

# FORTON FIELD DAY

Please scroll down the pdf to see all the photos

In the 1970s the late Miss Bessie Bargh gave us some photos of events in Forton taken in the early 20th century. Two of them, dated circa 1905, were of Forton Field Day. The trauma of WWI terminated this annual event and it was not revived until 1951.

## TWO OF MISS BARGH'S PHOTOS FROM c1905



**The Punch & Judy show**



**We're nearly there!**

# THE MODERN FORTON FIELD DAY BEGAN IN 1951



John Gardner in 2010

**John Gardner, born 1929, has a clear recollection of a meeting in 1951 called to consider re-establishing an annual Field Day for Forton. He was a member of Shireshead Church, and had been invited to attend by the vicar's wife, Mrs Storer. The meeting had been called by the Parish Council, whose Chairman was George Thornton of Holdings Farm. The Parish Clerk was William Robinson, grandfather of the present proprietors of W Robinson & Sons. At the start of the**



William Robinson  
Parish Clerk in 1951

**meeting, Gerald Willcock, officer at the Labour Exchange located in Bay Horse**



Gerald Willcock  
(photo taken c 1932)

**Post Office, questioned whether Mr Gardner could be a member of the committee, because he lived just north of the Forton parish boundary. Mr Robinson supported his membership, proposing that the Field Day should cover both the civil parish of Forton and the ecclesiastical parish of Shireshead. This was agreed and, by enabling John Gardner to continue, the committee acquired a major contributor to the organisation of Field Day for its**

**first 17 years. John recalls the first two events in 1951 & 1952 held in a field belonging to Mr Barton on the west side of Hollins Lane, just before the railway bridge. The event in 1953, in very poor weather, was in a field behind the present URC, and in 1954 Field Day moved to Mr Rowe's field in School Lane which at that time was also used by Shireshead Cricket Club. The first Chairman of Field Day was Mr Breakel of Halliwell Villa, and his wife acted as Treasurer.**

**John Gardner remembers going around the village asking for contributions in 1951, and Mrs Brockbank of Potters Brook welcomed him with the words "It'll not last, nothing in Forton ever does, but I'll give you half-a-crown". How very wrong she was!!**

# 1951

**We only have these snapshots  
of Betty Bilsborough (deceased)  
who was the first Rose Queen**

**Also present are Jim Rogerson,  
Dorothy Shaw, Ian Coates  
Cynthia Brindle, Cynthia or Sylvia  
Coates (twins) & ??Jessie Lamb**





**Teresa French as Rose Queen**

**1952**



**Jim & Anne  
Rogerson**

# Forton Rose Queen puts bouquet on the village war memorial

**G**OWNED in white figured taffeta, and carrying pink roses, 13-year-old Teresa French, of Hollins-lane, Forton, was on Saturday crowned Rose Queen at Forton and District Field Day by her immediate predecessor, Betty Bilsborough, who was in white cloque and carried apricot carnations. After the picturesque ceremony on the sports field at Brookfield, the new queen placed her bouquet at the foot of the village war memorial.

Miss French was presented with a lapel brooch by Mrs. Lund (wife of the chairman, Mr. R. Lund), who in return received a spray of pink carnations.

## PRETTY RETINUES

Prettily attired attendants on the new queen were Barbara Morley, Jenny Walling, Mavis Wright, Margaret Williamson, Eileen Helme, and Dorothy Houghton.

Attendants on the retiring queen were Dorothy Shaw and Cynthia Brindle.

Other children taking part were James James Rogerson, page; Ian Coates, cushion bearer, Sylvia Coates, and Jessie Lamb, train-bearers; and Geoffrey Hodge and James Williamson, canopy-bearers.

Mr. Slinger, of Scorton, was responsible for the admirable floral decorations.

The procession was headed by 5th King's Own T.A. (Lancaster) Band

## FANCY DRESS

Mr. and Mrs. T. H. Austin (Forton), Mr. and Mrs. H. S. Procter (Bay Horse), and Mrs. Graham (Forton Lodge) judged a children's fancy dress parade which attracted a good entry.

