

*By courtesy of A. Drake Sadler, Bedford*

Fortieth  
Elstow  
May Festival

*Thursday, 7th May 1964, at 3 p.m. only  
on Elstow Green*



1964 MAY QUEEN: ELIZABETH LAMBERT



SOUVENIR PROGRAMME · ONE SHILLING



## FORTY YEARS OLD — OR YOUNG?

THIS is a special programme to celebrate a special event, our fortieth May Festival. (It is also the tenth May Festival for which I have been responsible, and so also a rather special event for me.) Elizabeth Lambert, whom we at the school know as Beth, is our May Queen, and in choosing her the children have made history, because her sister was May Queen in 1961, and this is the first time that two sisters have been Queens. I am sure the children have made a good choice, and we look forward to seeing Beth in this exalted position. We should like to congratulate her parents, too, on having two daughters chosen for this honour. They have reason to feel gratified that this has come about.

History is being made in another way in this year's Festival. One of the trainbearers, Rondal Moore, is American. He, like all trainbearers, has been chosen for his evident suitability for the part. We are delighted that, in this special year, for the first time a child from overseas has been included, and we are sure that our visitors from the United States of America will share the pleasure we all feel in his selection.

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We should like to express our gratitude to those who have sent us the messages of congratulation and encouragement that you will find elsewhere in the programme.

As to the Festival itself, it has its origins far back in our history, and probably further back still. It is part of our national heritage. In most places it has dropped out of the national picture, as it did in Elstow about the end of the last century. But in 1925 Mr. Wadsworth—"the right man with the right idea at the right place at the right time", as Mr. Goodwin rightly remarks—saw fit to revive it here, and it has gone on ever since. Mr. Goodwin in his message obviously could not write of the part he played in its continuance. But he gave it the touch it needed just then, and it is not putting it too highly to say that but for his wisdom in seeing what was wanted, and in doing it, the Festival could scarcely have become what it is today.



He would be the first to pay tribute, as indeed he has done, to the support of Miss Pestell, and I must add my word of thanks for her help. She most ably supported both Mr. Wadsworth and Mr. Goodwin, and carried through the 1954 Festival on her own, after Mr. Goodwin had left, and then when I came she told me what to do—and there is a vast deal of it—and checked that I had done it! My, and our, grateful thanks for her energetic help through the years.

This year we hope—these notes are written in February—to have a goodly number of former May Queens present. I am indebted to those people, known and unknown, who have helped me to get in touch with some of these May Queens personally. Others I have tried to reach through the help of the *Bedfordshire Times*, whose staff have always been our very good friends.

So, then, to today, our fortieth Festival. It will be, we are sure, the best one yet, given good weather!

R. C. SMITH,  
*Head Master,*  
County Primary School,  
ELSTOW, Bedford.

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As will be seen from the lists on another page, we have in recent years sought to vary our dances in a way that was not done formerly. This year is no exception. Some have been done before and are being repeated by special request, but most are being done here today for the first time.





*Camera portrait by F. Jewell-Harrison, A.I.B.P.*

### LYNDA PIBWORTH, MAY QUEEN 1963

Linda Pibworth, who crowns her successor today, is the daughter of the 1940 May Queen. She was the first May Queen's daughter to become a May Queen.



*A message from Alderman E. K. Martell, LL.B., J.P.,  
Chairman of Bedfordshire County Council.*

It has been said that life begins at forty, and if this be true it augurs well for the future of the Elstow School May Festival. Indeed, if the Festival becomes even more alive in the future than in the past it will reach an exceptional degree of excellence, for it has justly earned not only for the school but also for the village of Elstow and beyond that for the county, a reputation for a charming occasion which must leave in the memory of those who have seen it a feeling of freshness and life of Spring. As succeeding generations of children take part in it may both the spirit and the charm remain and intensify.

