

Points on origin of the Glastonbury Carnival

There appeared in the edition of the Central Somerset Gazette (CSG), dated 9th November 1854.

An organised Procession took place on the 5th November. This appears to say that there was a procession of carnival of some sort in 1854, thus giving rise to the point that the Glastonbury Carnival was established some 138 years' ago.

There appears references to Carnival Processions over the years up to 1870 when the following letter appeared in the CSG.

Dear Sirs,

Our attention has been ;lately occupied by the report of the Government Inspector sent to Glastonbury to inspect the nuisance which exists in our Town. I mean such as one which occurred on Saturday night last. THE FIRING OF SQUIBS and other things, exposing property to fire. If those entrusted with Law and Order in the Town will not do their duty, the sooner we get the stipendiary magistrate in their place the better.

Signed: A LOVER OF LAW AND ORDER

We now come to 1875.

Bonfire Night was a decidedly tame affair compared with other years, old hands have given way to youngsters and the result was anything but favourable to those who liked to see the anniversary kept up with ECLAT. There was no procession (OBSERVERS WILL NOTE THIS REMARK, IT APPEARS THAT ALTHOUGH NO MENTION HAS BEEN MADE IN THE PRESS , THERE MUST HAVE BEEN PROCESSIONS HELD PREVIOUSLY). No Guy and very few Tar Barrels. (This reference to Tar Barrels bears out the point that for many years it was the practice on the 5th November, to race down the High Street with lighted Tar Barrels.)

1860-70

No Band. Were it not for a few Bonfires and a display of first class Squibbing it would have been difficult to believe it was the 5th November. Two GLASS WINDOWS were broken at the Rev. Allnuts residence. Avalonians have grown tired of Bonfire Festivals.

The next reference to Bonfire Night is 1880

It reads:

The Anniversary of the frustration of the gunpowder plot was celebrated with more than the usual spirit on Friday evening. Proceedings commenced with a Firework Carnival in Benedict Street School, admission was by ticket, here the fun ran high, music was provided by the AVALONIANS BAND. Soon after 9pm the Band paraded the Town and spirits were aroused. At the top of the Town a procession was formed (FIRST MENTION OF AN ORGANISED PROCESSION) and marched to the Market Place (Cross). Squibs and crackers were let off en route. Around the Cross and up the Town again to the strains of the Band, on turning at the top of the Town an individual took the lead with a Tar Barrel which he bore aloft in triumph and at last

deposited it in front of Mr Barnes shop, where it blazed away cheerfully (AGAIN THIS REFERENCE TO LIGHTED TAR BARRELS). The proceeds were brought to an end at 11pm, when the Deputy Chief Constable told the crown that he would not summons anyone for what had been done previously. This piece of good Generalship earned Deputy BISGROVE three hearty cheers and the crowd dispersed.

One can only assume that these festivities continued over the years on the 5th November, as we still have references to the lighted Tar Barrels and races with them down the High Street to the Cross. The High Street then was nothing but a dirt track.

1848-55

Open sewers ran down the High Street and in 1865 the Town Council made a reference that Cholera might be expected..

1891

In the year 1891, the Avalon Independent, the local newspaper, carried a two-page story of events which occurred in that year leading up to the November celebration. Two sets of Masqueraders appear on the scene a) The 'BONFIRE BOYS' who had been responsible for many years' organising the November Bonfire on November 5th. b) a new body came along, naming themselves the CARNIVAL CLUB. These could not agree as to who would now organise the Bonfire Night. A Public Meeting was called and several hundred people attended. It was resolved to appoint a new Committee to be styled 'The Glastonbury ad District Carnival Club', but alas the BONFIRE BOYS did not agree with this proposal and decided to carry on as before. Disagreement continued right up to and including the Bonfire Night. To mark their differences the BONFIRE BOYS arranged a huge bonfire at the top of the Town and the New Committee arranged one on the Cross. Two processions were held. They paraded through Benedict Street, Magdalene Street, Bere Lane, Chilkwell Street, Manor House Road and along Northload Street. It is noted that the two processions met in Northload Street, where they were very 'polite' to each other and made room for each to pass by. At the conclusion of the processions, Carnivalists gave a grand display of Fireworks in the Market Place, Tar Barrels were lit in the High Street, the fun was kept up 'til Midnight. At this time Mr BISGOOD, Deputy Chief Constable, appeared and congratulated everyone on such a peaceful display, he said his Officers had enjoyed a 'night free of duty', the crowd called for three cheers for the popular Deputy Chief Constable, the Fire Brigade then extinguished all fires and the crowd wended their way home. (This is a condensed report of the article which appeared in the Avalon Independent 7th November 1891.)

Returning to Bonfire Night

A meeting was held of the Glastonbury Bonfire Boys in the Crown Hotel, on Monday 17th October 1900. To consider what steps should be taken to celebrate November 5th. It was resolved to hold a Bonfire and Carnival on the Cross on the 5th November but no procession. The Town Band to be in attendance. The meeting was given a Balance Sheet for the past year of £3-9-5 (old money). WE STILL HAVE THESE REFERENCES TO PROCESSIONS AND CARNIVALS THIS MUST PROVE THAT GLASTONBURY HELD CARNIVALS OF SORTS IN THE 1800s.

