of Nelly is planned by placing a plaque on her grave on 2nd April in Lambeth Cemetery, Tooting.

There are also plans to launch a campaign to raise funds for a plaque on the house where she lived all her life on Loughborough Road, North Brixton.

A budget of £150 was originally set for a small brass plaque on a wooden block for her grave, but now the fundraising has taken off this may be something in stone and could include the house plaque.

The local heritage association, Brixton Society, are holding the funds for the plaques.

Donations can be made to:

Account Title: Brixton Society r/c  
1058103

Coop Bank:  
Sort code 089299  
a/c no: 65717231

Please include reference: NellyFund



1948 RHS Award of Merit painting by Nellie Roberts

*If I can get any more details about her life and her work regarding orchids I will include them in here, as I'm sure many of you would find them interesting.*

**Answers** - 1. 4th century; 2. Capricorn; 3. 5 gold rings; 4. Festivus; 5. Bethlehem; 6. Evening of 5th January; 7. White Christmas and Rudolph the red nosed reindeer; 8. Advent; 9. milled; 10. Oliver Cromwell in 1652 for heathen practices; 11. Mexico, named after the first US Minister to Mexico; 12. Resin; 13. Sesame; 14. Dasher, Dancer, Pancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, Blitzen