

**Notes:**

- *Flaming torches are used in the procession and these bring obvious hazards, especially if it's windy. We cannot allow children to carry torches at any point in the proceedings and we would appreciate the support of parents in enforcing this requirement.*
- *Wellies, thick socks and warm gloves are usually essential!*
- *There are no catering or toilet facilities at Old Mill Farm.*
- *You may wish to bring drinks, especially for children.*

**Please help towards costs when you see  
the collection 'trugs'!**

**The Chanctonbury Ring Morris Men wish you all  
a happy and prosperous New Year.**



**The Chanctonbury Ring Morris Men**

CRMM are now in the middle of their winter practice nights. Any local men who'd like to come along and see what's involved will be very welcome.

**And not just new dancers, as CRMM would also welcome musicians too!**

We meet at Henfield Catholic Church Hall every Wednesday at 8pm, but it's best to contact us first. Call our Bagman by email [bagman@crmm.org.uk](mailto:bagman@crmm.org.uk) It's a great night afterwards too, cooling off at a local pub!

**[crmm.org.uk](http://crmm.org.uk)**

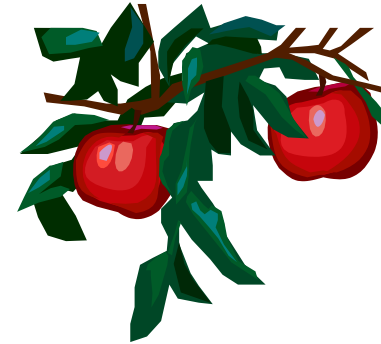
**Come and support us again on May Day at the top of Chanctonbury Ring!**



**"THE ANCIENT CEREMONY OF**

**APPLE HOWLING**

**AS TAKES PLACE ON TWELFTH NIGHT"**



**WASSAIL! WASSAIL!**

**dates & venue:**

**The first Saturday of January each year  
from 6pm  
at Old Mill Farm, Bolney RH17 5SE**



Wassailing the apple trees usually takes place on Twelfth Night.

This is the traditional order of events...

The Chanctonbury Ring Morris Men lead a torchlight procession to the orchard, where everyone encircles one of the oldest and largest trees.

The Master of the Ceremony then inaugurates the proceedings with the following invocation:

**Here's to thee, old apple tree,**

**May'st thou bud, may'st thou bow!**

**Hats full, caps full, bushel, bushel bags full,**

**Sacks full, barns full, and our pockets full too!**

**Hurrah!**

A spiced wassail cake, soaked in cider, is placed in the fork of the tree to ensure the goodwill of the robins and other birds. Cider is poured over the roots of the tree to encourage good growth.

The following is then intoned:

**Stand fast, root! Bear well, top!**

**God send us a howling crop!**

**Every twig, apples big!**

**Every bough, apples enow!**

**Hurrah!**

Volunteer beaters are then invited to thrash the tree with sticks to stimulate its growth, and then everyone then joins in the singing of the **wassail song**:

The Chanctonbury Ring Morris Men then perform a number of traditional Morris dances. The 'general hullabaloo' that follows starts with the firing of a shotgun into the air. Everyone makes as much noise as possible by any available means until the shotgun is fired again.

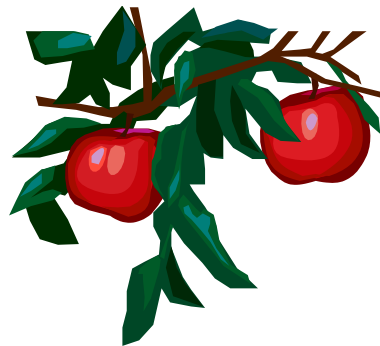
Then we all give **three cheers** for the apple trees, **three cheers** to the owner of the orchard for allowing the ceremony to take place, and **three cheers** for ourselves. The event ends with distribution of the spiced Wassail Cakes and English cider.

#### More tradition:

"A collection is taken from those present, so that all may associate themselves with the occasion and its benefits".

**These days, your contribution helps towards costs and ensures the continuation of this great event into future years.**

**Please help generously!**



## WASSAIL SONG

Wassail and wassail all over the town,  
Our cup it is white and our ale it is brown.

Our cup it is made of the fine ashen tree,  
Likewise our malt of the best barley.

*And its your wassail,*

*and its our wassail,*

*And its joy be to you*

*and a jolly wassail.*

O master and missus, are you both within?

Come open the door and let us come in.

O master and missus a-sitting by the fire,

Remember us poor travelers a-travelling thro' the mire.

O where is the girl with the silver headed pin,

To open the door and let us come in?

O master and missus, it is our desire,

A warm ale and cheese and a toast by the fire.

We have a little purse and its made of leather skin,

A little silver sixpence would line it well within.

O master and missus 'tis time we were gone,

Remember us poor travelers 'til we do come again