

Lymm

Life

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Keeping tradition alive

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Morris men keep ancient tradition of Lymm Rushbearing alive



LYMM Morris men helped keep the ancient tradition of Rushbearing alive in the village after the official event was cancelled due to highway closure costs.

Members of the Morris group were joined by a handful of members of the public who were carrying bulrushes.

Following a performance of

the traditional Lymm Rushbearing dance, the group walked up Rectory Lane to St Mary's Church, laying the bulrushes at the church door.

They then retired to the Church Green for refreshments, before performing again on the pub car park.

The official event, which normally includes members of the parish council and community groups was called off by local organiser Chris Limb, after Warrington Borough Council insisted on charging over £1,000 for highway closures.

Lymm Rushbearing was re-born in the early 1970's (having probably died out in the early years of the century, possibly during the First World War) and for the last several years has been held on the second Sunday in August, although it has over the years been held on other days. For many years in the twentieth century Rushbearing Monday was a local bank holiday.

Ormerod's late Victorian history of Cheshire refers to the festival taking place in many communities on or near to the feast of the parish's patron saint – hence

Lymm's tradition of having the festival during the summer holiday period and close to the feast of the Assumption of Saint Mary.

Although the carrying of fresh rushes to church (normally on a horse-drawn cart) was a central feature, and the replacement of the old rushes upon the earthen church floor a very practical necessity in former days, this gathering of locals also involved festivities including not only the procession and Morris dancing but also sports, fairground stalls, and very full public houses!

Until 2015 the route started from Pepper Street and then processed via The Cross up Eagle Brow, left into Brookfield Road and left into Church Road to arrive at St Mary's Church. After a short service the procession returned via Rectory Lane to the Village Hall for light refreshments, judging of the rushbearing garlands, and more Morris dancing.

The procession normally includes Morris men, people carrying Rushbearing garlands and rushes, the Chairman of the Parish Council and the Mayor of Warrington, the May Queen and various local groups. It is medieval in its origins and Lymm is one of a very small number of communities which have maintained the tradition.



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