

## PILTON FESTIVAL -THIRTY YEARS ON!

A world of 30 years ago is about to be re-visited in Pilton, Barnstaple, with the showing of a film of the first Pilton Festival in Pilton Church Hall on Friday 27th January at 7.30pm. The right to hold a street market in Pilton dates back over 600 years. It was revived as a month long festival in June and July 1982 by Rev. Anthony Geering, the then Rector of St Mary's Church.

A Super8 film of that first festival of the modern era made by Clifford Davies was found by his daughter Jennie Thomson and offered to the Festival Committee to transfer to DVD. "It was fairly nerve-racking entrusting the only copy of the old celluloid film to the Post Office but it came back safely", said Martin Haddrill, who runs the Festival website. "It shows how the event and technology has changed in three decades. For a start it now takes place over a single weekend at the end of the third week in July. It is also concentrated in the centre of the village - in Pilton Street, Rotary Gardens and St Mary's Church - instead of taking place all over Pilton and Bradiford", he added.



Some things have remained much the same - the Flower Festival and Summer Concert in the Church, a Market in Pilton Street, Street Performers, a costumed Parade and a Pageant - and have simply evolved with the years. One year in the 1980s there was a Maypole in the Street (left). The Pageant was also held there to begin with, but has now moved to the more spacious lawn of Pilton House. A 1982 Exhibition in the Bluecoat School 'Pilton Past and Present' was matched by a similar one in the church in 2008.

The big changes have been the closure of Pilton Street all day and the introduction of music stages which bring a wide variety of music styles to suit all tastes. And there are no longer fêtes in the schools and at Bradiford House. Rather, the expansion into Rotary Gardens has created space for a fantastic range of activities and food for adults and children.



The Festival Committee (some of whom are shown here inspecting the original reel of Super8 film) is keen to regain some of the village fête feel with sideshows and family activities and a limited number of commercial stalls and food outlets. The aim is to regain and retain the 'village' feel and not let it grow any larger than it is.

This year the Pilton Green Man Festival is on the weekend of 21st-22nd July. For more information visit the Pilton Festival website [www.piltonfestival.co.uk](http://www.piltonfestival.co.uk). The free tickets for the film night on 27th January are limited to

120 so get in early and visit Pilton Stores or call Martin Haddrill on 01271 372416.

Caption to photo above (l to r): Bev Neighbour, Heather Dwyer, Hamish Patrick, Richard Stevens and Dave Butt