Behind the results that have been achieved has been the hard work and devotion of the Headmaster and staff and the many others who have taken part in the organisation, and perhaps most of all the effort and keenness which the children have put into the performance. My very best wishes on this special occasion and for the future years. E. K. MARTELL

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*A message from T. S. Lucking, Esq., M.A., Director of  
Education for Bedfordshire, and Alderman Leslie G.  
Bowles, Chairman of Bedfordshire Education Com-  
mittee.*

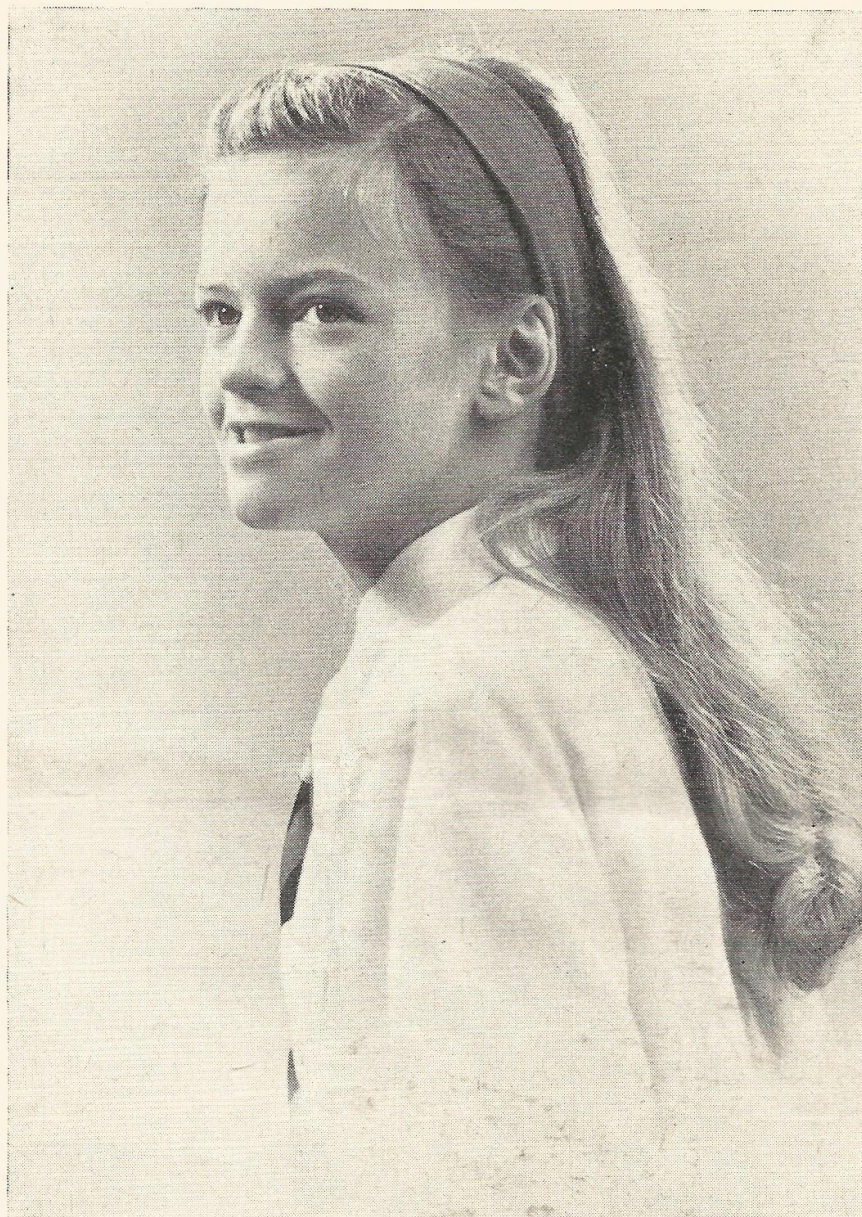
THIS May Festival is an important event in the life of Elstow School and we are very glad to have the opportunity of joining in the tributes which are being paid to it on this Fortieth Anniversary.

