

Seasonal Celebrations



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Seasonal Celebrations



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Introduction

A seminar was held at Mary Arden's House & Shakespeare Countryside Museum

<https://www.shakespeare.org.uk/visit/mary-ardens-farm/?>

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We looked at a number of seasonal activities which could be celebrated on farms and at other countryside locations.

Thanks to all those who attended but in particular to Joe Moore, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust; Bobbie Harvey, FACE; Becki Poulton, Moulton College; and Gurbans Randhawa, Rugby Intercultural Support Service.

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Apple Day

On October 21st every year, an annual celebration is held of apples, orchards and local distinctiveness.

Initiated by Common Ground in 1990, it has since been celebrated each year by people organising hundreds of local events. For more information about Apple Day visit <https://www.commonground.org.uk/apple-day/>



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Ideas for apple day activities

- **Apple bobbing**
- **Longest peel competition**
- **Tree planting**
- **Tasting different varieties**
- **Toffee apple making**
- **Apple prints**
- **Apple produce**
- **Making/tasting apple juice**



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Baisakhi

Baisakhi is a Sikh celebration held on or near April 13th to welcome the arrival of the harvesting season in parts of India.

Typically, people join together to eat spicy foods, meats and boiled sweets. They wear new clothes, play games and attend fairs. Bangra dancing is enjoyed.

There is a lot more information at this link:

<http://www.baisakhifestival.com/history-of-baisakhi.html>

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Baisakhi activities

- Naming fruits and vegetables
- Making scarecrows
- Collages
- Indian cookery
- Learning bhangra dancing



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Well dressing/Rangoli

There are great similarities between the Derbyshire tradition of well dressing and the Hindu rangoli craft.

Well dressing is the art of decorating springs and wells with pictures made from local plant life. The dressings are set in clay-filled wooden trays, mounted on a wooden frame.

Where to see well dressing:
www.welldressing.com



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Rangoli

A Rangoli is a colourful design made on the floor near the entrance to a house to welcome guests.

At Diwali, Hindus draw bright Rangoli patterns to encourage the goddess Lakshmi to enter their homes.

Traditionally, the pictures are made from finely ground powder and colours but any materials can be used to replicate similar patterns.

We made individual rangoli using clay which had been pressed into lids of margarine tubs and seeds, petals etc. Find inspiration here:

<http://bit.ly/297cySJ>

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Group Rangoli

Using a cardboard background we added seeds and flower petals to make a group rangoli.



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Den building day

Den building day was launched by the Forestry Commission in May 2006 to provide opportunities for outdoor play and adventure.

It aims to enable children to make their own choices about play and to create their own environments.



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Den building developments

The scale of den building can be changed to suit the audience and the amount of adult help required can vary.

Supply materials to get younger ones started.

For very young children try dens for teddy bears.



Do's and don'ts in den building

Do

- Build out of natural materials
- Make sure the den won't fall down
- Build the den on flat or gently sloping ground
- Avoid wet or boggy areas

Don't

- Build a den with sharp or dangerous materials
- Cut down trees or bushes
- Leave litter
- Build your den near busy roads, deep water or in quarries

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Hallowe'en

Hallowe'en is always celebrated on 31 October.

Hallowe'en is one of the oldest celebrations in the world, dating back over 2000 years to the time of the Celts.

There is a lot of information and many activity activity ideas at <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/naturedetectives/blogs/nature-detectives-blog/2016/10/nine-halloween-activities-for-kids/>

**Scary trails are popular!
(Don't make them too scary for little ones!)**

- Be imaginative with props**
- Incorporate storytelling**



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May Day

The first day of the month of May is known as May Day. It is the time of year when warmer weather begins and flowers and trees start to blossom. It is when people celebrate the coming of summer with lots of different customs.

May Day activities:

- Maypole dancing
- Making individual maypoles
- Tree dressing
- Decorating a May Queen chair
- Storytelling



Shrovetide

The last three days before the beginning of Lent are known as Shrovetide. Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day) was when all fats and cream had to be used up.

Shrovetide was celebrated with games, sports and dancing. There were feasts to use up the food that could not be eaten during Lent.

Pancake Day activities;

- Look at pancake ingredients (eggs, milk and flour); investigate local produce and food miles
- Try cooking activities
- Pancake races/pancake tossing/pancake decorating
- Frying pan music!

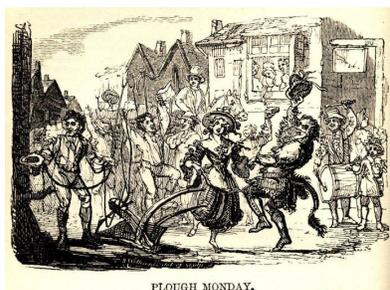
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Plough Monday

The first Monday after the Twelfth Night (after Christmas) is Plough Monday when young men used to drag a decorated plough through the village and knock on doors asking for money, food or drink.

<http://www.projectbritain.com/calendar/january/ploughmonday.html>



Activities for Plough Monday:

- Decorate an old plough or model with ribbons, leaves and foliage
- Demonstrate ploughing with a heavy horse—what a spectacle even if only a couple of furrows!
- Try morris dancing

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Stir up Sunday

The last Sunday of the church year, or the Sunday before Advent, is often called Stir up Sunday. On Stir up Sunday it is traditional for everyone to take a turn at stirring the Christmas pudding, whilst making a wish.



Stir up Sunday activities:

- **Treasure hunt for the 13 ingredients of the cake**
- **Measuring and weighing**
- **Sharing recipes**
- **Making a pudding for the birds**

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Wassailing

Wassailing has been associated with Christmas and New Year as far back as the 1400s. It was a way of passing on good wishes among family and friends.

Wassail is an ale-based drink seasoned with spices and honey. It was served from huge bowls. Wassail gets its name from the Old English term “waes hael” meaning “be well.”

Apple trees were sprinkled with wassail to ensure a good crop. Villagers would gather round the apple trees with shotguns or pots and pans and made a tremendous noise to raise the Sleeping Tree Spirit and to scare off demons.

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Wassailing Activities

Parade into the orchard with the wassail king & queen at the front of the parade - wearing ivy crowns.

Sing or chant the wassailing song on the next page.

Form a circle round the biggest & strongest tree in the orchard

Everyone 'hints' to the tree that they would like lots of apples by walking around the tree pretending to be carrying a heavy basket full.

Toast is hung onto several branches of the tree by members of the Wassail group. This is to encourage the good spirits to visit the tree in the form of Robins.

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Everyone has a drink around the tree.

Everyone shouts & claps and makes as much noise as possible before leaving the orchard. This is to scare away the bad spirits.

Wassailing Song

**Here we come a-wassailing
among the leaves so green.
Here we come a-wandering
so fair to be seen.**

**Love and joy come to you.
And to you your wassail too.
And we bless you and send you
A happy New Year.**

And we send you a happy New Year.

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Calendars

**There are many places where you can find
calendars of celebrations**

www.interfaithcalendar.org

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/>

**[http://www.britainexpress.com/what's_new/
calendar_of_events.htm](http://www.britainexpress.com/what's_new/calendar_of_events.htm)**