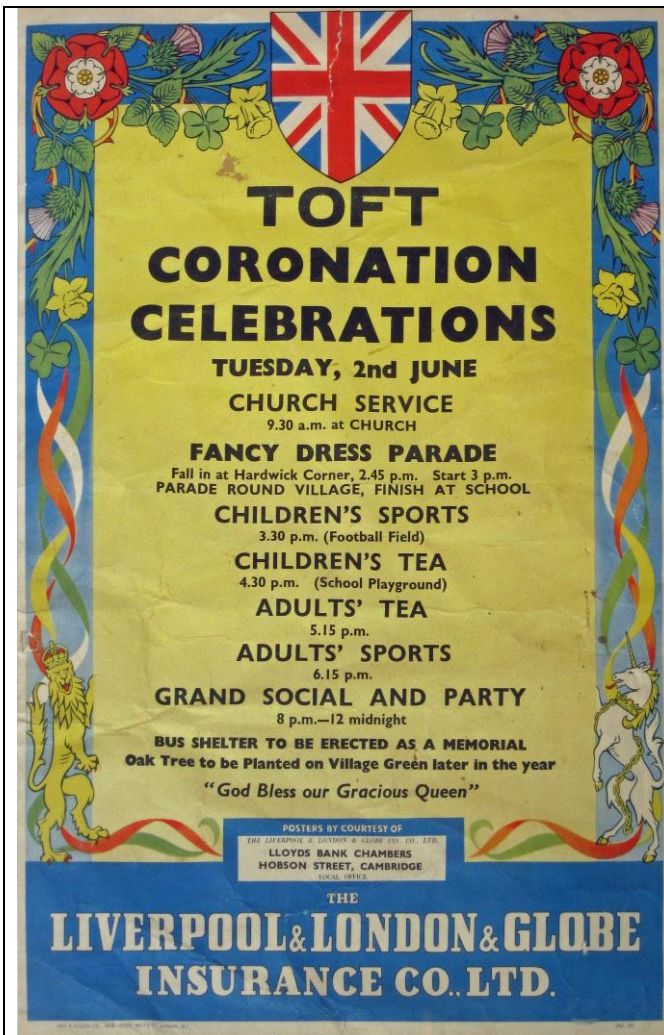


## THE CORONATION JUNE 1953

On 6 February 1952 Princess Elizabeth (Elizabeth of York) ascended to the throne following the death of her father George VI. The Coronation in Westminster Abbey took place on 2 June 1953. At that time few households had a television set and the wireless was the main means of communicating the Coronation Service to the general public. In Toft there were just three television sets, one belonged to Mr Balcombe in the shop, one to the spinster sisters the Misses Bullen and the third to Mrs Mitchell, the school headmistress. Mrs Mitchell wanted as many of the children to see the coronation as possible so she put all their furniture into the front garden and brought in the small school chairs. Most of the children saw some of the day. The film made of the event circulated to cinemas around the country, subsequently provided the visual imagery that cemented this celebration in the nation's memory. The villagers of Toft celebrated the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II with a church service followed by a fancy dress parade around the village ending at the school; there followed sports and tea for the children; sports and tea for the adults and a grand social and party for everyone in the evening.

In 1953 the local bus was still the most significant means of transport in the village; together with the bicycle. At a Parish meeting it was agreed that as a permanent commemoration of the Coronation an English oak tree would be planted on the Green and a bus shelter erected. In the end an English oak proved impossible to find so a *quercus rubra* was purchased from Notcutts. The brick Shelter, based on a design in use in Little Gransden was built by Messrs. Barford by the Glebe meadow for £106 paid for by the village and there was a grand celebration on January 24th 1954 when the Chairman of the County Council, Col Parker visited the village to inaugurate both the shelter and the tree. The Parish Council's decision also to make a permanent commemoration of the Coronation, in erecting a brick bus shelter and bench seat by the Glebe meadow, would have had more resonance than in our

age of widespread car ownership. Today's travellers still, nonetheless, enjoy the convenience of the shelter, at a time of reestablished significance for public transport.



Toft Coronation poster



HM Queen Elizabeth II



Toft bus shelter & commemorative plaque





Toft Coronation parade

## **SILVER JUBILEE**

The Queen's Silver Jubilee was celebrated on 11<sup>th</sup> June 1977 and began to the sound of Church bells. At 10am, after the official opening, the Jubilee parade began its procession around the village with floats decorated by the playgroup, the Brownies, the W.I. and the junior girls. Everyone was given a flag. Adding to the spectacle, as part of the best decorated bicycle competition, following the floats came an assortment of decorated bicycles. The parade was judged in School Lane and ended in Home Meadow, the venue of the ensuing games and competitions and a picnic lunch and teas for young and old. There was maypole dancing by Toft Brownies, a relay race, tug-of-war and rounders match and children's sports in four age categories. After tea as well as prizes, all the children received a commemorative mug. Throughout the week-end, a Flower Festival in St Andrew's Church, illustrated the life and history of the village; the Church Institute had on a display of bygones, photos and pictures; and in the People's Hall there was

an exhibition of Arts and Crafts including a children's painting and union flag competitions.

