

Tenbury Wells Mistletoe Season 2011 Press Release #1



Caption: Tenbury's current Mistletoe Queen Alice Williams with (far right) Oliver Palethorpe the Holly Prince and George Dicken and Eve Grove (Attendants)

Mistletoe Season celebrated by record showcase of events

Monday Sept 26, '11

Mistletoe is great for warming up winter with kisses – and is set to give an export lift to the local economy, with Tenbury's Mistletoe Season attracting widening interest.

The plant that brightens the gloom of winter is also good for England, with masses of bunches from Tenbury going to Scotland, Wales and Ireland - where mistletoe is only found in the north, and is rare – and all the way to America.

It flourishes with lush berries among the apple orchards in the cider-producing valleys around the Teme Valley.

Tenbury's Mistletoe Season is to be celebrated in a bigger-than-ever calendar of events, highlighting this evocative winter harvest of the plant, steeped in tradition and folklore.

National mistletoe expert Jonathan Briggs, who lectures on the mysteries of the plant, said: "Tenbury mistletoe is in demand around the British Isles, as far as Shetland, and is ordered by discerning people in the United States and Canada seeking the best British mistletoe. One local trader once shipped it to South Africa.

"People can see the beauty of real mistletoe when they buy from their local florist, rather than putting up with plastic imitations. We must fight back against that – there's no magic in plastic. There's nothing like The Real Thing: it's not just good for kissing; it's good for England."

The home – grown plant rewards those who buy British with superior quality, compared to imports from France.

Local schoolchildren will be turning detective, tracking down stories to discover 'who's been kissing who' under the Tenbury mistletoe, and how far and wide it decorates homes.

Mistletoe Season, celebrates Tenbury's 100-year tradition stretching back to Queen Victoria's naming it her 'Little Town in the Orchard', and runs from mid November to Christmas. Druid rituals take place to bless the plant, followed by the town's traditional wholesale mistletoe auctions, Lantern and Santa Parade, music and storytelling, Christmas lights switch-on, and the Mistletoe Ball.

The Season starts with the switching on of the Christmas Lights on 18th November 2011, hosted by Sunshine Radio, followed by a film evening at Tenbury High School. Mistletoe Auctions are held on the three Tuesdays from 29th November

An evening with world renowned storyteller Ben Haggarty in the Pump Rooms will set the scene on Saturday 26th November, with a storytelling workshop with Ben the following afternoon on Sunday 27th November, starting at 3pm.

National Mistletoe Day opens on Saturday December 3 with a procession through the town by the Mistletoe Foundation. The day includes a multi-faith ceremony, mistletoe and craft sales.

The Mistletoe Foundation Procession starts at 2pm, from the Rose & Crown to the Burgage, followed by a blessing ceremony and crowning of the Mistletoe Queen and Holly Prince. At 7pm Damh the Bard a Pagan musician from the Druid tradition, poet, and storyteller, will be performing in the Royal Oak.

The Santa Parade starts at 4pm on the following Saturday from the Teme Bridge to Church Street.

Plans are being discussed for a Mistletoe Arts Exhibition next year, welcoming local painters, photographers and reviving interest in local crafts.

For full details of Tenbury's Mistletoe Season activities, please see www.tenbury-mistletoe-festival.co.uk/

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For more details, or to arrange interviews, please call Derek Weekes at PRWeekes, tel 07837 985774, email info@prweekes.co.uk