1901

The Guy Fawkes Anniversary was feebly celebrated on Tuesday. The Town was enveloped in a pall of Fog, which dampened the effect of a few fitful Squibs let of by juveniles. There were no Bonfires.

1902

Beyond the desultory explosion of a cracker or diminutive Squib by the juvenile element, Guy Fawkes Day once so spiritedly kept up in Glastonbury was as during the past few years, allowed to pass unobserved.

1914-18

There were no celebrations.

1920

The following appeared in the CSG.

Glastonbury Guy Fawkes Carnival like many other old time local customs has now been relegated to 'Has Been'. Since it has disappeared from our midst, the festivities have been unorganised and spasmodic, but we were not allowed altogether to forget the 5th November. There was a large exodus to Bridgwater Carnival on Thursday last. However some did have a Bonfire at Hill Head and Chilkwell Street for the children to dance around.

I believe that this report in the press was the turning point in the local Carnival and Bonfire Night. To summarise the past 70-80 years, there was always some kind of celebration held on 5th November within the Town. Some squibbing, some marching of bands, there were points around the Town where bonfires were traditionally held: Chilkwell Street, Hill Head and the Cross. It must be recognised that the procession was held well before 1900, how otherwise was it necessary for the Glastonbury Bonfire Boys to produce a Balance Sheet to their Meeting in 1900.

We come now to the first organised procession, a forerunner of our present day Carnival.

1921-22

There is a Public House in Chilkwell Street, names the Rifleman's Arms, it was in this Public House that the regulars first talked over organising a Chilkwell Guy Fawkes Carnival. THIS IS THE HOME OF GLASTONBURY CHILKWELL GUY FAWKES CARNIVAL. There were some dozen stalwarts at this meeting. Namely:-

Harry Ford	William Hersey	Harry Maidment
Frank Talbot	Frank Green	Len Fowen
Frank Green	Les Walters	Jim Maidment
Lou Nurse	Sgt Goddard	Fred Mortimore

to name but a few. THESE ARE THE FOUNDERS OF THE PRESENT CARNIVAL.

5th November 1923

Several days before there were indications of approaching fun. On the 5th November a large party of Masqueraders paraded the Town with a guy with frequent explosions of Squibs. A number of Bonfires were lit, Benedict Street, Hill Head and Chilkwell

Street, where dancing took place in the paddock, corner of Bere Lane and Chilkwel Street. Refreshments were provided by Harry Maidment, a barrel of cider was soon consumed.

1925

Carnival celebrations of Guy Fawkes in Glastonbury. A large fire was lit in Chilkwel Street, by kind permission of farmer Geo Mapstone, after the procession around the Town, a squibbing display was held in Chilkwel Street. In the CSG paper an advert appeared for the Wells City Carnival Procession prize money to be £50.

It is now we get some records of the Carnival Funds. William Hersey, was the Treasurer (recall him well). In 1928 he recorded a total income of £11-3-4 (old money). With organised processions came to TORCHES, these were cans of paraffin held on a long pole, with a thick taper into the tin. When lit they would burn for several hours, thus several around a 'cart' would give it added lighting. Many carts were now coming from Bridgwater and surrounding Areas. (There were no cars around then.) This was my first entry into the Carnival Procession, I entered as a Chinaman. The route was Chilkwel Street (start) down the High Street, Benedict Street, back up again, (carts were very small) into Magdalene Street, up Fisher's Hill and Bere Lane to Chilkwel Street. Lots of stories are around of these old days. One of Lou Nurse (farmer) in Cinnamon Lane, Lou purloined an old Gypsy Caravan. At the top of Coursing Batch, he lit the stove inside, with damp wood. This smoked so badly that Mr Cozens who lived in the house at the top of the hill was so badly smoked out that he was forced to leave his home and call the Fire Brigade. Another tale from an old Glastonian. Horses were used to draw the 'Carts' in these early days. One such 'Cart' came around as far as Fisher's Hill, where the competitors on the cart felt need of refreshment in the Globe Inn. Jack Fox was mine host, when they came out of the pub, after a quick half, they found that someone had stolen their horses and could not take further part in the Carnival. These were times when Carnival was fun and everything was taken as part of Carnival. Incidentally, we all got 6 pence (old money) to carry a torch around the town.

To ensure the future of Carnivals, this Committee held raffles, Harvest Home Sales, Jumble Sales, house to house collections, Sacred Concerts, Dances in the Assembly Rooms, Horse racing in the Abbey Park, Fetes and open air dances in the Park. Along this time the local children were given a Xmas Party, always a big day just before Christmas, this was held in the Assembly Rooms.

1934

We have the first mention in the records of a Carnival Queen, together with her MAIDS they received £2 (200) for dresses.

Some items in the Balance Sheet of 1936 read Carnival Prize Money £31, Powder for Dance Floor 1 Shilling and 6 pence, hire of Burtle Band 16 Shillings, Dance Assembly Rooms £2-7-6 pence, hire Town Band £1, refreshments for Wells City Fire Brigade 8 Shillings, Town Band 6 Shillings and 4 pence (all these figures are in old money).

