**DANEHILL PARISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**Do We Still have May Queens?**

It seems rather a quaint notion nowadays to have an election and procession for a May Queen.

But in May 1938 the idea of a May Queen was firmly established and Fletching had their own real May Queen who had been born in Fletching on a 1st May.

The coronation took place on a Saturday on the recreation ground before a good group of spectators and friends, among whom was Mrs Soames of Sheffield Park, and whilst unfortunately the weather was cold, the children carried out their programme successfully.

It was possible to carry out the procession through the village through the kindness of Mr F Gunn of Knabb Farm, who not only lent a wagon and horse, but also supervised the decoration of both animal and vehicle. The procession started from Splaynes Green with Richard Gunn being the coachman and as it approached the recreation ground the choir sang ‘The Lass with the Delicate Air’.

The procession included retired Queen (Jean Morley) with her pages Beryl Thompsett and Michael Bucker and Maids of Honour, Eileen Morley and Mollie Streeter. Then came the crown bearer (Ronald Hunt) followed by the new Queen (Irene Thompsett) with her pages and Maids of Honour Hilda Scott and Joan Welfare.

Following the singing of the traditional air “Good morrow, Pretty Maid” the new Queen was crowned by her predecessor and then “Down in a Green and Shady Bed” was sung.

There was a display of country dances, maypole dancing, and a sword dance which was carried out by boys under the direction of the Headmaster (Mr E H Gilson). The whole production was carried out by Mr Gilson, who was also responsible for the singing and music.

Will we ever see a May Queen crowned again? Probably not.

Jill Rolfe