

www.morrisfed.org.uk

fedextra

The quarterly newsletter of The Morris Federation
Spring 2016

Inside this issue...

Banks of Green Willow

Fool's Gambit celebrate four of Cecil Sharp's demonstration team who died at the Somme

"I didn't know women were allowed to do that!"

An exhibition of photographs to celebrate the Morris Federation's 40th anniversary



Roy Dommatt

remembered

issue

Spring 2016



**Roy Dommett
remembered**

06



**Roy's
legacy**

09



**More
memories
of Roy**

10



**Fool's Gambit:
Banks of Green
Willow**

14



**"I didn't know women were allowed
to do that!"**

16



**The children
are our future**

15



**Hook Eagle
celebrate**

20

**MF day of
dance and
AGM**



28

04 Welcome to the Spring
issue: a message from
the editor

04 Contact your committee:
details of how to get in
touch

05 President's prologue: an
overview of what the Morris
Fed offers its members

06 Roy Dommett remembered:
a tribute from Fleet Morris,
by Denise Allen

09 Roy's legacy: 40 years of
Fleur de Lys ladies morris
and Invicta Morris

10 Memories of Roy: short
stories and anecdotes by
Barbara Butler

12 High Spen Success: first
place win at the North East
Rapper Competition

12 35 years of Mason's Apron:
looking back and celebratory
plans for 2016

13 Ossett Beercart: Wakefield
Morris prepare for the third
festival on 3-5 June

14 Banks of Green Willow:
Fool's Gambit celebrate Cecil
Sharp's demonstration team

15 Eccleston Heritage Clog:
enjoyment, fun and
determination from Year 6

16 "I didn't know women were
allowed to do that!": a photo
exhibition of the Morris Fed

18 30 years of Ditchling Morris:
2015 was a busy year, some
memories in pictures

19 Garlands and Maypoles with
Jerusalem Jammers in and
around Leicester: in pictures

20 25 years of Hook Eagle
Morris: the key to happiness
is music, exercise, & friends

21 Wassail! Three accounts
of fruit-based January
celebrations

22 Eccleston Heritage Clog
remember when it all began:
thoughts & challenges

23 Legacy Morris: what will
happen to your morris 'stuff'
when you pass away?

23 Money, money, money: ideas
needed for projects to help
young dancers

24 25 years of Maybe Morris: the
weekend of dance in Arundel
was a highlight of 2015

25 Obituary - John Thomas:
Rose and Castle Morris
founder member, since 1977

27 Paul White's Diary: new
members and Cornish
wassail with Cat's Eye Morris

28 Morris Federation Day
of Dance and AGM: info
about our annual event,
this year hosted by Mortimer's Morris in
Nottingham on 24 September. Further
info is also available from our website.

www.morrisfed.org.uk

Front cover photo: 'Roy behind the lens (late 1980s)'
Photograph by Sue Swift



➤ **Sam** Ross, Newsletter Editor

- newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk
- 64 The Batch, Farmborough, Somerset, BA2 0AJ
- 07849 055 339

from the
editor

welcome to the Spring issue of **Morris FedExtra**

In this issue there are six pages dedicated to Roy Dommett CBE, whose celebration I was fortunate enough to attend last November, alongside at least 350 other representatives of morris teams and work colleagues from around the UK.

It was a sad day, as we all said goodbye to such a widely renowned, respected, and interesting character, but the mood was definitely celebratory, including a number of dedications and tributes that brought back happy memories and raised more than a laugh or two.

The service also included music played by a band of morris friends and musicians and a special dance by Fleet Morris called 'Roy's Request', which was finalised between the team and Roy in his final days.

Following the service, teams and individuals queued up outside the church to perform some dances in honour of Roy, before moving on to a nearby hotel for an opportunity to catch up with old friends and reminisce.

Roy's legacy almost certainly lives on with any individual or team that was fortunate enough to know him. It is great to note that at least two teams influenced by Roy in their early days are still dancing 40 years later.

I hope you enjoy the contents of this new look newsletter and I look forward to hearing your feedback alongside receiving articles for the summer issue regarding your danced-based exploits and experiences.