The Saturday celebrations were brought to a happy conclusion with a Village Dance held in Mr Clifford Tebbit's thatched barn.

On Sunday there was a United Jubilee celebration service at St. Andrew's.

*Organization of the Silver Jubilee celebrations by the Jubilee committee, chaired by*

*Richard Howard*

*The Children's Sports were organized by Mr D. Robinson helped by Mr. J. Hansford.*

*Flower Festival directed by Mrs J Sewell, Comberton and Mrs A. Mitchell*

*Church Institute Bygones display arranged by Mr Barnhurst helped by Mrs Moody, Mr T. Long and Mrs Harrowell*

*Catering for the day organized by Mrs Kate Roberts, Toft Womens' Institute and others.*



Children's tea-party



Decorated Bile competition



Tea-party for the old folk



Flower Festival

## **GOLDEN JUBILEE**

Village celebrations on the weekend of 25/26 May 2002 to mark the Queen's Golden Jubilee featured an exhibition in the People's Hall of locally sourced royal memorabilia, a coffee morning and a visit from Radio Cambridgeshire. On Saturday afternoon events for the children of Toft took place in a marquee at Firs Farm included a Golden Crown competition (winner-Ishbael Tannahill), a Jubilee cake competition, an enthralling magic show by Dr. Bondini and a visit from the Star Bug from Star Radio . Tea and special Jubilee cakes were enjoyed even though the weather was perhaps not up to the occasion. Everyone received a specially designed Toft Jubilee pennant and a Jubilee coin presented by South Cambs. District Council.

In the evening a Ceilidh took place in the same marquee to the musical accompaniment of *The Wide Glide Band*. Few events take place in the village unaccompanied by victuals, and with fish or chicken and chips followed by Toft made cakes and a bar run by the Social Club this evening was no exception, the enjoyment was brought to a close in a fireworks display.

The continuing festivities on Sunday began with a village walk to Frogs Hall. The sun shone at first, but it has to be said the weather was better suited to those denizens of Hardwick Hill that gave the venue its name. The walkers were restored by a picnic lunch and coffee at the 'open-house' provided by the Quenby's and returned to the village to be greeted by a display of maypole dancing by 1<sup>st</sup> Toft Brownies on the Green accompanied by live music . The walk continued to the Church to the sound of the bells; at the well, dressed for the occasion, water was drawn under the supervision of Richard Howard, and followed by a service of thanksgiving in the Church, and Parish Tea in the gardens of Manor House.

The celebrations were rounded off on Monday 3 June with the lighting of the Millennium Beacon on Church Drift, joined to the chain of Beacons simultaneously lit across the realm.

Later in the month of June the new seat on the village green, to mark the jubilee, was unveiled by Brian Roberts who had made it.

Illustrations 9. 7/4 Exhibition of royal memorabilia in the People's Hall  
*(from above)*

9. 7/15 Children's event in marquee

9. 7/16 Crown competition - Ishbael i centre front

9. 7/5 Star Bug Radio *(from above)*

9. 7/17 Village walk

9. 7/18 At the well – Richard Howard

9. 7/19 The Beacon is lit with a rocket *(NB not the fireworks)*

*I would like to add a picture of the jubilee pennant if possible – picture 1 of email on 24/11*



Children's event in the marquee



Crown competition



Star Bug Radio



Village walk



Royal memorabilia



At the well: Richard Howard



Commemorative pennant



The Toft beacon lit, and rocket

## ROYAL WEDDING APRIL 2011

The marriage of Prince William and Kate Middleton took place on Friday, April 29<sup>th</sup> 2011, for which an extra Public Holiday was given.

Toft celebrated the event by having a Village Garden Party in the Manor House garden (thanks to Mr & Mrs David Taylor), to which all villagers were invited. Two competitions were held for people to enter, these were a decorated cake and a hat competition.

Helpers erected the marquees in the Manor garden on the Thursday evening and much baking was done during the day to provide goodies for the tea on Friday.

The Royal Wedding and its accompanying parade of carriage splendour was broadcast on TV throughout the morning of 29<sup>th</sup> April.