This delightful spectacle has brought great pleasure and enjoyment not only to the people and children of Bedfordshire but to many beyond the bounds of the County. The Festival, which was brought into being by the late Mr. R. J. Wadsworth, M.B.E., has become part of the local tradition and a great debt of gratitude is due to all those who have devoted so much of their time and energy in its presentation. We know that it will continue to bring pleasure and enjoyment for many years to come.

T. S. LUCKING  
Director of Education

LESLIE G. BOWLES  
Chairman  
Bedfordshire Education Committee





*Camera portrait by F. Jewell-Harrison, A.I.B.P.*

ELIZABETH LAMBERT, MAY QUEEN 1964

Elizabeth Lambert, this year's May Queen, also makes history. Her sister Victoria was May Queen in 1961.



PHOTOGRAPHERS PLEASE NOTE—While we are happy to allow photographs to be taken, we would ask photographers to avoid as far as they possibly can interrupting either the view of the spectators, or the performance. The children have been instructed that no part of the ceremony can be repeated, nor may they change their position, for the benefit of photographers. Incidentally, a good view of the crowning can be had from the side; I see it excellently from my place by the coach.

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### WET WEATHER

If the Festival were to be entirely rained off we should try again on the following Thursday at the same time. But we should not be put off easily. *Provided the ground were in reasonable condition*, a decision about postponement would be delayed as long as possible.

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It would be quite impossible to record all the ways in which the May Festival has been recognised by others than ourselves. Here, however, are some of them.

In 1954 the B.B.C. made a recording, mainly of the preparatory stages of the Festival, which recording was used in their broadcasts to schools.

In 1962 B.B.C. Television covered the crowning ceremony and the dancing, and Anglia Television covered the procession.

From two sides of the world: There have been photographs of the Festival in the National Geographic magazine and in a newspaper published in Hong Kong.

In 1959 the well-known artist Terence Cuneo was commissioned to paint a picture of the Festival; a print of his picture hangs in the school.

In 1961, "Coming Events in Britain" had an article on Maypoles and May Queens, in which special reference was made (with photographs) to Elstow's Festival, and if you buy a country dance gramophone record there is quite a chance that the picture on the sleeve will be of the Elstow Festival.

# *May Queen*

ELIZABETH LAMBERT, of Kempston

## *Trainbearers:*

KATHERINE JONES

RONDAL MOORE

## *Maids of Honour:*

VIVIEN LEE

(Maid of Honour in Chief)

CHRISTINE COOPER

IRENE DUGGAN

SALLY GEORGE

ROSEMARY HARTLEY

CAROL KEEBLE

GAIL MAXEY

FELICITY PEGG

## *The Queen's Jesters:*

DAVID PERKINS (Chief Jester)

NICHOLAS HODGKINSON

MARK STACEY

## *Coachman and Herald:*

ALAN PIBWORTH

## *Crown Bearer:*

MARTYN LINCOLN

## *Ribbon Holders:*

JANET BARRINGTON

JENNIFER DAWSON

ALICIA GIBSON

ELAINE MAY

GLENYS NORMAN

JENNIFER PEGG

LINDA STAPLETON

DIANE WAGSTAFF

DENNIS HARTNETT

TIMOTHY LAMBERT

MARTIN NORMAN

MARTIN PEARSON

STEPHEN ROBINSON

RAYMOND SOUTHAM

CARL SZUBA

ALAN WHITE



# Programme

## MAY FESTIVAL—1964

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1. THE QUEEN'S PROCESSION TO ELSTOW GREEN.
2. THE CROWNING OF THE QUEEN BY LYNDIA PIBWORTH,  
1963 QUEEN.
3. THE MAY QUEEN'S SPEECH.
4. ERECTING THE MAYPOLE.
5. MAYPOLE AND COUNTRY DANCES.
6. INTERLUDE—THE HEAD MASTER.
7. COLLECTION.
8. MAYPOLE AND COUNTRY DANCES.
9. TABLEAU.
10. GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.
11. REMOVAL OF THE MAYPOLE.
12. RETURN PROCESSION TO THE SCHOOL.

