

Maureen Sutton – Old Harvest Customs & Traditions

Maureen took us back to a time when crop harvesting was totally different to today's methods. She mentioned Samphire and Glasswort, salt tolerant plants that thrive in saline conditions, being in short supply in those days.

During the harvesting period food and drink was an important part of the working day.

She mentioned local pasties that consisted of meat one side and jam the other. Sweet and savoury in one pasty. People used to drink a home brewed concoction that was literally produced in old tin baths that had probably been used for it's usual purpose not long beforehand. Many ending up with upset stomachs because of it. They had billy cans full of warm or hot tea, sometimes kept warm through the day by placing in a nearby manure heap that was still steaming....lovely eh?

She also mentioned Pork Pies and Sausages, all traditionally home cooked. There was Onion and Cabbage pickling. They made Mince Pies that actually contained meat and not the usual sweet variety bought in shops nowadays.

Maureen spoke using some old local Lincolnshire dialect.

Arrad, meaning tired. Uneppen, meaning clumsy. Frit, meaning frightened, to name but a few.

Later Maureen spoke about a local village competition, mostly taking place in northern Lincolnshire, if memory serves. This was a village against village competition where opponents would literally kick each other on the shins. This was called Shin Boxing or Kick Boxing. Sounds painful.

Finally Maureen mentioned a local Shepherd method of counting a flock of Sheep. A song was written using some of the dialect used.

This had to be looked up to put it down here, and you'll no doubt see why. Here goes.....

The Lincolnshire Shepherd lyrics

Yan, tan, tethera, tethera, pethera, pimp.
Yon owd yowe's far-welted, this yowe's got a limp.
Sethera, methera, hovera, and covera up to dik,
Who's to deal wi' 'em all, and where's me crook and stick?

Why, I counts 'em up to figgits, at figgit there's a notch,
Why, there's more to being a shepherd than being on watch.
For there's swedes to chop and there's lambing time and snow upon the rick,
Yan, tan, tethera, and covera up to dik.

Yan, tan, tethera, tethera, pethera, pimp.
Yon owd yowe's far-welted, this yowe's got a limp.
Sethera, methera, hovera, and covera up to dik,
Who's to deal wi' 'em all, and where's me crook and stick?

From Caistor down to Spilsby, from Sleaford up to Brigg,
There's Lincoln sheep all on the chalk, all hung wi' wool and big.
And I'm here in Langton wi' this same old flock,
Just like me grandad did before they meddled with the clock.

Yan, tan, tethera, tethera, pethera, pimp.
Yon owd yowe's far-welted, this yowe's got a limp.
Sethera, methera, hovera, and covera up to dik,
Who's to deal wi' 'em all, and where's me crook and stick?

Oh, we've bred our tups and gimmers for their shape and length and girth,
And sheep have bred, they've gone away all over all the earth.
Why, they're bred in foreign flocks to give the wool its length and crimp.
Yan, tan, tethera, pethera, pimp.

Yan, tan, tethera, tethera, pethera, pimp.
Yon owd yowe's far-welted, this yowe's got a limp.
Sethera, methera, hovera, and covera up to dik,
Who's to deal wi' 'em all, and where's me crook and stick?

Oh, they're like a lot of bairns, they are, like youngsters of me own.
They fondle round about owd Shep until they're strong and grown.
But they gets independent-like, and afore I knows, they're gone,
And yet come round next lambing time some more will carry on.

Yan, tan, tethera, tethera, pethera, pimp.
Yon owd yowe's far-welted, this yowe's got a limp.
Sethera, methera, hovera, and covera up to dik,
Who's to deal wi' 'em all, and where's me crook and stick?

Why, yan, tan, tethera, tethera, pethera, pimp.
Fifteen notches up to nowt and one yowe with a limp.
You reckons I should go away, but you know I'll never go,
For lambing time's on top of us and it'll surely snow.

Yan, tan, tethera, tethera, pethera, pimp.
Yon owd yowe's far-welted, this yowe's got a limp.
Sethera, methera, hovera, and covera up to dik,
Who's to deal wi' 'em all, and where's me crook and stick?

Oh, it's lambing time comes regular-like, just as it's always been,
And shepherds have to tend to them until they're strong and weaned.
Why, me family did it afore I came, they'll have it when I sleep,
And they shall count their lambing times like I am counting sheep.

Yan, tan, tethera, tethera, pethera, pimp.
Yon owd yowe's far-welted, this yowe's got a limp.
Sethera, methera, hovera, and covera up to dik,
Who's to deal wi' 'em all, and where's me crook and stick?