1939- 45 No carnivals were held.

1946

New names now appeared in the Treasurer's accounts. Several clubs from Bridgwater now came to the Town, two in particular, Lime Kiln C.C. and the Golden Lion C.C.. One from Wells, Clare's C.C.

1952

In this year a new phase commenced, the formation of a County Carnival Association. Glastonbury did not enter in it first year, but saw the prudence of entry in 1953. This Association was formed to ensure that Rules were the same for all participating carnivals, safety and a degree of standards maintained.

1960

The CSG became a source of information again. Public Houses were closed at 11pm. The Carnival commenced at 7pm and was ended by 8.30pm. The Devonshire Arms C.C. Bridgwater won the Open Tableau and Lime Kiln C.C. Bridgwater the Open Feature. Street Collection was £127.

1963

In this year came calamity. The Carnival Committee decided they could not organise a Carnival this year, they said the combined loss on the two previous Carnivals had been £19 and the cost of producing this year's Carnival would be £200.

On the 22nd November, it was decided by members of the public to hold a Carnival of sorts. Hundreds of people turned out to see members of King William C.C. stage the event, 5 gaily decorated floats followed the Lime Kiln C.C. of Bridgwater 'Cart' King William members paraded the Carnival Queen Float, Mr Ian Underwood was 'carnival Queen'. Wick C.C. entered a float 'Fiesta Time'. THIS CARNIVAL WAS SAVED.

1964

Carnival carts were now much improved, an occasional horse drawn 'cart' appeared, mostly with the Young farmers Clubs and still very popular with the spectators. The old Torches had disappeared in the late 1950s, from now on the farm tractors were appearing together with a small generator for lighting. The new Committee had been formed, Messrs Morland, Northover, showed interest, Mr Humphry Morland asked Cllr Maurice Bush to take over the Carnival and offered him support, this Cllr Bush did supported by Ron Moss as Secretary (both from Chilkwel Street).

1965

It was in this year that Ron Moss retired and Ennie Holley took his place (another member from Chilkwel Street). Hard times were still experienced losses on Carnival were reported in 1965, 66, 67 and 68. Somehow the Carnival survived. Carts were improving, with the introduction of the Chippenham Crackpots as the main collectors things began to improve, they together with such stalwarts as Mrs Hellins, (who always came back with a full tin) collected some £100 each time.

1974

In 1974 our local Clubs King William and Wick were joined by the Falcons C.C. (Walton), Goldfinch C.C., Avalon C.C. and the Phantoms C.C.. We were also now getting support from Wells and the surrounding Area. Carnival was now on the up. A new Association was formed in the 1970s, the Mid-Somerset Gangs and Features.

This was good for our Carnival, we now had rules and conditions of entry to which all affiliated Clubs had to comply. However Bridgwater Clubs still dominated the Prize List.

1982

It was in 1982 that our Chairman, Cllr Maurice Bush passed away, his place as Chairman was taken by Cllr Hugh Barker.

1987

This year for the first time the street collection went over the £10,000 mark. Prize Money was now well over £6,000. The Avalon Round Table in the last 1980s took over the street collection. It was now that our King William C.C. was challenging the Bridgwater Clubs. We now have 100,000 spectators attending the Carnival.

BONFIRE & CARNIVAL AT GLASTONBURY**“THE GLORIOUS FIFTH”****“LOOKING BACKWARDS”**

In all the history of our snug little borough, no event perhaps has exercised a greater amount of influence upon the public mind than the Guy Fawkes Carnival of 1891, celebrated with all due pomp ...

The affair partook of a somewhat disjointed character on account of the rivalry between two sections of the masqueraders known respectively as The Carnival Club and The Bonfire Boys, and thereby hangs a tale. In the year 1889 a few of the old hands were asked to send out circulars to get a few friends together to carry out the bonfire as it should be. A secretary was appointed pro tempore to send out between 30 and 40 notices, several of which were sent to members of the now Carnival Club. It is said that the only responses to these were from two gentlemen, one of whom from his official capacity, was unable to take part in the scheme. Of course it rained on the eventful night, but the moisture of the atmosphere did not prevent the Boys from carrying out fully the proposed programme. Up to the present time the Fifth has been observed in the latest approved fashion, the “Old Firm” adhering to the principles of business to the extent of publishing a balance sheet from year to year. Last year, it will be remembered, the pluvial authorities were unusually generous, and the over-plus of rain which fell throughout the evening had a tendency to put a damper on everything, bonfire-boys not exempted. A few weeks later a public meeting was convened in the Town Hall, and about a hundred of the townspeople assembled in response. The idea of establishing a Carnival Club was then mooted, and after a free and full discussion it was resolved by a large majority to put the suggestion into tangible shape, and accordingly the new venture was styled “The Glastonbury and District Carnival Club” and a provisional committee was appointed to draft rules and discharge various other functions appertaining to the launching of the club. Whilst on the matter of this Committee a question was asked as to who constituted the Committee of “The Old Firm”. In response Mr Stanley Squires (hon. sec.) handed a list of names to one of the now hon. secs. of the Carnival Club, but intimated that he was not authorised to act on behalf of his confreres. Subsequently several of the Old ‘uns were nominated to serve on the provisional Committee, but these withdrew their names, on the ground that the whole of the Bonfire Boys Committee should be nominated, they having borne the brunt of the work in by-gone days. It was further argued that the Boys had a large membership, and a substantial fund at their banks, and that, therefore they were entitled to election en masse on the provisional Committee of the new organisation. This, however, was not the mind of the Committee of the New Firm, and the result was that the “Boys” decided to wash their hands of the whole affair and to carry out their own programme as in previous years. Things went on for several months in this way; the Carnival Club adopted rules of the provisional committee, elected its officers and took such steps as were necessary to formulate plans for the forthcoming Fifth. The “Boys” did ditto at their headquarters, and latterly each part has held meetings, some committee and some general, almost every week. The new Firm appointed collectors, and the Old Firm did likewise and for several weeks past the town has been vigorously canvassed for “tin”, the unfortunate citizen having to decide between the merits of the rival ‘firms’

