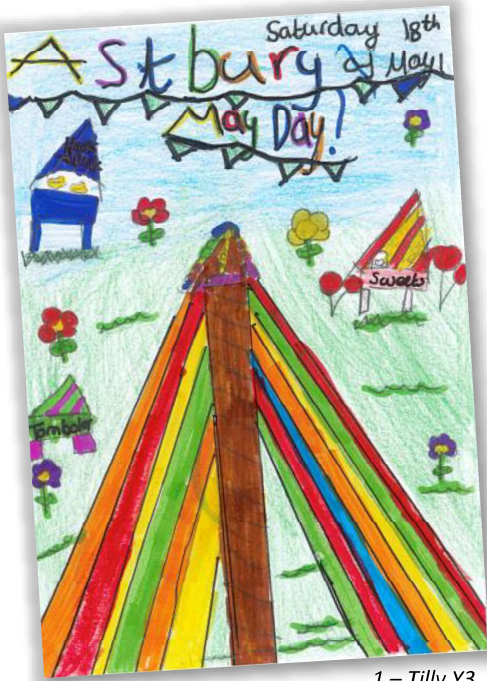


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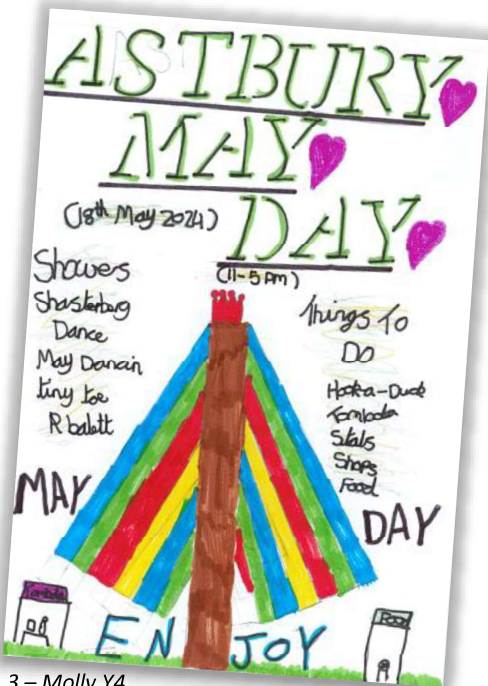


1 – Tilly Y3

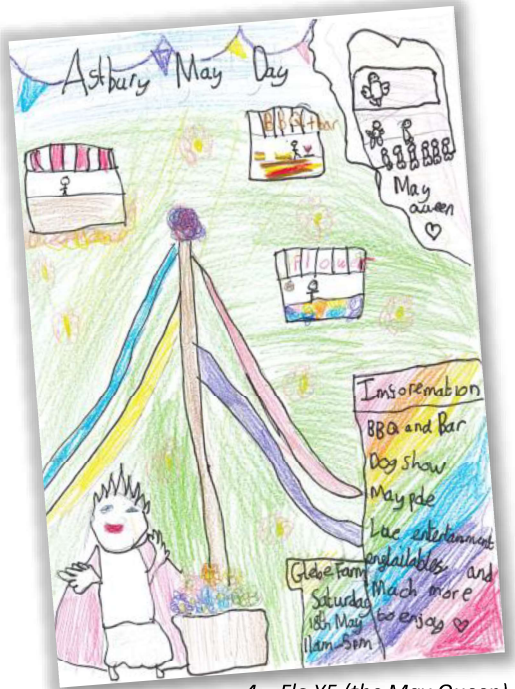


2 – Elsie Y6 (the retiring May Queen)

Runners up



3 – Molly Y4



4 – Flo Y5 (the May Queen)



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Astbury St. Mary's Primary School



As head teacher of Astbury St Mary's Primary School, I am bursting with pride at all the children and staff have achieved to make this Astbury May Day such a success. Working in partnership with the Astbury community, we celebrate being part of this wonderful tradition. The children have worked hard to learn their traditional dances. They have persevered, shown great resilience, had lots of fun, worked together as a team and today they will dig deep and overcome their nerves to perform for you with their friends.

At Astbury May Day, it is a delight to see former May Queens and the Kings of Newbold Astbury as well as their attendants, returning to join in the celebrations - perhaps remembering their time in the limelight. Today, I hope that you will take the time to sit back, relax and make your memories with friends and family.

Your attendance at Astbury May Day is very much appreciated, thank you for coming. The money you spend supports our school in financing projects such as creating a chat and chill area for our children – a place outside where the children can enjoy quieter time during their breaks. Last year, we used also used money raised at May Day to lease ipads to develop the computing curriculum. So why not wander over to the plate smash, have a go on the tombola, visit the tea tent, grab a burger and browse the stalls whilst the children bounce on the assault course, hook a duck, have tea with Alice in Wonderland . . . so much to do! I wish you all an incredibly happy May Day.

