

In the time when most of the district was covered with dense woods and the wild bear and deer roamed at large, a maypole was erected on the green at Pagnahill, near Stroud and merry making and modieval sports were enjoyed. The green was larger then than it is today and the original maypole has long since rotted but succeeding generations of villagers have kept the traditions alive and scores of maypoles have from time to time been erected on the same spot.

On Saturday, the noble pole which was 120 feet long when it was cut in 1929 is to be taken down for repainting. When it is re-ected later in the year there will once again be merrymaking around it and a revival of some of the old customs.

The "Mayor" of Paganhill will be in attendance. This office, filled again after a lapse of many years, is held by Mr. Ted Wheeler a popular local figure who has been a live wire in helping and encouraging the development of the virile community spirit for which Paganhill is now noted.

Tragedy recalled.

Paganhill maypole is one of the few remaining in the country and although it conjures up memories of jollity and fun, it has also been the cause of tragedy. While the pole was being erected in 1804 it slipped and fell on two children who were killed. This brought an end to the Whit Monday celebrations that year and for a long time resulted in a curtailment of the annual customs.

Just over 100 years ago the maypole needed replacing but funds were short and some of the villagers, determined to get a pole by hook or by crook, ~~chose~~ selected a tree in Penn Woods to make good the deficiency. Unfortunately for them they were caught in the act of taking the tree and as a result found themselves in the cells of Gloucester Prison.

Since then whitpounds or money making social events have provided the cash needed to buy new poles as they have bn required.

For well over 100 years the local Blanch family have bn prominently associated with the provision and care of the Maypole and it was the late Mr. Thomas Blanch, a venerable ~~local~~ ~~character~~ and respected local character and Mr. Job Bayliss, the licensee of the Old Crown Inn who selected the present maypole from the larch trees growing in Prinknash Woods. The pole weighs two tons and cost £10, the money being raised by public subscription.