Happy May Day
and keep dancing! **Sam**

deadline for next issue: **15 May**

advertising rates

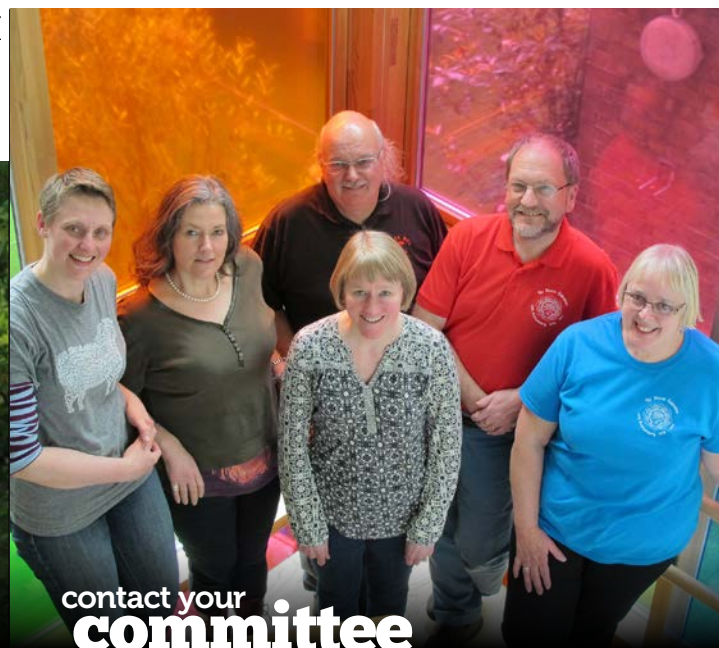
For the current rates and advert sizes, please contact the editor: newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk

You can also download a copy from our website by visiting: www.morrisfed.org.uk/newsletter

useful info

To contact all Morris Federation members by email: broadcast@morrisfed.org.uk

To notify us of a change to your team's contact details: contacts@morrisfed.org.uk



contact your
committee

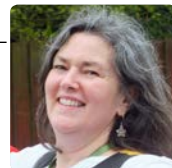
➤ **Melanie** Barber, President

- pres@morrisfed.org.uk
- 72 Freedom Road, Walkley, Sheffield, S6 2XD
- 0114 232 4840



➤ **Fee** Lock, Secretary

- sec@morrisfed.org.uk
- 28 Fairstone Close, Hastings, East Sussex, TN35 5EZ
- 01424 436 052



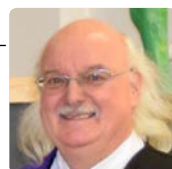
➤ **Jenny** Everett, Treasurer

- treasurer@morrisfed.org.uk
- Willow Cottage, 20 High Street, Sutton-on-Trent, Newark, Notts, NG23 6QA
- 01636 821 672



➤ **Mike** Everett, Archive Officer

- archive@morrisfed.org.uk
- Willow Cottage, 20 High Street, Sutton-on-Trent, Newark, Notts, NG23 6QA
- 01636 821 672



➤ **Jerry** West, Notation Officer

- notation@morrisfed.org.uk
- 23 Avondale Road, Fleet, Hampshire, GU51 3BH
- 01252 628 190 or 07754 435 170



Co-opted committee

➤ **Kevin** Taylor - Web Editor

- webeditor@morrisfed.org.uk

➤ **John** Bacon - Licencing Bill Advisor

- jandabacon@aol.com

Advisors

➤ **Sally** Wearing - Health & Safety Advisor

- sallywearing@outlook.com
- 0118 946 3125

President's prologue

Hello! It always seems somewhat late to say 'Happy New Year' in Spring, but as it's our first newsletter for 2016, Happy New Year!

I must start with a huge thank you to Sam Ross for all the hard work she has put into our newsletter. We think it looks great, so I hope you enjoy it.

This isn't the only change that the committee are driving, we are also in the process of rebranding our broadcasts, and moving and reviewing the website. The website especially has been in need of an update for some time. Until recently all the work in managing and maintaining the website fell to our co-opted webmaster Kevin Taylor, which is a lot to ask of one volunteer.

The move to a new server will allow us to share the load, with each committee member maintaining their own areas of responsibility. This won't happen overnight, so for the foreseeable future you will continue to see the current site. That said, I hope it won't be too long before we are able to launch the new site, which I hope will prove a really useful

resource for our members, especially as it will include pages on all the services we offer.

I'm not sure if members realise just how much the Morris Federation offers over and above public liability insurance, not least the amount of advice given to individual teams by committee members on various subjects. I'm not saying it isn't appreciated, but just that we sometimes don't realise how much work goes into running an organisation as large as ours.

