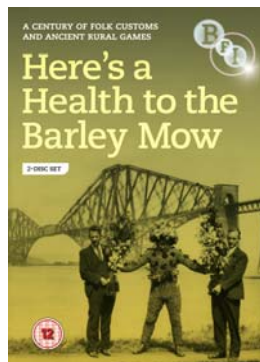


DVD press release



Here's a Health to the Barley Mow

A Century of Folk Customs and Ancient Rural Games

For the first time ever on DVD, the BFI has compiled an idiosyncratic and highly entertaining collection of startling short films, poetic documentaries, long-unseen TV reports and rare silent film footage all celebrating the traditional folk customs, songs, dances and games of Great Britain.

This double-disc set of 44 newly remastered films, accompanied by a 58-page booklet of essays and notes by leading folk authorities, reveals just how powerful and enduring our folk traditions have always been, and celebrates the enjoyment that these customs continue to bring to communities nationwide.

These eye-opening films, with subjects ranging from pagan customs to traditional dances and extreme sports, come from all over the country. There's Cornwall's 'sexy, savage Spring-time rite' performed on May Day; the highly anarchic ball games played in Leicester and Orkney; the Mummers' plays of Derbyshire, Dorset and Dartmoor; mischievous 'dwile flonking' in Suffolk; the extraordinary Burry Man of West Lothian; sword and step dancing in Yorkshire and Norfolk; and the carrying of barrels of burning tar in Ottery St Mary, Devon.

This ambitious 6 hour collection includes Alan Lomax's glorious Padstow May Day film *Oss Oss Wee Oss* (1953); a series of 1912 Kinora Spools featuring traditional dances by pioneering folklorists Cecil Sharp and George Butterworth; Richard Philpott's celebration of ancient pre-Christian spring rituals in *The Flora Faddy Furry Dance Day* (1989); 1920s newsreels charting Shrove Tuesday football contests; and recent footage shot by filmmakers Doc Rowe and the Turner Prize winner Jeremy Deller with Alan Kane, showing the exhilarating contemporary performance of folk customs and rituals. The silent films feature innovative fiddle and melodeon accompaniments by contemporary folk musicians.

The films are divided into thematic sections titled *Dance and Song*, *Extreme Sports*, *Mummers and Hobbyhorses* and *All Manner of Customs*. [The full listing is on page 2.](#) Drawing on films collected over many years by the Britain's national and regional film archives, as well as the BFI National Archive, *Here's a Health to the Barley Mow* is presented in collaboration with the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS).

The BFI National Archive curators Will Fowler and Vic Pratt who programmed this release are available for interview. Clips will be available for broadcast and online use.

DVD launch event at the English Folk Dance and Song Society, Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London NW1, Thursday 14 July, 7.30pm

This public launch event screening will include rare silent films with live musical accompaniment and special focus on the uniquely poetic 1950s documentaries of Peter Kennedy. Tickets £6, from the EFDSS, Cecil Sharp House Tel: 020 7485 2206

'The Barley Mow' Archive Folk Film Programme – for cinemas and folk festivals

The BFI and EFDSS present a programme of rare and beautiful archive films. Highlights include the Padstow Mayday celebration *Oss Oss Wee Oss* (1953), the alcoholic folk musical *Here's a Health to the Barley Mow* (1955) and Doc Rowe's speedy sword dancing film. This 70 minute film programme is available to cinema and festival programmers now. Contact: BFI Film Bookings at bookings.films@bfi.org.uk / Tel: 020 7957 4709

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Release date: 18 July 2011

RRP: £19.99 / cat. no. BFIVD920 / Cert 12

UK / 1912-2005 / black & white, and colour / 365 mins / 2 x DVD9 / Dolby Digital mono audio
(320kbps) / Mixed original aspect ratios

BFI DVDs are available from all DVD retailers & BFI Filmstore Tel: 020 7815 1350 or
www.bfi.org.uk/filmstore

**For more details, review copies and interview requests please contact:
Jill Reading, BFI Press Office. Tel: (020) 7957 4759 or e-mail jill.reading@bfi.org.uk**

Disc One: Dance and Song

Films Taken from Kinora Spools Made in 1912 (1912/1982)

Bampton Broom and Morris Dances (1928)

Sword Dances in North Skelton, Handsworth, Sleights, Westerhope and Grenoside (c. 1927)

Dances by Ilmington Teams in the Grounds of Peter De Montfort's House 1220 AD. Fiddler
Sam Bennett (1926)

Abbots Bromley, Painswick and Bampton (c. 1928-36)

High Spen Sword Dancers (c. 1928)

Bacup Coconut Dancers (1930)

Grenoside Long Sword Dancers (1938)

Wake Up and Dance (1950)

Here's a Health to the Barley Mow (1952)

'Winlton Sword Dance' from Mining Review 8th Year No 5 (1955)

Dick Hewitt 'The Norfolk Step Dancer' with Percy Brown – melodeon (1979)

The Flora Faddy Furry Dance Day (1989)

Rapper Dancers at 'The National' (2003)

Extreme Sports

NEWSREELS: Shrove Tuesday Football Games (1921-29): Ye Olde Game of Football (1921);

Shrove Tuesday Football (1924); Uppies and Downies (1926); Not For 'The Cup' (1929)

600-Year-Old Custom! (1927)

The Game of Haxey Hood (1929)

Handba' at Kirkwall, Orkney (1939)

New Year Fireball Festival, Stonehaven (1965)

NEWS STORIES: Shrove Tuesday in the 1960s (1965-66); Shrove Tuesday Football at

Sedgefield and Alnwick (1965); Sedgefield Shrove Tuesday Football Match Plans (1966)

Ancient and Traditional Sport of Dwile Flonking (1966)

Dwile Flonking from Harleston (1967)

Tar Barrel Rolling, Ottery St Mary (2000)

Shrovetide Football, Ashbourne (2000)

Hare Pie and Bottle Kicking, Hallatan (2005)

Disc Two: Mummers and Hobbyhorses

The Tichbourne Mummers' Play (1919)

Walk in St George (1952)

Oss Oss Wee Oss (1953)

Derby Tup (1974)

All Manner of Customs

NEWSREELS Greater London May Queens (1922-30); For I'm to be Queen of the May, Mother
(1927); Prettiest May Queen (1926); London's May Queen (1927); Call Me Early, Mother Dear
(1930)

NEWSREELS Llandudno May Queens (1927-29); Llandudno – May Day Festival (1927);

Llandudno's Chosen (1929)

Boy Bishop of Berden (1927)

Merrie England (1928)

One Potato, Two Potato (1957)

Castleton Garland Day (1957)

Election of New Mayor of Harwich and the Traditional Ceremony of Throwing Kitchels
(1962)

All Manner of Customs (1965)

Informal Gurning Contest at Whitley Bay (1963)

Girl Wearing Earring at School Dispute (1966)

Children of the Moor (1975)

The Face of a County (1976)

Castleton's Traditional Garland Day (2000)

The Burry Man of South Queensferry (2000-02)