Awards were:—Prettiest (up to 5): Ruby Clegg, Elaine Askew, Beryl Walker, Ann Dobie. Six to 10: Margaret Helme, Judith Taylor, Valetia Whiteside, Ann Roberson. Most original (up to 5): John Ball, Ann Parker, Luke Bilsborough, Peter Barton. 6 to 10: Howard Whiteside, Irene Smith, Tom Askew, Wendy Oliver. 11 to 15: Audrey Smith, Brian Dugdale, Malcolm Whiteside, Geoffrey Walling. Most humorous (up to 5): Tony Dobie, Frank Smith. 6 to 10: Derek Fox, Doreen Askew, George Smith. 11 to 15: Thomas Wright, Bill Brindle and David Whincap, Francis Rice, Stanley Howarth.

## DANCE PRIZES

The sports programme had to be postponed owing to the weather, but there was a large attendance at the dance in the Shireshead Institute in the evening.

Mrs. Lund and Mrs. Preston judged a fancy dress competition, awards being — Original: Mesdames Purvis and Hichen, Mrs. Askew, Mrs. Daniel. Humorous: Ken Dugdale, Audrey Jackson and Jenny Fishwick, and Mesdames Oliver and Pickford.

Mr. W. R. Brindle was secretary, and Mr. J. Preston, treasurer for the event, the committee

1952

# 1952



*Miss Betty Bilsborough, the retiring queen, crowns Miss Teresa French (kneeling), the new queen at Forton Rose Queen crowning festival on Saturday.*

# 1953?



**Rose Queen: Teresa French**  
**Train bearers: Barbara Morley, Jennie Walling**  
**Margaret Williamson, Dorothy Houghton, Mavis Wright, Eileen Helme**  
**Canopy bearers: ????????, James Williamson — Cushion bearer: Ian Coates**

**1953**



**Nancy Lamb represented Forton in the Coronation celebrations in Garstang, but was not formally crowned as Forton's Rose Queen**

**1953** [in Garstang]

**YOU MAY FIND: NANCY LAMB, CYNTHIA COATES, JESSIE LAMB, ANNE ROGERSON  
MARJORY MIDDLETON, CHRISTINA GARDNER, SHEILA FISHER, GEOFF HODGES. TERRY OLIVER, HENRY KITCHEN  
STAN OLIVER, BILL BRINDLE, HOWARD WHITESIDE**



## **FORTON FIELD DAY 1954**



**Teresa French (now Mrs Teresa Hall)  
crowning Frances Rice (deceased)**

## FORTON FIELD DAY 1958/9



**Back row from left: June Smith, Joan Sayer, Judith Helme, Margaret Garth, Margaret Robinson  
2nd row from left: ?????, Susan Robinson, Susan French, Alison Cowburn, ?????, Jean Barton, Ann Doby  
Queens: Angela Walling, Elizabeth Cook  
Andrew Ball**

Probably 1959



**Elizabeth Cook**

**Ruth Swarbrick**



**Susan French**  
**Attendant in c1959**  
**now Mrs Susan Richardson**

**Elizabeth Cook crowning Ruth Swarbrick  
probably 1959**



# **DATE UNCERTAIN, PROBABLY EARLY 1960s**



Date uncertain, probably 1959-61



# FIELD DAY PROCESSION IN 1961

Ruth Swarbrick was Rose Queen



1961



**Thomas French leading the way for the band**

1962

# Roses, roses all the way



Freely 12-years-old Dorothy Knight walks under a bow of roses held by page boys in a procession to the sports field after being crowned Rose Queen at Forton on Saturday.

## Colourful Forton Rose Queen ceremony

**DOROTHY KNIGHT** was crowned Rose Queen by the retiring Queen, Emily Swarbrick, at Forton Field Day on Saturday. The ceremony followed a colourful procession headed by Storeys of Lancaster Works Band, from the school to Jenmoor Dene where the event was held by permission of Mr. and Mrs. Rowe.

A children's fancy dress competition was judged by Mrs. and Mrs. R. F. Walker, of Pine Lane, and Mr. and Mrs. Peil of Bay Horse. Results were: Character, under 3, 1 The Askew Twins; 5, 6 and 7 years, 1 Susan Pedder; 8, 9 and 10 years, 1 Peter Ball; 11 years and over, Susan Ball and Beryl Wilkinson. Comic, under 5, Julia and David Richmond; 5, 6 and 7

years, Helen Atkinson; 8, 9 and 10 years, Christine Doble; 11 years and over, Michael Swarbrick. Pretext, under 5, Karen Winder; 6, 7 and 8, Pauline Metcalfe; 9, 9 and 10, Brenda Jennings; over 11, Rosemary Glen. Original, under 5, Philip Winstanley; 5, 6 and 7, David Galle; 8, 9 and 10, Jean Stansell; and over, Alistair Wilt

