

A Weekend of Celebrations in Bampton



Friday 31st May – Tuesday 4th June

Welcome to a weekend of celebrations in Bampton. Spring Bank Holiday has long been a time of extensive festivities and it is hoped that this year traditional pursuits such as the SPAJERS Great Shirt Race, the Garlands and the Morris Dancing will be augmented by a number of special events that have been laid on to commemorate the Queen's Golden Jubilee. These include the competition for Best Jubilee Decorations, a special service to celebrate the first 50 years of Her Majesty's reign and an afternoon of sporting activities for all ages at the Recreation Ground. The celebrations culminate in a Barndance in the Market Square with the aptly named 'Band From The Jubilee.'

The many people involved in organizing these activities do hope that you enjoy this special holiday.

Friday 31st May

Magpie Lane in St Mary's Church Songs and Tunes of Rural England

The Friends of St Mary's are pleased to welcome back this ever-popular group of talented local musicians for a concert of traditional English music and song. Since their formation in 1991, Magpie Lane have recorded traditional material from all over Britain and are noted for their performances of songs and tunes from Oxfordshire. The group has given concerts at many of the county's most prestigious venues and performed at national and international festivals, as well as on local and national radio. The concert starts at 8.00 pm and tickets can be obtained in advance from Temple's, The Elephant & Castle or from David Rose (850214).

Saturday 1st June

Jubilee Decorations Competition

Decorations will be judged at 11.00 am. There are two classes:
Best Decorated House
Best Decorated Commercial Premises

No entrance form is necessary and the judges are looking for the most impressive jubilee decorations. The results will be announced at the Great Shirt Race.

St Mary's Church Flower Festival

The annual flower festival will be open from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm each day throughout the weekend. On Monday, refreshments will be available in the Church.

Art in Bampton

The West Ox Arts Members Exhibition for Oxfordshire Artweeks will be open in the Town Hall Gallery as follows: Saturday (10.30 am - 12.30 pm, 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm), Sunday (2.00 pm - 4.00pm) and Monday (10.30 am - 12.30 pm, 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm).

Lesley Williams, Isabella Whitworth and Anna Lever are presenting an exhibition of ceramic sculpture, resist dyed textiles and domestic and garden pots in the gallery and garden at Stenton Cottage, Bridge Street. Opening times: Saturday 1st - Tuesday 4th June, 12.00 pm - 6.00 pm.

SPAJERS 50th Great Shirt Race

The Society for the Preservation of Ancient Junketing is celebrating its 50th Great Shirt Race. Highlights of the celebrations include children's rides, a display of photographs and a visit by a Dutch band, Werkmans Wilskracht. Many of those who thought they had long since retired from the race will be taking part and there is always room for more competitors. Entrance is free but you need to supply your own set of wheels. This year there is the added bonus that competitors will visit no less than 9 'public houses'.

- 5.00 pm Children's rides, refreshments and photograph display
- 6.00 pm Werkmans Wilskracht Band, Leiden
- 6.45 pm Judging of Fancy Dress
- 7.15 pm Junior (11 & under) & Intermediate Races (ages 12-16)
- 7.30 pm Senior Race (1st Prize: a barrel of Hook Norton bitter)
- 8.00 pm Prize Giving

Sunday 2nd June

Sunday Services

- 8.00 am Communion Service, St Mary's Church
- 11.00 am Morning Service, Bampton Methodist Church

Morris Practices and Music Sessions

Morris practices are informal affairs, offering a chance for the dancers, musicians and audience alike to warm-up for the following day's exertions. Practices are typically followed by music and singing sessions which often resume later in the evening after a sojourn for a late Sunday lunch. Morris practices take place at The Elephant & Castle, The Horseshoes and The Romany and start around 1.00 pm.

Monday 3rd June

Morris Dancing

Bampton is one of only a handful of places with an unbroken tradition of Cotswold Morris Dancing. Although the origins are difficult to ascertain, the history is thought to date back over 400 years. The tradition has attracted the interest of numerous collectors over the years, including Cecil Sharp who published both tunes and steps. The dances are handed down to new dancers by example leading to a slow and subtle evolution, which is the hallmark of a thriving tradition.