and fork out in conformity thereto, or else subscribe equally to both. The bonfire boys disclaim the assertion that they are a rival party, arguing that having occupied the carnival arena for several years prior to the advent of the New Firm, can in respect thereof lay claim to being the 'old established' party, while the Carnivalites are obviously the intruders. On the other hand it is contended that the Boys never were an organised body, and that the Carnival Club therefore stand first and foremost in this respect. After the first meeting of the latter in November of last year the Bonfire Boys Committee, not being asked (so they say) to stand as a body on the general committee of the new club, declined to act, feeling that they had not been fairly dealt with. Time passed away, and then a delegates' meeting was arranged, and the overtures were very satisfactorily accepted on both sides and the amalgamation (for which a certain Civic Father has prayed fervently and unceasingly of late) was pretty generally considered to be complete, but then came the bone of contention. The New Club already had a committee of 30 members and it was felt that it would be a bad business to dismiss any of these. The Old Firm were numerically the smaller body, and in view of these two points, the New Club decided that in the event of amalgamation the Boys (should have less representation) on the General Committee. This was considered by the Boys to be a violation of the contract entered into by both sides at the delegates' meeting, and announced that unless the Carnival Club would consent to equal representation on the Committee, they (the Boys) would withdraw their consent to the amalgamation. The Carnivalites, however, were determined to stick to their point, and so between the two stools, the much desired union between the two factions very complacently fell to the ground. During the past fortnight party feeling has waged high in the town, and a certain amount of ill-feeling has been occasioned in consequence. It was generally felt that there being such a strained relationship between the two parties a regular "bust up" on the eventful night was inevitable. The common mode of salutation in the streets for several weeks was "Old Firm" or "New Firm", and it became quite proverbial to swear by the Carnival. Thanks however to the efforts of several influential people, the two parties were prevailed upon to adopt different routes on the evening in question, and an amalgamation in the matter of the bonfires was brought about, the Bonfire Boys consenting to build the fire on the cross and the Carnival Club that at the top of the town. This is briefly how the 'machinery' of the event stood up to last evening.

Glorious weather favoured the pageant, which was attended by several thousand persons, including a number of excursionists, visitors from Street, Walton, Baltonsborough, Meare, Pennard, Westhay, Wells, Godney, Butleigh etc.

Early in the morning immense quantities of fuel were collected in the Market-place and at the top of the town, and monster fires were built later in the day, Mr. Jim PHILLIPS being chief fireman. The torch was applied to the piles about seven o'clock, and an hour later the fires were burning brightly and merrily.