**1964**

**Rose Queen: Susan Ball**

**Retiring Queen: Barbara Jordan**

**Attendants**

**Attendants**

**Anne Thornton**

**Jennifer Wearing**

**Joan Moorby**

**Mary Walmsley**

**Jean Stamper**

**Pauline Metcalfe**

**Rosemary Glen**

**Jean Hall**

**Katharine Viggars**

**???????????**

**Sword Bearer: Peter Ball Page Boys & Cushion Bearers: Keith Pedder Ian Metcalfe Ian Brade**

**Cub: David Moorby Scout: Paul Thompson**



## Rose Queen Susan Ball



**Assembling outside the School  
with a view of Curwen's shop  
1964**



**Susan crowning new Queen  
Jean Hall in 1965**

**FORTON FIELD DAY 1966**



## FORTON FIELD DAY 1968



Left to right:  
Mrs Joan Yates, Christine Collins (Welsh girl), Deborah Yates (with push chair), Caroline Carr, Sylvia Walmsley (spider), Mary Wright  
The 2 girls at the end are ??? Hughes

1968

# Forton Field Day Queens beat the weather

FORTON'S BIG DAY — the Field Day — was carried through with its usual gaiety on Saturday. The long-standing reputation for fine weather was upheld so far as the most important part of the proceedings — the crowning of the new Queen — was concerned, though there was some heavy rain later.

The customary colourful procession was held from the village to Jesmond Dene, School Lane, where the field was lent by Mr. and Mrs. Rowe.

Headed by Storeys of Lancaster Band, the procession included the new Queen, Julie Fenton, of "Hillside," and her retinue. Aged 13, she attends Lancaster Girls' Grammar School. She wore a white dress and pale blue cloak.

Her attendants, in pale blue dresses, were: Mary Walmsley, Isabella Ball, Sylvia Swarbrick, Jane Gartside, Sarah Thomas and Helen Gordon. The canopy bearers were Jeremy Harrison and David Jolleys, while Malcolm Barton was the cushion bearer.

The retiring Queen, Rosemary Walsh, wore a white dress and dark blue cloak. The attendants, in rainbow dresses, were: Linda Rowley, Denise Billington, Gaynor Brace, Joan Moorby, Claire Walsh, and Margaret Carr. Andrew Collins and John Askew were the canopy bearers, and

the sword bearer was Andrew Drummond.

The procession also included an array of fancy dress characters, and many of the costumes showed much originality.

The compere for the proceedings was Coun. J. Preston, who thanked all the people of the district who contributed. He also thanked the officers and committee.

Retiring Queen Rosemary Walsh crowned her successor, and wished her every happiness. She thanked all who made possible her own year of office, and emphasised that a great deal of work went into the event. A necklace was presented to the Queen by Julie Beesaley.

## FANCY DRESS

The judges for fancy dress were Mr. and Mrs. E. Pyke, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. J. Preston, Mr. and Mrs. D. M. Errington. The awards were:—

Character: Under five years:

— 1 Tracy Gill, 2 Peter Smith, 3 Richard Procter; five to eight — 1 Joanna Procter, 2 Andrew Collin, 3 Kevin Hodgson; eight to 11 — Kathy Gresty, 2 Michael Eccles, 3 Alison Walker; over 11 — Jill Thompson, 2 Graham Armer, 3 Mary Swarbrick.

Pretty: Under five — 1 Carol Dewhurst, 2 Janet Wright, 3 Valerie Armer; over five — 1 Sandra Ayres, 2 Julie Thompson, 3 Julie Graham.

Original: Under five — 1 Tomlinson Sisters, 2 Dugdale Brothers, 3 David Holding; five to eight — 1 Christine Collins, 2 Robert Jolleys, 3 Kevin Dewhurst; eight to 11 — 1 Sylvia Walmsley, 2 Caroline Carr, 3 Deborah Yates; over 11 — 1 Pamela Metcalfe and Brenda Hodgson, 2 Anthony Fenton, 3 Melvin Moorby.

Humorous: Under five — 1 Andrew Cragg; five to eight — 1 Mark Atkinson; eight to 11 — 1 Vincent Swarbrick; over 11 — Ellen Atkinson and Elizabeth Towse.

