

LYMM RUSHBEARING SUNDAY 13th AUGUST 2006

Lymm is a community of character and tradition and one of its oldest traditions is that of rushbearing. We are one of only a small number of places to continue this festival – a piece of living history.

The tradition grew out of the need in medieval times to replace the reeds which were used as a carpet on the earthen floor of buildings including the church. The community joined together to gather the new reeds (rushes) and remove the old. They combined work with pleasure and combined the carpet laying at church with a procession, music and dancing. We continue the combination although the laying of rushes at church is only symbolic rather than functional! The spirit of communal life is real. Please join in.

Although there may have been some breaks the tradition seems to have continued from the medieval era until about the time of the first world war. We then recommenced in the early 1970s.

In 1869 it was reported in the Warrington Guardian that there were various village sports on a Monday in connection with the rushbearing but the actual procession had been on Saturday when “the rush cart was drawn through the streets of the township by four grey horses, decorated with flags, and bells were suspended round their necks. The cart was preceded by a man (sic), containing a band playing popular tunes. A great crowd collected round the cart at different parts of the district. The usual collection of shows, rifle galleries, standings and other things requisite for a country fair were located in the vicinity of The Cross. A fire occurred at one of the “peep shows” but was speedily extinguished by the bystanders”!

The procession will start from Pepper Street car park on Sunday 13th August at 4pm processing via The Cross up Eagle Brow, left into Brookfield Road and left into Church Road to arrive at St Mary’s Church at approximately 4.30pm. After a short service the procession will then move down Rectory Lane to the Village Hall where there will be light refreshments, judging of the rushbearing garlands, and more Morris dancing. It is hoped the procession will include not only Morris men but as many people as possible who have made and are carrying rushbearing garlands.

If you have any queries please contact

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