THE BONFIRE BOYS

They met together at the top of the town at seven o'clock when the huge bonfire already prepared there was ignited. The preliminary matters having been got through, a procession was marshalled and proceeded through High Street in the following order. First came the torchbearers in goodly numbers, followed by the 'magnificent' banner of the Order on which was inscribed the words "The Old Brigade". Then came the Street (old) brass band (Bandmaster Mr. Albert Hosper) who played a spirited air. A number of signal lights, i.e. tar barrels under the guidance of the renowned Beef-eater Mr. John Chivers, were followed by masqueraders in goodly numbers, including the Prince of Clowns (Mr. Charles Haines), 'Night and Day' (Mr. Frank England) a capital character, the dress being half white and half black, 'The Australian Gold-digger' (Mr A. Baily), 'Night and Morn', (Mr. D. Dunthorn), a costume of black and red, etc. The ever-green Guy Fawkes occupied the first car, and in the opinion of everybody, the arch-traitor 'took the cake'. The effigy was about 20 feet high and was of immense proportions. The face, a very wicked one, was covered with grizzly beard and surmounted with a high cocked hat. Over the shoulders was thrown a red cloak fringed with yellow. The hands were encased in white gauntlets and one of them grasped the immortal lantern. The legs were jointed, and a man in the bottom of the car manipulated the strings and kept the effigy's pedals dancing about to the music of the band. Then came a posse of torch bearers, under the direction of the boss of Wells-road, Mr John Page, and it must be mentioned that the effect produced by the innumerable lights was uncommonly good. Another batch of signal lights succeeded and these in turn were followed by more torch bearers. The popular jockeys of the day (Messrs. R Champion and Brooks) came next, the former mounted on "Common" and the latter on "Deemster". The second car was a really smart representation of H.M. Ship 'The Lady Brue', manned by twenty jolly tars, notable amongst whom were Messrs. Major and Claydon. As the procession moved along the coloured fire was ignited and aft of the 'vessel' and the tars lustily sang the chorus of the popular song 'Sailing'. Following this was a capital model of a gun, measuring from 19 to 20 feet in length, and labelled "The Old Firm". The A detachment of Artillery guarded the 'early closer', under the command of Mr. A. Lisk. Then came a battalion of the Queen's own 'Mocus' riders with ribbons and flowers, and the riders dressed in fancy garb. The 'Witches' a Shakespearian tableau, which followed next in order, was unquestionably the feature of the procession. This was a car canopied with laurels and ivy; in the centre was the cauldron, in which were stationed three witches. (..... stand was responsible for the staging of the piece. Each character was armed with the most mysterious of crooked sticks, and was to all appearances deeply engrossed in invoking evil spirits to their aid. A weird effect was continuously produced by the burning of the coloured fire in the fire underneath the cauldron. The witches were represented by Messrs. W. Edmunds, H. Tucker and G. Lester. Then came the celebrated clowns just imported from Barnum's with their eight-day donkey "Sambo". The antics of these celebrities-Messrs. Godfrey and Sharpe, were highly entertaining. A gang of masqueraders representing Buffalo Bill, Turks, Niggers, Red Jackets, Zulus and the King of 'Snouts', attracted considerable attention, their costumes being particularly good, and their general appearance adding immensely to the effectiveness of the procession. The 'Dancing Bear' (Mr. J.W.C. Pearce) was thoroughly domesticated, and his performance gained him enviable renown. Mr. T. H. Harrington came out in the character of a Devonshire Volunteer, and was a rare get up. The donkey chariot which brought up the rear of the display was occupied by two of the funniest of funny

clowns – Messrs. T. King and H. Strode, both of whom displayed well-timed jocularly. If course there were hundreds of minor characters in the procession, whom space will not permit of our noticing individually. To one and all we offer our hearty congratulation on the exhibition which they each so ably contributed to. On reaching the Cross, a move was made towards the residence of Mr. H. Hanham, and as the procession paraded through Northland Street, the effect produced by the various coloured lights, monster squibs and the costumes and set pieces was charming. On returning to the Cross, the procession passed that of the Carnival Club near the Lamb Inn, but to the credit of all concerned be it said, the utmost order and good manners(?) prevailed. A move was made to Benedict Street, and from thence in turn Magdalene Street, Manor House Road, and High Street were visited, the band inspiring everybody with the lively music that they played. Mr. S. Squires acted in the capacity of Marshal, being picturesquely attired. All along the route of the procession coloured fires were ignited and squibs of “fine and large” calibre were continually let off, so that everything looked bright and animated throughout. Subsequently the Market-place was resorted to, and here the Boys disported themselves to their hearts’ content. Frequently the Band paraded the High Street, and was followed by the masqueraders, who baptized the spectators lining the streets with showers of fire from their squibs. In due course, Guy Fawkes was tried by Court Martial, sentenced to be burned, and amidst the cheers of the Old Brigade, was consigned to the flames. We are requested to state that the Boys feel themselves much indebted to Mr. R. Hanham, of the Rose and Crown, for the many services he has from time to time rendered the cause; to Mr. W. Lewis, who has expended time and energy in helping to arrange matters; to Mr. R. Champion, for the use of his pony and trap and personal services; to Mr. Idiens, to S. & D.R. Co. for the loan of wagons; and to the general public for their kind pecuniary assistance which enabled the Old Brigade to celebration the time-honoured Carnival in accordance with their high prestige.

THE CARNIVAL CLUB COSTUMES COMPETITION

The members and friends of the Carnival Club assembled shortly before seven o’clock in the Fair-Field in Benedict Street, and here the tedious process of marshalling was (promptly performed. The (?) Committee offered prizes for the best costumes, single, double and groups, and the judging took place in the field. The judges were Rev. H.L. Barnwell, and Messrs. E.B. Sly and J.A. Bright, and owing to lack of management in arranging for the Competition, these gentlemen experienced a somewhat trying time of it. “Come and be judged, you naughty boy,” was the joke on everybody’s lips. The cars were drawn up in line to be judged, whilst a ring was formed for the inspection of the masqueraders, the spectators holding aloft lighted torches.

There were over a hundred competitors, and some of the dresses were exceedingly smart; there was a close run for the prizes awarded. First honours (15/-) for the best tableau was unhesitatingly awarded to the car representing Britannia. This was a massive structure, rising tier upon tier to the height of 20 feet, and on the summit was seated Britannia with her trident, and at her feet were soldiers and sailors. On the lowest tier were stationed a number of British subjects from every point of the globe, all of whom were effectively dressed in characteristic costume. John Bull (Mr.

