

THE HOLLY AND THE IVY  
Palmer Newbould

The Society had a topical talk by Professor Palmer Newbould at its December meeting on “The Holly and the Ivy”. He described the nature and distribution of holly, ivy and mistletoe. A map of mistletoe in Gloucestershire showed it was essentially absent from the Cotswolds although common in the rest of the County – particularly in Cheltenham. There is no accepted explanation for this effect.

Professor Newbould then discussed the folklore associated with these plants, which derived originally from pagan times. Finally he commented on the famous carol “The Holly and the Ivy”, showing how its pagan origins had been taken over by the Christian Church. The carol lacked a story but had a splendid tune.

Subsequently at the Society’s AGM, the following officers were elected for 2007: Dr Geoff Richards Chairman, Professor Peter Stoward Vice-Chairman, Mr Tony Gordon Treasurer, Dr Roger Wheeler Programme Organiser, Mrs Joan Cooper Membership Secretary, Mrs Kathleen Wells Minute Secretary, Mr Bunny Lees- Smith Editor Newsletter, and Committee Members Dr Andrea Tales and Professor Roy Postlethwaite.

*Given on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2006 at the Parish Centre, Cirencester*