We expect to use these Country Dances: *Cumberland Long Eight, Dargason, Durham Reel, Nancy's Fancy, The Triumph, Gathering Peascods, Sicilian Circle, Pat-a-cake Polka.*



*A message from F. J. Goodwin, Esq., B.A., Head Master of  
the School 1947-1954.*

ELSTOW May Festival is such a celebrated event that, I suppose, most people will take for granted its sturdy survival for forty years. Yet had it not been for two men and one lady, it is very unlikely that we should see this wonderful village tradition surviving to this day. I refer to Mr. R. A. J. Wadsworth, to Mr. R. C. Smith and to Miss Dorothy N. Pestell. Mr. Wadsworth was, of course, the founder of May Day. He was the right man with the right idea at the right place at the right time. The only sad thing in the mention of his name is that he has himself not lived to see this happy anniversary. Then Mr. Smith. His determination saved May Day at a moment of real crisis. When the new secondary school opened, the village school lost at one swoop the great majority of the children who had, traditionally, carried the show. Would Mr. Smith call it a day or would he carry on? Of course, he carried on—always upholding the previous high standards. Finally Miss Pestell. She served May Day splendidly over a long span of years. All facets of the production and dancing were in her devoted and capable hands.

So with thanks to Miss Pestell and the two gentlemen, and not forgetting the 1964 Queen and children whose happy day this is, may I wish Elstow May Festival another forty years—to start with.

F. J. GOODWIN



*A message from Miss Dorothy N. Pestell, A.C.P., who as a member of the school staff was intimately connected with the Festival from its beginning in 1925 until 1957.*

It is with very great pleasure that I send good wishes for Elstow's Fortieth May Festival, especially when I remember with joy that I have been intimately connected with thirty-three of these forty Festivals.

Memories crowd in from over the years! Although changes must inevitably occur, some things have remained constant ever—the intense excitement of the children; the superhuman efforts of the staff; the breathtaking beauty of the procession; the regal bearing of the Queen; the sweet simplicity of the diminutive trainbearers; the poise and sheer beauty of the Maids of Honour; the antics of the jesters.

Over and above all—the generosity of the parents, without whom it would be quite impossible to stage such a Festival.

Many Happy Returns, Elstow!,

DOROTHY N. PESTELL





*By courtesy of A. Drake Sadler, Bedford*

MR. R. A. J. WADSWORTH, M.B.E.  
Headmaster, 1921 to 1947.

Mr. Wadsworth, known so widely as "Waddy", began this series of May Festivals in 1925. It has continued ever since, even during the war years, and has become known in many parts of the world. It has been recognised on radio and television, in magazine and newspaper articles, by artists, and in many other ways. The letters we get from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, the United States, Hong Kong, countries in Europe and elsewhere, shows how widespread its fame has become, this Festival that he began.



## LIST OF MAY QUEENS, 1925-1963

|      |                  |      |                    |
|------|------------------|------|--------------------|
| 1925 | LAURA CAVES      | 1945 | IRIS VANN          |
| 1926 | MABEL CROUCH     | 1946 | JUNE THOMPSON      |
| 1927 | DORIS BARTRAM    | 1947 | RITA JUDD          |
| 1928 | OLIVE DEVONSHIRE | 1948 | JEAN WEBB          |
| 1929 | AUDREY BIRD      | 1949 | MARY ROACH         |
| 1930 | JOYCE WEEKS      | 1950 | DIANA SKELTON      |
| 1931 | CONNIE MILLARD   | 1951 | JACQUELINE MAYCOCK |
| 1932 | VERA BAXTER      | 1952 | GRETA GILSON       |
| 1933 | JOAN HACKETT     | 1953 | MAUREEN IZZARD     |
| 1934 | DORIS CURNOW     | 1954 | GLENYS DANIELS     |
| 1935 | PHYLLIS IZZARD   | 1955 | JOYCE NORMAN       |
| 1936 | BETTY CROUCH     | 1956 | CHRISTINE LOWE     |
| 1937 | MAISIE GOODSHIP  | 1957 | JANET COOPER       |
| 1938 | KATHLEEN GOODE   | 1958 | JENNIFER CARDING   |
| 1939 | ENA HEATHFIELD   | 1959 | JANET HOUSDEN      |
| 1940 | MARY TROWBRIDGE  | 1960 | ANN HINDSON        |
| 1941 | IRENE BROWN      | 1961 | VICTORIA LAMBERT   |
| 1942 | JOAN MOBBS       | 1962 | LYNNE SHARP        |
| 1943 | MARION NICHOLLS  | 1963 | LYNDA PIBWORTH     |
| 1944 | LILIAN BAKER     |      |                    |