Tea and party fare were prepared early in the afternoon and by 3pm. many were sitting in the garden enjoying their tea in warm sunshine with a cloudless sky.

The cake competition was judged by Richard Fletcher and Marion Read. There were entries from children as well as both male and female adults. The ladies had a joint first shared by Sue Bone and Elizabeth Dolman. The hat competition was judged by Yvonne Mason and there was a winner in both ladies and gents classes as well as children's. Prizes were then given to all the winners by Miss Mason.

By about 4.30 pm people began to drift away home after such a pleasant afternoon. Celebrations continued in the evening with a free concert in the Peoples Hall at 8pm. A variety of musicians were present: Toft Session, Comberton and Toft Ceol Galore and African Drums. A very varied and enjoyable day and a time to remember the Royal Wedding by was had by all.



Toft ladies serving fine fare at the Royal Wedding Celebrations



## **Diamond Jubilee 2012**

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee saw four solid days of celebration in Toft. The list of events included:

- Six exhibitions: Farming, Wood-turning, Flowers, Royal Memorabilia, Painting and Drawing, Needlecraft
- Sports Day
- Scarecrow Trail
- Village Trail
- Wishing Tree
- Ceilidh
- Molly Dancers
- Variety Evening (local music groups, comedy, recitations)
- Fireworks
- Beacon
- Commemorative Oak Tree (Parish Council)
- Toft Choir performances
- Plus the usual Sunday Mayday events and a special Social Club Jubilee Quiz

See next page for the Festival at a glance

# Toft Festival at a glance ...

All events free except Ceilidh and Pub Quiz



| day                              | When?               | event   | Where?  |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|---|---|
| Saturday<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> June | 10.30               | <b>Scarecrow Trail &amp; Village Quiz<br/>Wishing Tree</b>  | Start People's Hall<br>Village green  |
|                                  | 10.30am<br>- 4.00pm | <b>Exhibitions</b><br>Art & Photography<br>Textile & Craft<br>Royal Memorabilia &<br>Flower Festival<br>Farming in Toft / Woodturning | People's Hall<br>Methodist Chapel<br>Saint Andrew's<br>Church<br>Festival Marquee |
|                                  | 6.00pm              | <b>Gog Magog Molly Dancers</b>  | Roadside near Saint<br>Andrew's   |
|                                  | 8.00pm              | <b>Ceilidh/Barn Dance</b><br>(tickets £8/£6 at Toft Shop &<br>Social Club)  | Festival Marquee  |
| Sunday<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> June   | 11.30am             | <b>Short service</b>  | Outside Methodist<br>chapel   |
|                                  | 11.45am             | <b>Village Walk</b>   | Methodist Chapel to<br>Frog's Hall  |
|                                  | 2.00pm              | <b>Maypole</b>  | Village green   |
|                                  | 3.30pm              | <b>Well-dressing ceremony and<br/>thanksgiving service</b>  | Saint Andrew's<br>Church  |
|                                  | 4.15pm              | <b>Parish Tea</b>   | Festival Meadow   |
|                                  | 8.00pm              | <b>Jubilee Pub Quiz</b><br>(£1 per player, teams max. six people)   | People's Hall   |
| Monday<br>4 <sup>th</sup> June   | 3.00pm              | <b>Toft Sports</b>  | Festival Meadow   |
|                                  | 5.30pm              | <b>Village Barbecue</b>   | Festival Meadow   |
|                                  | 7.15pm              | <b>Musical Variety Show</b>   | Festival Marquee  |
|                                  | 10.15pm             | <b>Fireworks &amp; Beacon</b>   | Church Drift  |
| Tuesday<br>5 <sup>th</sup> June  | 11.00am             | <b>Jubilee Oak Tree</b>   | Toft Wood   |

Some Diamond Jubilee images:



Scarecrow making workshop at Brookside



Erecting the marquee in the Festival Meadow



Molly dancers on Church Road, Toft  
Diamond Jubilee & Spring Feast 2012



The winner, Scarecrow Competition (Josephine and Nick, Miller's Rd)



Maypole dancing in the marquee (bad weather outside!)



Toft Session musicians at the Variety Show



Keith Collett on his tractor, farming exhibition



Tug-o-war at the Sports Day



Koran Collett: stand-up comedy at the Variety Show,  
Toft Diamond Jubilee & Spring Feast June 2012



The bus shelter, Toft Diamond Jubilee & Spring Feast, June 2012

The bus shelter decorated



“The Queen” attends the Sports Day



Clifford Tebbit, Martin Yeadon (Chair, Parish Council), John McGill (sculptor) at the inauguration of the Jubilee Oak, Toft Wood