

Friends of Putnoe Wood & Mowsbury Hillfort
Wassail 2019 with HEMLOCK MORRIS

All will make a formal procession, Piper, Wassail King and Queen, Morris, Friends of Putnoe Woods and invited guests.

Upon entering the orchard, all will process around the orchard whilst making as much noise as possible (*this is to scare away any evil spirits in the orchard*) by using musical instruments, biscuit tins, saucepan lids, etc. or shouting and clapping, until we and come to rest at the chosen tree.

****Hemlock Grove will bestow a Blessing upon the Tree.****



Mowsbury Hill Fort Wassail 2019 Ceremony

(Arrangement based on Horton Kirby Wassailing Ceremony)

The Royal Couple will be adorned with a golden nut for good luck!

All Sing “O’ Wassail, O’ Wassail”

Everyone chants the Wake-Up rhyme. (*This is because the fruit trees have fallen asleep for the winter*)

ALL: **Grand old Apple Tree, we have come to Wassail thee...**
May your branches be heavy, as your sweet apples grow
May you bring forth much fruit for us here below.

The **Wassail Queen** sprinkles Wassail onto the roots of the tree, (*cider from the Wassail Bowl*) whilst the **Wassail King** says these words...

Old Apple Tree, awake and grow - take nourishment from the earth below
Old Apple Tree, we anoint thine root - Great Bearer of our Autumn fruit
Old Apple Tree may your blossoms fall - then grow your apples for one and all
Old Apple Tree, to you good cheer - bring forth your fruit for us this year

(*Everyone ‘hints’ to the tree that they would like lots of apples by walking around the tree pretending to be carrying a heavy basket full of fruit.*)

Toast is hung onto branches of the tree by members of the Wassail group.
(*This is to encourage the good spirits to visit the tree in the form of Robins.*
These good spirits will help the tree to produce plenty of fruit.)

All sing “The Hillfort Wassail Song”

End of formal ceremony.



Here We Come A-Wassailing!

**Here we come a-wassailing, among the leaves so green,
Here we come a-wand'ring, so fair to be seen.**

*Love and joy come to you, and to your wassail, too,
And God bless you, and send you a Happy New Year,
And God send you a Happy New Year.*

**We are not daily beggars that beg from door to door,
But we are neighbours' children whom you have seen before**

Love and joy...

**Good Master and Good Mistress, as you sit beside the fire,
Pray think of us poor children who wander in the mire.**

Love and joy...

**We have a little purse, made of ratching leather skin;
We want some of your small change to line it well within.**

Love and joy...

**Bring us out a table and spread it with a cloth;
Bring us out a cheese, and some of your Christmas loaf.**

Love and joy...

Protect this orchard from the wind, from winter's frost and snow

Take care of us kind visitors that wander to and fro.

Love and joy...

The Hillfort Wassail

Now Yuletide is over, but the nights are still cold
Our thoughts take us back to those dark days of old
We join the tradition and the ways gone before
Be Hearty and Hail the old ways once more...

We gather in darkness, excited to see
Our friends on the hillside, - how cold will it be?
With flickering flame to show us the way,
We climb ever upward, on this special day.

So Hail! and be Hearty, be Hearty and Hail!
Come one and come all to the Hillfort Wassail

Then comes the dance, the dance in the night
The dance of The Morris – oh what a sight!!
The bells and the music all blend like a spell
Can this all be real? It's so hard to tell.....

The old orchard beckons and welcomes us in
Then oh what a racket, oh what a din!!!
With screaming and shouting as loud as you please
There's no doubt at all that we'll wake up the trees

So Hail! and be Hearty, be Hearty and Hail!
Come one and come all to the Hillfort Wassail

The King and his Queen drink cider and cheer
For much apple blossom and good harvest next year
With toast in the branches now the fires dim low
It's back down the hillside we once more must go

The orchard now quiet, in darkness it rests
This Wassail is over but we did our best
To restore the old ways and never you fear
We'll do it again – the same time next year!!

Chorus x2