Miss P. Blythe
Head teacher

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Mr Grumpy – May Day 2024

‘As Time Goes By.....’

I’ve lost count of how many years I’ve had a mail from ‘The Committee’ (sounds sinister) asking me to write a ‘special’ for the May Day programme...

It suddenly occurred to me that it all started when my own kids were dancing (sort of) around the Maypole, getting tangled up / tripping over / getting muddy / getting stropky while we all watched both proud but nervous, knowing that the ‘men folk / school dads’ were quite drunk when we erected said pole a couple of nights earlier : it was always a relief it didn’t fall over and take out the Rode Hall Brass Band.



Our first / eldest has just bought his first house, the middle one does stuff we can’t talk about (but we should all be glad she does) and the youngest knows more about politics (and why Russia is like what it is) than I do but – mercifully – ticks the same box as I do on polling day. In other words, it was a long time ago & they’re now all adults...

Proud nanas have gone (x2) as has grandad and I’m sure we’re not alone in seeing their ghostly shadows under the tree, keeping the pram in the shade.

Apparently, Dooley Wilson sang the first version of the song ‘As Time Goes By’ back in 1931 and every cat & their dog since, but the song just sprung to mind which is unusual as it’s usually only Genesis that rattles around in my head & headphones...

The lyrics include the lines ‘Never out of date, Hearts full of passion’ which sort of sums up May Day perfectly, although the next line is ‘Jealousy & hate’ which it’s perhaps best to conveniently ignore : I can remember one young chap trying to stab the Rector with his (thankfully plastic) sword but also smiling when another Rector’s (3-legged) dog ‘did his business’ on the lawn, as if thinking ‘this is my lawn, at my house and this is where I always do my afternoon dump!’

It’s very possible some of the costumes worn today are actually the same ones my own kids wore (albeit washed at least once since) and I’m surprised there hasn’t been a suggestion from an exceptionally noisy minority to ban them on the basis they humiliate & belittle via outdated stereotyping & glorifying past traditions that have no place in today’s society that must reflect all views, even if the vast majority are happy to leave things as they are and remember times when things were rather more straightforward, more innocent and – frankly – nicer.

MayDay has always been some sort of ‘escape’ : it costs next to nothing to get in (if you were truly skint, I’m sure Farmer Rob would let you in for free) and I always leave feeling better than when I arrived and happier than when I’ve watched pretty much any film these days, assuming I leave the cinema in the car I arrived in because it hasn’t been pinched or set fire to by another protester.

It seems to me that some people (usually not many, despite the fuss & outrage) want to change the country we live in....then complain when it doesn’t work (of course, it’s not their fault) and someone else complains about that and....it’s not Elton John’s circle of life, it’s a circle of chaos & misery....why can’t we embrace & appreciate what we’ve got & be grateful for the good things in life....be balanced & not obsessed with outrage and the feeling a day isn’t complete without it?

I’m glad we still have MayDay and those costumes haven’t changed. I’m pleased the Maypole (it’s the same one!) is still there, even if the Head Teacher had to complete a 300-page H&S Risk Assessment about kids being strangled in the ribbons. I’m glad the songs haven’t changed, even if Genesis have never played The Spiders Web....

And I’m glad we still have today – even with my parents missing.....

Read Mr G in ‘The Chronicle’ every Thursday



Astbury St Mary's C of E Primary School

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A message from the Rector

I've recently been to a conference about the human brain and the way current trends in society are affecting us. This all sounds very serious but luckily the solution is easy - PLAY! And playing isn't just good for children - it is necessary for adults and for society as a whole. It turns out that we need to spend unstructured time free of outcomes and targets, seeing who we bump into maybe, letting ourselves wander about and seeing what happens if we try things! So what better reason could there be to support Astbury May Day, have a go on a stall you haven't tried before and see what happens, and catch up with friends old and new?

Have fun!

