

Lymm Rushbearing beats the showers

WHILE heavy showers brought traffic to a standstill with flooding in some parts of the village earlier in the day, Lymm Rushbearing managed to dodge the showers.

Organiser Chris Limb, who helped resurrect the medieval tradition, said: "Putting up a few last-minute posters on Sunday morning was a very wet affair but the rain went and the sun almost shone by 4pm when Rushbearing started.

"The walk up the Dingle was delightful – for those walking it is probably more enjoyable than being on the roads. Both Lymm Morris and Bollin Morris were present and as well as dancing en route they both danced in the car park of St Mary's before and after the service. As well as local councillors our MP Andy Carter came along."

For many years in the twentieth-century Rushbearing Monday was a local bank holiday.

Ormerod's late Victorian history of Cheshire refers to Lymm Rushbearing 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!

Lymm's grey horses were well-known and a Lymm Grey is a person of an established local family, normally at least third generation born in Lymm.

The procession includes Morris men, people carrying Rushbearing

garlands and rushes, the Chairman of the Parish Council and councillors, the May Queen and various local groups.

It is medieval in its origins and Lymm is one of a very small

number of communities that have maintained this tradition.

Following the traditional walk with rushes through the village, a special service took place at St Mary's church.

Pictures: John Hopkins

