



Oak Apple Day, 1953, decorating cottages

Oak Apple Day Recalls 1603

Oak Apple Day was celebrated today in the village of Wishford near Salisbury.

The 280 inhabitants were commemorating the 247th anniversary of the granting of a charter enabling them to collect dry, snappy wood from nearby Grovely Woods all the year round.

An hour before dawn a band with bugles and a variety of instruments, led by a 60-lb church bell mounted on a cart, paraded outside the rectory with the slogan "Grovely, Grovely, Grovely and all Grovely." Other households in the village were also awakened, and the band then headed a mile-and-a-half trek to the woods, where everyone cut a green oak bough to place outside the front door, thus maintaining the right to gather wood for another year.

Later crowds were to beat the bounds, and each member of the Oak Apple Club, formed more than 50 years ago to protect these rights, carried the boughs round the village.

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