Cridland), was a splendid make-up, as was also the Zulu (Mr. Culverwell). The second prize (10s), went to a most realistic representation of the Tor-hill tower; and the third (8s), to the Electric Barber's Shop; the fourth (6s), to Robin Hood and his merry men; and the fifth (5s), to the "Darkest African" Minstrels. In the competition for double costumes the Ring clowns (Messrs. E.H. Roach and E.R. Williams) with their chariot artistically decorated with comic sketches by our "local Boz" and tandem donkeys carried off the first award (10s 6d). Owing to lack of entries in this department the judges decided not to award second and third prizes, but gave a fourth award to a happy couple "Darby and Joan" (Messrs Churchill and Hiscox). For single masqueraders there was a capital display, "King Hal" (Mr. W.T.M. Tucker) carried all before him in his costume being artistic and elegant, and it was an easy matter for the judges to award him the premier honours (7s 6d). Mephistopheles (Mr. F. Pollett) came second (6s), The Zulu (Bert Fisher) third (5s); The Bear (a Baltonsborough boy) fourth (3s) and the Jockey (unknown), fifth (2s 6d). The decision of the judges gave general satisfaction.

THE PROCESSION

Started from the Fair-Field shortly before eight o'clock, and paraded all the principal streets of the town in the following order:- Benedict Street, Magdalene Street, Bere Lane, Chilkwell Street, Lambrook Street, High Street, Northload Street, Manor House Road, returning to the Market Place. First came torch bearers innumerable, most of whom were fantastically dressed. The torches, of which there were about 150, were composed of yard poles with tin cisterns, each having a two inch wick-holder, being calculated to hold a pint and half of oil. The effect produced was capital, the torches burning clear and giving good light without the volumes of smoke which render the old tar torches so objectionable. Then came the celebrated Glastonbury Brass and Reed Band (27 performers) under the conductorship of Mr. E.F. Huish. Preceded and flanked by torch bearers followed the Glastonbury Fire Brigade in full uniform under the command of Capt. E.V.P. Barker and Lieut. A.A. Blakiston. The members were located on their engine, which was drawn by four spirited horses with postillions. Then came a party of masqueraders representing the various nations of the earth, each in characteristic native garb, and carrying the flags typical of the nationalities. This was an exceedingly clever feature. A decidedly smart and novel car came next illustrative of Robin Hood and his Merry Men. The car, which was drawn by two horses, was embellished with fir trees and evergreens, and contained Robin Hood (Mr. Geo. Curtis), Will Scarlet (Mr. C. Mills), Friar Tuck (Mr H.J. Carpenter), Maid Marion (Mr. A. James) Little John (Mr E. Pester), Allan Adale (Mr. C. Burns). The various characters were splendidly got up and as the car was illuminated with coloured fire, the effect was strikingly pretty. "The Electric Barber's Shop" followed, and was the source of endless amusement. The car was fitted up as a shaving establishment, and the officiating barber (Mr R Vile), who wore a business-like air and a white apron was disclosed operating upon a couple of victims in a most "life-like" manner. The shaving brush was about two yards long, the razor – warranted "best Sheffield steel" – was proportionately huge, and the comb might have done service for kitchen garden pailings. The assistant barber, who wielded a pair of immense scissors in a hair dressing operation, was impersonated by Mr. W. Clark. Then came another conspicuous gang of masqueraders, all of whom were most picturesquely attired, and whose smart appearance was generally admired. An extraordinary feature of the procession was the car on which was displayed a splendid model of the Tor Hill Tower. This unique piece of workmanship (for the

construction of which Mr. A. R. Williams, one of the honorary secretaries was responsible) measured 15ft. by 6ft. and was composed of canvas stretched on a wooden frame. The exterior was realistically painted by our local artist, even the carved figures on the original being depicted. This model was surrounded by a group of notabilities, charmingly dressed. A batch of torch bearers followed, and then came a distinguished personage "Boss of the Road from Blow Hard Corner" (Mr. W. E. Renshaw) who was attired in a huge broad trimmed hat, red wig, America Imperial white Newmarket coat with stars and stripes, breeches and top boots, and who drove a pony attached to a 'spring' gig. One of the features of the procession was the miniature car drawn by two donkeys, and on which was seated the two inimitable King Clowns – "uncle Joe" and "Tompkins" (Messrs. E.H. Roach and A.R. Williams) in company with their "leetle dawg". Both Clowns were grotesquely attired, one wearing a skull cap and the other a sugar-loafer bearing the inscription "How do you do?" preceded and guarded on either side by torch bearers came the immortal Guy Fawkes, borne aloft on the shoulders of several men, the archtraiter being drawn by a pair of horses. This was the nigger troupe each of whom manipulated an instrument of some kind and filled the air with nigger songs and absurdities. The following composed the troupe:- Messrs. W. Pearce, A. Pearce, A. Dunthorn, T. Kerridge, J. King, W. Bryant, and R. Marsh. Next in order was the 'performing bear' accompanied by its keeper. Then followed the Baltonsborough "Star of the East" Brass Band (conductor Mr. A. Silcox), and in the rear came The St. Dunstan's Brigade, under the of His Satanic Majesty now on furlough (Mr. J. Bond), St. Dunstan was impersonated by Mr. Stacey, whose get-up was very clever. There were representations of "The Charge of the Light Brigade", Buffalo Bill with his rough and tumble riders, "Red-skirts", "Huntsmen", "His Eminence, Ally Sloper, F.O.M.", direct from the Sloperies, Mr. W.T.M. Tucker appeared as Henry VIII, in the following costume:- Cloak of red velvet, silver brocaded jacket, grey and amber satin breeches, black velvet court shoes, grey hat and plume. The 'rig-out' was mounted with silver braid and buttons, and was one of the chief features of the procession. Mr. F. Pollett impersonated the renowned Mephistopheles, in 'Faust', and was becomingly attired in a costume of black and red loose blouse with cloak and tight fitting pants, and was in every respect a warm and sparkling character. The rear of the display was brought up by the grand car representing Britannia. Her Majesty, (Mr. F. Bautch), fully robed, was seated on a raised dais covered with the national colours, and was surrounded by 22 subjects, the whole forming a most picturesque tableau.