There are currently no less than 3 thriving teams in Bampton.

Bampton Morrismen
(Headquarters: The Elephant & Castle)

Bampton Traditional Morris Dancers
(Headquarters: The Horseshoe)

Traditional Bampton Morris Dancers
(Headquarters: The Romany)

Details of the dance programmes will be available over the weekend from the Headquarters of each team, and a combined programme will be on sale in aid of Macmillan Cancer Relief, at Cromwell House on Monday.

The dancers would like to thank all those who allow them to dance in their wonderful gardens and ask that their followers enter and leave each garden with the dancers.

Garlands

One of Bampton's longstanding traditions is the making of Garlands of wild flowers, which children carry around the village before being judged. Unfortunately the popularity of this tradition has waned over the last few years. To encourage a greater number of entrants in to this annual competition the instructions for making a garland are reproduced here:

To make a Garland for 2 children you need 2 supple sticks (preferably willow), each about 1 metre long. Bend each stick into a circle and tie at the top firmly. Place one inside the other and tie them together at the top and bottom. Then tie bunches of wild flowers, such as Cow parsley or Buttercups, to each of the 4 sides. (May blossom or Horse chestnut blossom should not be used). Then place a doll inside the frame, and put a stout stick through the middle of the garland to make a handle for a child to hold each side.

The Garlands will be judged at 11.00 am outside The Jubilee public house.

3rd Grand Plant Sale

A sale of plants, shrubs and produce will take place at Eagle House, Church View, between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm. All contributions would be welcome either on or before the day. All proceeds will go to the Bampton Museum.

Bampton Museum & Historical Society

The inaugural exhibition of the Bampton Museum, entitled 'The Great Shirt Race' will be open between 10.00 am and 4.00 pm in the Robert Vesey Room in the Old Grammar School. The exhibition will continue through June and July.

Tuesday 4th June

Peel of Bells and Ecumenical Service, St Mary's Church

Following a celebratory peel of bells, there will be a special service to celebrate the first 50 years' of the reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The service will start at 10.30 am and all denominations will be most welcome.

Jubilee Sports Day, The Recreation Ground

The Playing Fields Committee have laid on an afternoon of entertainment, including refreshment stalls, children's rides and a bar. The afternoon starts at 2.00 pm with fun activities organized by the various clubs, including a boys penalty competition (First Prize 1 pair of tickets to a Premiership match); Dad's football match; fastest tennis serve competition; cricket and archery. Following a display by the Bampton Dance Group at 3.00 pm, there will be an entertaining series of races for all ages, from toddlers to grandparents. The Pub Challenge Tug-of-War competition will be followed by the presentation of prizes. Commemorative Mugs will be available for collection from 4.30 pm to 5.00 pm (see below).

Commemorative Mugs

All children aged 11 and under, living in the Parish of Bampton, are eligible for a free Commemorative Mug. These should be collected from the Pavilion between 4.30 pm and 5.00 pm on Tuesday. If you will be unable to collect your mug, please add your name to the list held at Temple's, by *Saturday 1st June*.

Commemorative Mugs will also be on sale at the Pavilion on the day and from Wednesday 5th June onwards at Temple's.

Barndance in the Market Square

7.30 — 11 PM

One of the highlights of the Silver Jubilee celebrations was an evening barndance in the Market Square. This year the music will be provided by a unique collaboration between members of Bampton's many barndance bands. 'Band From The Jubilee' will be led by Mathew Green whose task it is to keep both the band and the dancers in order. A bar will be available in the Village Hall. The dance is free and no tickets are required. However, in the event of rain, it will be held in the Village Hall where numbers will be restricted by fire regulations.

Thanks and Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to the large number of people and organizations that have contributed so generously to such a wide range of events for the appreciation and enjoyment of the people of Bampton.