Anne-Marie





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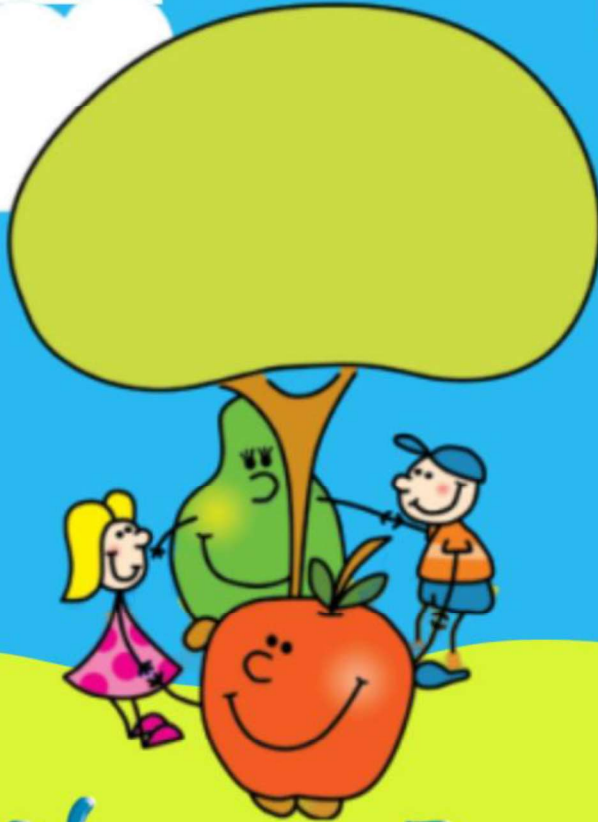
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Special Thanks To....

- *Robert and Lesley Lomas at Glebe Farm for the use of their paddock for May Day and fields for Car Parking
- *Biddulph and Congleton Rotary along with Cheshire Marshals for helping us safely run the car parking and famous May Day procession and road crossings
- *Rector Anne-Marie Naylor leading us in celebrations of May Day.
- *Rode Hall Silver Band for leading us in the procession and playing our traditional May Pole Dancing songs
- *Astbury May Day Committee who again have pushed so hard alongside they're very busy lives to bring this event for you to enjoy today
- *All the volunteer helpers in the BBQ tent of which many are our loyal friends and neighbours from Smallwood Village who are joined by the BBQ Cavern
- *The staff of Astbury St Mary's Primary School for their organisation preparing the children for the May Day Dancing.
- *All the family, friends and children of Astbury St Mary's Primary School who have helped prepare for today.
- *Our entertainment provided by All on Stage Congleton, BB entertainment, Izzie Naylor and our School Choir along with Tiny Toes Ballet and Shaftesbury Dance.
- *Posh Pugs for stepping in to run our dog show this year, I'm sure it will be fantastic fun.
- * Kate Naylor from Astbury W.I. who has volunteered to officiate our Great Astbury 'Mad Hatter's Bake Off' as well as Astbury Mere Care Home once again donating the prizes for this event. Also special thanks to Jane Bibbey and Mal Walsh for creating a special 'Wonderland Tea Party' treat for our local royalty
- *Astbury Women's Institute for kindly donating their time and creativity to deliver tea, cakes and strawberries and cream with a smile in our refreshments tent.
- *6th Congleton Scouts for allowing us to borrow kitchen equipment
- *The Egerton Arms Astbury providing us with overflow car parking facility on their field
- *Astbury St Mary's Church Wardens, Astbury Parochial Church Council, Astbury Ladies Fellowship, Astbury Women's Institute, Congleton Lions, Howard Hall, Congleton Chronicle, Amberon, Event Fire and Medical, Stu's Loos and all the other groups and individuals who have helped to make it a great Astbury May Day 2024.



Astbury May Day 2024 Programme

- 11am -** Astbury May Day Opens!
- 11.45am -** Entertainment by All on Stage Congleton.
- 12pm -** Vocalist by BB's Entertainment.
- 12.45pm -** Dog show (£2.00 to enter and please register upon arrival).
- 1.15pm -** Procession of children from Astbury St Mary's Primary School and visiting King and Queen from nearby villages led by Rode Hall Silver Band.
- 1.30pm -** Service in Astbury St Mary's Church led by the Revd Anne-Marie Naylor.
- 2.15pm -** Crowning of the Astbury May Queen 2024 followed by Traditional Maypole Dancing.
- 3pm -** Izzie Naylor Vocalist.
- 3.50pm -** Astbury St Mary's Primary School Choir.
- 4pm -** Entertainment by Tiny Toes Ballet.
- 4.15pm -** Entertainment by Shaftesbury Dance.
- 4.30pm-5pm -** Astbury May Day Grand Draw!
Astbury May Day Closes until 2025!





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Astbury May Queen 2024.

I was so excited when my name was pulled out of the hat. Also, I felt proud of getting the chance to be Astbury May Queen. I really enjoyed spending time with my attendants choosing the colour of their dresses and choosing my dress. We are still trying to decide how to wear our hair but our flowers are ready for the big day. I am looking forward to May Day, but admit I am a little nervous as I do not want to mess anything up on the day. I will feel extremely proud of myself when I parade around the arena on Astbury May Day.

