

HARVEST FESTIVAL – WHAT WAS IT ALL ABOUT?

As summer draws to a close and the fields are cleared of crops, we turn our thoughts to the many ways that the harvest season has traditionally been marked across the country. Many harvest customs are connected with bringing in corn or other cereal crops. The final handful of corn stalks might then have been woven into a 'corn dolly'. This represented the spirit of the corn and was kept until the following spring to ensure a good harvest next year.

Harvest time involves a whole array of other crops too, including apples, cherries, hops and potatoes. For families living in polluted parts of London in the early half of the 20th century, an annual September trip to the hop fields of Kent provided a breath of fresh air. This was hardly Butlins; these were working holidays, and accommodation was cramped and unhygienic. But for many children, it was a rare chance to see the countryside, encountering their first cows and running free around the woods and fields.

Apples are picked a little later in the year, usually October. Over 2,500 varieties of these popular fruits were developed in the UK but nowadays it's hard to find more than a couple of types in supermarkets that have been grown here.

Naturally, a celebration of the harvesting of food often involves special feasts or dishes. Bread often featured. A loaf might be baked into the shape of a wheat sheaf, and on Lammass Day, the first of August, bread baked with freshly picked corn was taken into the local church to be blessed.

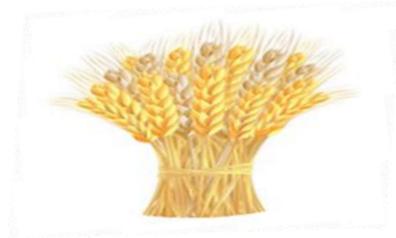
Harvest suppers, were traditionally hosted by the farmer. They brought together the community of people who'd helped bring in the crops as a way of saying thank you and celebrating a successful growing year.

As a species, have we lost touch with the seasons? Has globalisation meant that we can eat whatever we want, whenever we want? Have we lost the link with growing local, sustainable, flavoursome food?

The Covid-19 pandemic has perhaps taught us that community and our local environment are important and that the traditional ways are worth remembering.

Let's come together and celebrate the 2021 Harvest.

HARVEST FESTIVAL IN 2021



Date for your diary:

**Harvest Festival
Buffet Lunch
12.30 to 2.30pm
Sunday 10th October
Church Annex**

Let's bring tradition back to Plumpton & East Chiltington.

The corn is in. The apples have been picked. The excess fruits and vegetables have been bottled or frozen.

Join Rev Anne at All Saints Church on Sunday 10th October at 11am for a Harvest Festival service which will celebrate our local produce and give thanks for the food that will sustain us all through winter. It will be a truly joyous occasion.

Everyone is invited to a Harvest Festival Buffet Lunch in the Church Annex at 12.30 on Sunday 10th October. (You don't have to have been to the church service)

Come to lunch, if possible 'bring and share' food you have made, using produce from your own garden or from local sources.

If you are planning to come to the lunch, it would help if you could let us know so we can make sure we have enough food and drink for everyone.

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OPEN TO ALL

We hope to see you there!