I mentioned in the last newsletter that I would be discussing with the committee how we manage applications for grants, sponsorship and bursaries. Well, we agreed at our last meeting that there should be a policy setting out what can be applied for under each category, which will then be published to the website with a simple application form. I am currently in the process of drawing this up and hope to have it ratified at our AGM in September. It doesn't mean that you can't apply in the meantime, it just means that in the future there will be more guidelines on what can be applied for, which will help both

you as members in applying, and us as the committee in agreeing the level of support.

We also still have in place a Health and Safety Adviser in the guise of ex-president Sally Wearing, who can advise on risk assessments, event plans, and specific topics such as traffic management. She can be contacted by email at sallywearing@outlook.com so please make use of this service.

Each event that we run has a lead committee member to support the host team, drawing on the wealth of knowledge that we have as a committee. If your team is interested in hosting a Morris Federation Day of Dance and AGM, or a Joint Morris Organisations' National Day of Dance, then please get in touch.

I'm looking forward to the start of the dancing season and seeing lots of teams at the JMO National Day of Dance on 23rd April in York.

Happy dancing!

Melanie

diary dates

23 april
JMO National Day of Dance, York

23 april
Hook Eagle 25th, Odiham, Hampshire

29 april - 2 may
Jack in the Green, Hastings, Sussex

7 may
Jack in the Green, Bristol

3-5 june
Ossett Beercart, West Yorkshire

23 july
Fleur de Lys 40th, Godalming, Surrey

17 september
Invicta Morris 40th, Sevenoaks, Kent

24 september
MF Day of Dance and AGM, Nottingham

28-30 october
Fools and Beasts Unconvention, Caryford, Somerset

guidelines for submission of articles

Please send articles as doc, docx, txt or odt formats. Articles over 1000 words will be trimmed.

Please accompany all articles with at least three high quality images. Any images embedded in text should also be sent as separate attachments.

Photographs and illustrations should be jpg, eps, tiff or pdf, though other file types may be accepted.

Make sure you have appropriate permission to publish all words and pictures. Credit will be given to photographers and captions printed, where provided.

keep it **social**



BY DENISE ALLEN, SQUIRE, FLEET MORRIS

ROY DOMMETT REMEMBERED

Roy Dommatt began his association with Fleet Morris many years ago and the contact remained to the end. Here are some extracts of memories from the tribute read at Roy's celebration on 21 November 2015.

Denise's twin brother Grahame and his wife Corinne started Fleet Morris in 1984, with their first performance in 1985.

When work moved them away from the area it left Fleet without a foreman or a musician, so the team contacted Roy for assistance. Roy was a lovely dancer, light on his feet, but a force to be reckoned with and ended up going along regularly to play and teach.

When Clive and Denise visited Roy in hospital he mentioned his legacy to Fleet: Roy Dommatt's Dozen Dances. These are dances that started off from an idea during a practice session in which everyone had a say on what would become staples of Fleet's repertoire. Some notable dances came from various comings and goings: when Clare was leaving to return to America 'Clare's Dance' was born; Carol requested a dance in a long line known as 'Carol's Dance'; Shirley left Fleet but then returned, so to celebrate they worked on 'Shirley's Return'; whilst at Winchester Folk Festival Roy treated Fleet to lunch, they had a new dance but no name for it, the dining room was named Matilda, so the dance became 'Matilda's Weave'; Roy took Fleet out to celebrate his 67th birthday, they had a wonderful time with lots of memories including a dance that was devised and named '67'; Roy always referred to 'Speed the Plough' as 'Joan's Dance'; Fleet donated money one year to an owl sanctuary and consequently have an 'Owl Dance', also known as the 'Seagull Dance' when at Swanage.

Roy's sense of fun really came to the fore when concocting skits for morris ales. Fleet danced to *Johnny Todd* (best

known as the theme to 'Z Cars') dressed as Burglar Bills, policemen and others, and danced as commuters in bowlers with rolled newspapers performing 'Ring of Bells' in an imagined railway carriage.

Roy and Fleet hosted workshops for other sides to attend and two dances have become standards: 'Windmill', a Basque stick dance, and the other is the 'Acton Stick Dance' which members of the audience are invited to join in. This dance is believed to come from a Tony Hancock programme with a pantomime theme and was performed by the regular members of the cast.

In hospital Roy mentioned that Fleet had hosted about four border workshops and that he didn't repeat a single dance once.