Sprays of flowers were presented by Helen Gordon to Mrs. Preston, Sarah Thomas to Miss Preston, Jane Gartside to Mrs. Brown, Sylvia Swarbrick to Mrs. Errington, and Isabella Ball to Mrs. Pyke. Buttonholes were presented by Malcolm Barton to Mr. Preston, Jeremy Harrison to Mr. Errington, and David Jolleys to Mr. Pyke.

Mr. Beasley was chairman, Mrs. Birchall secretary, and Mr. Walsh treasurer. Mrs. Bflockbank was in charge of refreshments.

Sports results were:—

Flat races:—

Eight to nine years: Boys — 1 T. Marr, 2 M. Baines, 3 N. Towse. Girls — 1 M. Thornton, 2 M. Jolleys, 3 S. Askew. Ten to 11 — 1 M. Cansfield, 2 M. Swarbrick, 3 D. Cornthwaite. Girls: — 1 J. Smith, 2 C. Jenkinson, 3 J. Beasley. Twelve to 13: Boys — 1 F. Cansfield, 2 J. Lensden, 3 K. Davis. Girls — 1 S. Turner, 2 B. Hodgson, 3 G. Brace. Fourteen to 15: Boys — 1 W. Brightmore, 2 M. Richmond, 3 A. Parkinson. Four to five: Boys — 1 T. Clayton, 2 R. Proctor, 3 A. Cragg. Girls — 1 S. Hayhurst, 2 J. Carr, 3 C. Dewhurst. Six to seven: Boys — 1 V. Cobbett, 2 C. Hartwell, 3 C. Nolan. Girls — 1 S. Thompson, 2 C. Braide, 3 (equal) L. Hartwell

1968



A smiling Julie Fenton pictured with her attendants after her coronation on Saturday.—258/72



Retiring Forton Queen Rosemary Walsh with her attendants after she had crowned the new queen Julie Fenton. — 258/73

**1969: LESLEY BEASLEY**





1969:Lesley Beasley at Garstang



**Lesley Beasley retiring, Margaret Carr new Queen in 1970**



**Lesley in 2001 with former Queens Teresa French & Susan Ball**

## FORTON FIELD DAY 1971



1971  
Dena Brace was Rose Queen



A PICTURE FOR THE ALBUM. — Newly-crowned Fortson Field Day Queen, Dena Brace, and the retiring Queen Margaret Carr, make a pleasant picture for the Courier photographer as they pose with their attendants during the annual event on Saturday. — 422/17



The bride was there and so was the groom, in fact all the village turned out for the big event at Fortson on Saturday, but when our photographer asked the groom to kiss the bride it was just too much and Lloyd Thompson decided to go back to his room, leaving his sister Alison, the bride, to face the fancy dress, alone on her own. — 422/14

## CAPTIONS FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

**A PICTURE FOR THE ALBUM.** — Newly-crowned Forton Field Day Queen, Dena Brace, and the retiring Queen Margaret Carr, make a pleasant picture for the Courier photographer as they pose with their attendants during the annual event on Saturday. — 422/15

The bride was there and so was the groom, in fact all the village turned out for the big event at Forton on Saturday, but when our photographer asked the groom to kiss the bride it was just too much and Lloyd Thompson decided to go back to his mum, leaving his sister Alison, the bride, to face the fancy dress judges on her own. — 422/14

# Scenes from the 1970s

Probably 1973



Date uncertain



Nicola Murgatroyd was  
Rose Queen in 1976





1973 TIM MANSFIELD, THE  
BEARER FOR THE RETIRING  
QUEEN, PASSING  
MISS BARGH'S COTTAGE



**1973 Susan Thompson**



From *The Lancaster Guardian* 6 July 1973

# FORTON'S GALA DAY



Proud mothers with their bonny babies ready for the judges.

**1974**



**Christine Collins**

**1976**

**ROSE QUEEN: JULIE GRAHAM**



# FORTON FIELD DAY 1976



## **FORTON FIELD DAY 1977**



### **NOVELTY FOOTBALL**

**Can you identify these participants?**

**Harold Thompson, Mike Coulton, John Park, Tom Rickerby, Sylvia Thompson**

1979 →

1978 ↓



**FORTON FIELD DAY 1981**



## FORTON FIELD DAY PARADE 1981



# FORTON FIELD DAY 1982



**JULIE LAWRENSON**  
**1983**



**Julie Lawrenson in 1983 in Forton  
and at Garstang Whit Festival in 1984**





**1984**

Gail Waddington in 1984  
Miss Bessie Bargh watching



1986



# 1990



# FORTON FIELD DAY 1990