I am looking forward to representing Astbury at other events. I already have lots of ideas about fundraising as I know how hard Elsie and Riley worked.

I think that being Astbury May Queen will boost my confidence and give me the courage to approach new challenges in life as I grow up!

Flo, Astbury May Queen 2024.



Astbury May King 2023.

When I figured out that I was going to be May King, I felt overjoyed because I really wanted this role. When it was May Day, I felt nervous because I thought I would mess up, but all the dances were great fun. The May Day pole looked brilliant after we had completed our dances in the end. During the year, Elsie and I have worked with our families to organise and run events to raise funds for our school. We raised lots of money which will support all the students at Astbury St Mary's School.

Riley, Astbury May King 2023.

Astbury May Queen 2023.

Being chosen to be an Astbury May Queen has been amazing. On May Day, we were crowned and then danced around the maypole, it was good fun. We also ran stalls during the day, the King had a 'guess the name of the dog' stall and I ran a 'guess how many jellybeans are in a jar' stall. We represented Astbury at several events during our reign.

I would like to thank my attendants, Claire and Hollie-Grace, who supported me during the day and at events.

I hope that Flo has a wonderful time being our new Astbury May Queen!

Elsie, Astbury May Queen 2023.



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May Day 2024

May Queen of Newbold Astbury and Retinue



New Queen:	Florence Luckin
Retiring Queen:	Elsie Parry
Retiring King of Newbold Astbury:	Riley Reece
Attendants:	Seren Bibbey and Kendal Johnson
Retiring attendants:	Hollie-Grace Haigh and Claire Nott
Little Maids:	Charlotte Clark Theera Hermis Faith Johnson Holly Wilmott and Isabelle Winstanley
Retiring Little Maids:	Meadow Buckley Lilly-Mae Gent Elsie Gosling Edith Kenyon Harriette Kettle and Katelyn Turner
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Sceptre Bearer:	Peter Bibby
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Message from the Chair:

Astbury May Day 2024

Returning to my role as chair of this team in 2024 has been a whole different experience this year. One example for instance, at our first meeting it was nearly standing room only! Despite having some experience under my belt, this was a pleasant 'unique' situation to find oneself in. In addition many of the standard jobs for January had already been completed such as the vigour and determination of the team that run May Day today as key stakeholders are happy to get stuck in. I sometimes get referred to as Mrs May Day....and in some years I have been happy to take the credit. However, this year I can safely say it's been down to the great team I have the pleasure to work with and I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge massive thank you to the stalwarts and the newcomers.

As a team we have renewed our vision and commitment, we are always looking for new people to join us to bring fresh ideas and energy. We are but 'custodians' of the tradition and whilst I think we have found a winning format for the day, we do try to challenge ourselves to provide the best experience for those that join us on the day and deliver it at the most cost-effective way for our families.

This year's Mad Hatter's Tea Party theme in the refreshments tent including decorations, the Great Astbury Bake Off and themed tea party for our 'local royalty' are just some of the ways that our new committee members have contributed to making this year's visitor experience extra special. We've also with our shared experience had a small 'jig-around' with the layout and as you will no doubt be aware extended our opening times.

Getting to the business end of my message, we have also taken the decision this year to increase some of our charges....and this has taken a lot of discussion time at our meetings. Getting back to our vision and commitment, we at May Day HQ don't run the event to make profit, we do it to put on a great day for our visitors, showcase our village spirit, our local school, church and community groups and bring people together in cost-friendly family-friendly way. This is our vision and values. But always at the forefront of our minds is also our commitment to fundraising. In favour of transparency here is our justification as to why - in essence we live in a world where everything costs so much more than its last year and the year before. We are always looking to maximise our fundraising potential and look to cover our increasing costs and have been lucky enough to secure fantastic sponsorship from Sibelco, Bill and Ben Skip Hire, Howdens, Eze talk and obtain support from the Parish Council which goes a long way to covering our annual expected expenditure. A massive thank you to those involved in providing and securing this funding. It makes the world of difference as a committee we can sleep easier at night knowing that we can pay the bills!!

Last year we were in a position to donate a record £8165.00 to 12 different organisations and charities but we are also aware of how much more things cost for our beneficiary's and how far the money we donate will go to ease financial pressures and that this is all relative. So, we are determined to be resolute in our support and really push ahead and raise the bar further this year.

Enough of the serious stuff now....I hope you all have a great time (I've put an order in for some sunshine, but will it arrive?) Good luck on the raffle, enjoy the procession, the dancing and the entertainment, say hello and visit all the stall holders eager to meet you and spend spend spend as much as you are able. Knowing that in doing so you are supporting this wonderful local community.

Thank you

Claire Hocknell



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