These are the country dances that we have given in the past few years. Pretty well all the repetitions shown (except Sellenger's Round and Brighton Camp) are repetitions of tunes only—the dances were different. With this year we have a total of some thirty-six different dances in six years.

1959

Ruffy Tufty  
Circassian Circle  
Flowers of Edinburgh  
If all the world were paper  
Cumberland Long Eight  
Sellenger's Round  
Brighton Camp

1960

Pop goes the Weasel  
Black Nag  
Jenny Pluck Pears  
Christchurch Bells  
Newcastle  
We won't go home till  
morning  
Sellenger's Round  
Brighton Camp

1961

Haste to the Wedding  
Ribbon Dance  
Thady You Gander  
Hunt the Squirrel  
Galopede  
We won't go home till  
morning  
Sellenger's Round  
Brighton Camp

1962

The Butterfly  
Elstow Eight  
The Mary and Dorothy  
Dargason  
Lucky Seven  
We won't go home till  
morning  
The Old Mole  
Brighton Camp

1963

Cumberland Long Eight  
Cumberland Square Eight  
Hunt the Squirrel  
Lucky Seven  
Picking up Sticks  
Speed the Plough  
Sellenger's Round  
Brighton Camp



## ORGANISING COMMITTEE

*Organiser and Chairman:*

MR. R. C. SMITH (Headmaster)

MRS. D. M. EVELEIGH, MRS. D. E. HUCKLE, MISS L. B.  
JEFFS, MRS. M. MINISTER.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

