



Food, Glorious Food

By *Maryanne Baird*

The media in all its forms is constantly overflowing with news about the ever widening gap between the rich and the poor, and our government has pledged to reduce child poverty. When I do my supermarket shopping, I am appalled at the new increases in the price of healthy wholesome food, but as I am a superannuant and generally only feeding one, I can still budget to eat healthily.

What amazes me is the number of people who for some reason or another have put themselves on very restricted diets and it appears that this is encouraged by the media. Over the past few years we have been told not to eat or to significantly reduce meat, butter, and indeed all dairy products, with expensive alternatives being nominated.

Also, we are told gluten is a dangerous ingredient in wheat, barley, and rye –

and a huge gluten free industry has risen from this. I spent many years working for a Gastroenterologist, and, yes, a few (a very few) people have a condition known as coeliac disease, and gluten, even in minute quantities such as a crumb, acts as a poison in their bodies.

Now, sugar and salt should be eliminated from our diets, too. What will be next I wonder, hopefully not some large corporation coming up with a magic pill to swallow instead of food as we know it.

However, eating is meant to be a pleasurable activity both for sustenance and as a social occasion. I am reminded of family sayings **‘one man’s food is another man’s poison’** and **‘moderation in all things’**.

Perhaps, restrictive diets only occupy the minds of **subjective wealthy cultures.**