The Marshalls of the procession was Messrs. W. H. Higgins, H. Hanham and the Hon Secs. (Messrs. Williams and H. Sanders), the former being dressed in a costume of Silver Mail.

As the procession moved through the town the various cars were illuminated with coloured fire, whilst fireworks, such as squibs, Roman candles, shells, rockets, triangular wheels, huge gerbs, flying pigeons, cobars, golden rains, aerial murrions, Chinese flyers and fountains, were discharged on route.

At the conclusion of the procession the Carnivalites gave a grand display of fireworks in the Market-place, and the fun was kept up until midnight.

COMPLIMENTARY

Shortly before twelve o'clock Mr. Bisgood, D.C.C. appeared on the scene and briefly congratulated the "moving spirits" on the success which had attended the demonstration and the perfect good feeling with which the proceedings had been carried out, and also that his men had practically enjoyed a night free of duty. One of the crowd called for cheers for the popular Deputy Chief, and this was responded to heartily by all present.

The Fire Brigade then brought out their Engine and pumped a volume of water on the remnants of the fire, totally extinguishing it, and the Bonfire Boys and the Carnivalites wended their way to their respective homes, not however, before cheering for the "Old Firm", and the "New Firm". The arduous duties of the hon. secs. to the Carnival Club were admirably discharged by Messrs. Williams and Saunders, to whom the utmost credit is due. The Carnivalites are indebted to their Marshall (Mr. W. Higgins); Mr. Elston for the use of his yard, wagons etc, and the general public who supported the Club funds.

THE BONFIRE BOYS AND THE CARNIVAL CLUB.

BIRDSEYE VIEW OF THE DEMONSTRATION

"The great th'important day" big with the fate of the above mentioned institutions has come and gone, and all that remains this morning of the glorious Carnival are a couple of heaps of ashes and charred wood, and an extraordinary amount of brown paper strewn about the market place. Truly it was a remarkable sight, and to those who for the first time in their lives received a generous baptism of fire, will not soon be forgotten. By a strange freak of the water god no rain fell all the evening, indeed a cloudless sky (gave fine weather from beginning to end) (?). It is to be regretted that the affair was carried out by two rival parties, but it was a due amount of consideration, must be allowed for the exuberance of a section of the old and the New Times. The first indication that something unusual was 'on the board' took place at early morning when two large bonfires were built, one on the Market-place and the other at the top of the town. Later in the day the shopkeepers in the High Street and the Market-place, who were unprovided with shutters wisely had their shop windows covered, some with boards and others with wet canvas, as a protection against the explosives anticipated at a more advanced hour. Shortly after six o'clock visitors commenced pouring into the town; traps heavily laden (came from the surrounding villages, others were conveyed by the proprietors of the railway buses.) Very soon the streets became densely populated, and one had to elbow one's way through the crowd to get from the cross to the station. The Carnival Club Members went to the Cricket field where their paraphernalia awaited them. The masqueraders numbering several hundred, soon took their allotted positions, and the Judges (the Rev. H.L. Barnwell and Messrs. Bright and Sly) got through their work of judging the various costumes and awarding prizes according to merit. The torches was all then lit, and the various carts properly illuminated, and about eight o'clock all was in readiness for the start. Mr. W. Higgins, who wore a splendid costume of silver mail, performed the duties of Marshal with great tact and promptitude, and under his guidance the details of the pageant were well displayed. The procession looked extremely picturesque as it left the rendezvous, and the spectators cheered heartily particularly when the final car – Britannia – hove in sight. The tableaux were all cleverly done, everything being carried out in an elaborate and imposing scale. Some of he costumes were works of

art, notably that of Mr. W.T.M. Tucker (King Henry VIII). The Procession was about a quarter of a mile in length, and was composed entirely of masqueraders in fancy costume. Even the bands (the Glastonbury Band, the 'Star of the East' Baltonsborough) donned special attire, the former wearing white helmets, and the latter, soldiers' uniform. The Bonfire Boys congregated at the top of the town at seven o'clock, and were promptly marshalled in procession by Mr S. Squire, who wore the garb of the Royal Engineers.