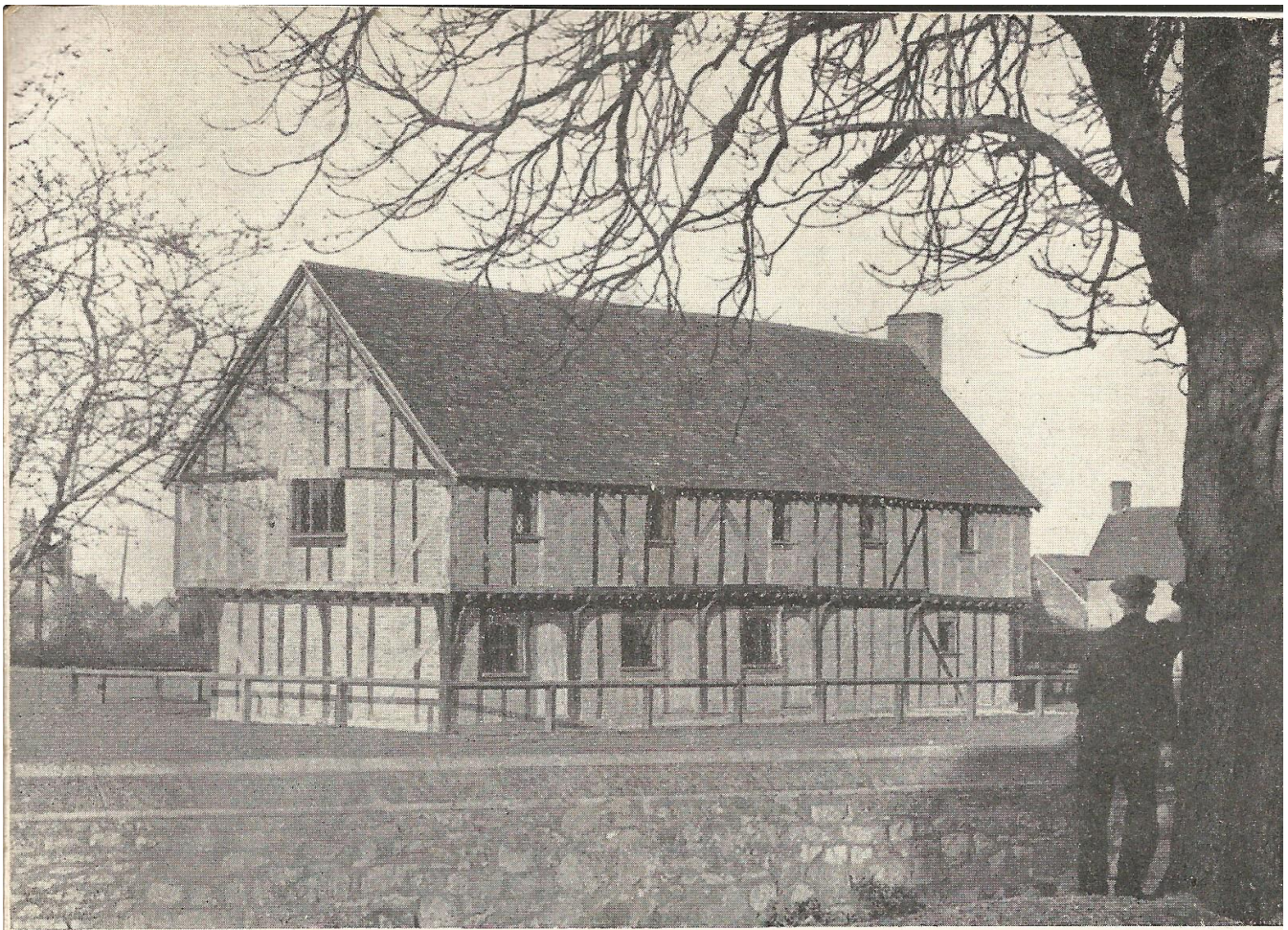
We acknowledge with gratitude our special obligations to: THE PARENTS, THE BEDFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, THE BEDFORDSHIRE COUNTY CONSTABULARY, MISS J. GODBER, REV. PETER HARTLEY, M.A., MR. F. JEWELL-HARRISON, MR. J. FOUNTAIN, J.P., MR. E. PLATT, B.A., MR. R. E. HARDING, MISS D. H. FOX, M.B.E. AND HELPERS, THE SCHOOL CARETAKING STAFF AND MR. W. G. BAILEY.

## BROADCASTING ARRANGEMENTS

ROBINSON AND GREEN

All proceeds go to Festival expenses and Festival Reserve Fund with any residue to Elstow School Fund.





## ELSTOW MOOT HALL

The Moot Hall which stands on Elstow Green was formerly a market-house in connection with the fair. John Bunyan knew the Moot Hall as a boy, and probably in after years thought of Elstow fair when he came to describe Vanity Fair in *Pilgrim's Progress*.

The Moot Hall is run by the County Council as a 17th century centre in association with John Bunyan. Here are shown furniture and other exhibits of his day, both from the simple homes of the humble and the stately rooms of the well-to-do. Two doors of the old County Gaol at Bedford are reminders of Bunyan's two terms of imprisonment; and there is a considerable collection of early editions of his works. The building is open daily except Mondays.

For the summer of 1964 an exhibition on *Industry in the Seventeenth Century* has been arranged. Old implements illustrate the manual methods employed when the only power man had beside his own was that of wind and water. The exhibition illustrates pottery, metalwork, basket-making, joinery, leatherwork and cloth. There is a model of a wind-mill.