There were two exceedingly clever set pieces, one a vessel, "The Lady Brue", manned by sailors in costume, and the other a realistic tableau, representing the Witch scene in Hamlet. Then there was a detachment of Artillery in charge of the 101 ton gun which rejoiced in the name of the "Old Firm". Other novel features of the procession were arranged in order with a view to effect, conspicuous positions being of course occupied by the signal lights. The Street Brass Band were chartered for the occasion and leading the way they started off at the word of command through High street and from thence to Northload street. Now a good many people imagined that if the two parties met in the street there would be a free fight. True, such an occurrence would not have given rise to any great amount of surprise, but that neither party intended to create a disturbance was soon proved inasmuch as the Old Firm met the Carnival Club mid way in Northload street, and those the road at that point was narrow and the two processions cleared one another admirably and not an ill word or an offensive action came under our notice. Later on the processionists passed and repassed in High street, and but for a lot of good-natured chaff on both sides, nothing unparliamentarily took place. This is to the credit to all concerned; to the Bonfire Boys especially as they felt themselves the aggrieved party in the matter of the amalgamation which was suggested a few weeks previous. The Carnival Club concluded their peregrinations first and the Fire Engine and cars were haled away forthwith. The 'Old Brigade', however preferred to give the public the benefit of their united display and for fully an hour after the other party had ceased operations they paraded the streets of the town. Ultimately a final halt was made on the cross; the cars taken to a place of safety; Guy Fawkes effigy (one of the best we have ever seen, and a credit to the Brigade) was drawn up alongside of the Monument; the boys settled down to squibbing, and the bands alternately discoursed short selections of music. There was plenty of smoke, banging, sparks, shouting and bustle all the evening and it was the fault of the spectators if they did not enjoy themselves. The Brigade claim to have had the most and the best of the squibs and it was evident that they intended the spectators to unanimously endorse the opinion, for they kept up the continual discharge for several hours. The (call from everybody) bar the Carnival Clubites was '**The Old Firm**', and often this was heard above the booming of the fireworks. Mr W. Higgins discharged some immense squibs and a splendid assortment of rockets and Roman candles. The Market-place was literally packed with spectators until nearly midnight, and the fun waxed fast and furious until a like period. The fire at the top of the town was occasionally visited by the bands followed by gangs with squibs, but the display of fireworks otherwise took place at the other end of the High street. The St Dunstan's Brigade, from Baltonsborough positioned their celebration at home and threw in their lot with the Carnival Club. In return for this we understand that the members of the later institution intend going over to Baltonsborough to-night for the purpose of making the Carnival in the village a thing to be looked back upon with awe and wonder. So far as we can gather this morning, the affair of the last evening passed off from beginning to end with éclat,

and the perfect harmony on both sides, and there is little doubt that next year this time will find the New and Old Firms happily amalgamated. May it be so.

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NOTES ...

There are sentences or parts of sentences contained within brackets. The words had to be guessed as the copy from which I transcribed this article was folded or damaged and the words were obliterated.

By today' standard there are many in-accuracies in both punctuation and the use of capital letters, however I have tried to adhere to the original phraseology, at times giving the appearance of inconsistency.

1950

Carnival Queens from 1950s

Carnival Queens from 1950s		Carnival Princess	
1950	Marina Collins	1989	Fleur Foster
1951	Gwen Chislett	1990	Shelley Frazier
1952	Eileen Watts	1991	Abby Vallender
1953	Marlene Harris	1992	Alice Kelly
1954	Mary Parsons	1993	Tanya Lambert
1955	Peggy White	1994	Jemma Walker
1956	Molly McCartney	1995	Melinda Webber
1957	Ruth Richards	1996	Melanie Day
1958	Peggy Durston	1997	Fern Webber
1959	Penelope Shears	1998	Katie Shepherd
1960	Doreen Pompey	1999	Kayleigh Ensor
1961		2000	Anna Pegg
1962	Penelope Searle	2001	Hannah Brown
1963	HOT RODD (Ian Underwood)	2002	Chelcie Hole
1964	Marilyn Allen	2003	Lauren Diment
1965	Bernice Tucker	2004	Sammie-Jo Avery
1966	Helen Crabb	2005	Lucy Helps
1967	Tina Atkins	2006	Emma Berry
1968	Carol Whitcombe	2007	Alice Helps
1969	Lyn Cogswell	2008	Ella Bremner
1970	Rachel Lecras		
1971	Elaine Dyer		
1972	Diane Lock		
1973	Geraldine Morse		
1974	Julie Martin		
1975	Mandy Billett		
1976	Michelle Walters		
1977	Rosa Carullo		
1978	Patricia Linham		
1979	Julie Groom		
1980			
1981	Joanna Look		
1982	Tracey Clarke		
1983	Suzanne Dando		
1984	Lorraine Elson		
1985	Lisa Hallett		
1986	Nadine Burns		
1987	Sheena Moore		
1988	Nicola Phelps		