Also, the day before he died, Roy asked Denise and Clive to visit him in hospital to share his idea of a dance for Fleet Morris to perform at his celebration. The conversation they had was light-hearted and humorous at times, but as they knew he was dying it was poignant too. It would be a version of 'The Rogues March'. Roy explained that this used to be played to drum out dishonoured soldiers from the army. During the playing they were stripped of rank, badges, and buttons, then flogged and marched out of the camp. (*Fleet Morris performed this dance, called 'Roy's Request' at the end of Roy's celebration service - ed.*)

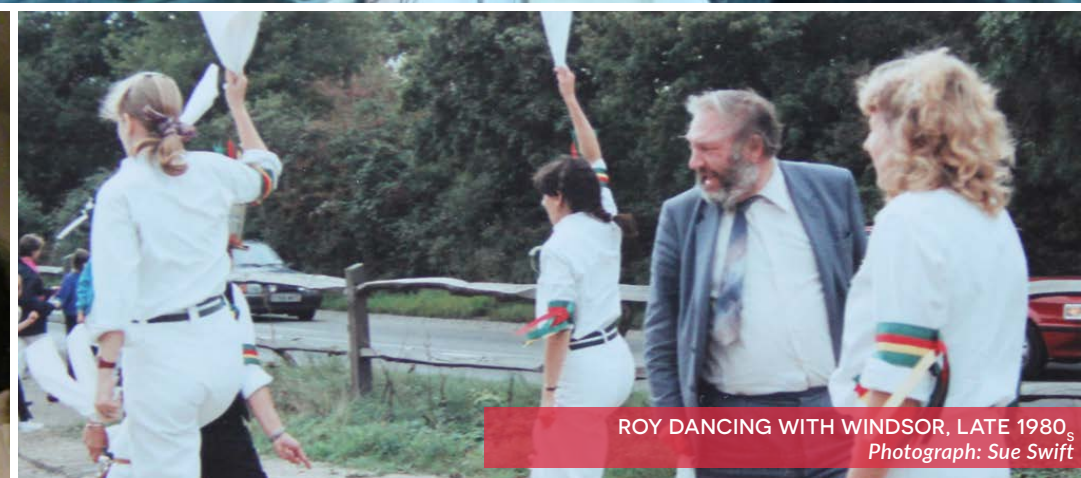
Roy said each morris side had its own characteristic which would change as members changed. Roy understood Fleet as a side of women, and encouraged them to dance in their own style, quietly feeding in ideas for dances which he thought would work. He really loved to



ROY BEHIND THE LENS, LATE 1980s
Photograph: Sue Swift



ROY AS ANDY PANDY WITH MARGUERITE
Photograph: Dommatt Family



ROY DANCING WITH WINDSOR, LATE 1980s
Photograph: Sue Swift



ROY & CHERRY SIMMONS DISCUSS FOOLING,
LATE 1980s Photograph: Sue Swift



ROY (RIGHT) AT ABINGDON, 1965
Photograph: Keith Chandler

Roy was a lovely dancer, light on his feet, but a force to be reckoned with.

see his ideas evolve into dances that other sides enjoyed watching.

To help Fleet become more confident, Roy introduced the side to the Portsmouth Musical Festival and they took part for a few years. They had to learn a number of dances and dance them well. Roy also put Fleet into the double jig contest, it was only them competing but he encouraged the members to play whilst others danced - it also meant Fleet won!

Roy affected Karen's life as he was instrumental in introducing her to Fleet. When she was first looking for a morris side to join in 1987 she went to Camberley library to ask for information. They gave her Roy's phone number and he told her about a friendly side in Fleet and the rest is history. Karen also remembers how supportive Roy was when she was learning to play melodeon. He would happily play 'The Three Musketeers' at quarter speed during practice tea breaks. It probably drove him mad but he kept smiling and encouraged her to play along even though she barely knew which way up to hold the instrument! Roy's accordion playing although random at times never ceased to lift the dancing.

Roy was a source of all necessary local knowledge, such as where to find bluebells and snowdrops. Also, Roy and Shirley both had a keen interest in history and would share books and enjoy long conversations.

Fleet were invited to lots of Dommatt family occasions, such as wedding anniversaries and birthdays and were made to feel part of their extended family. Roy and Marguerite were good



ROY DOMMETT (2013)
Photograph: Steve Poole

ROY DOMMETT REMEMBERED

BY DENISE ALLEN, SQUIRE, FLEET MORRIS

at making people feel comfortable with whatever they were attempting. An early social occasion with Fleet was when the whole side went to Roy and Marguerite's for dinner and they fed the team spaghetti bolognese from giant saucepans on the kitchen table.

For their 25th birthday, Fleet chose to celebrate by doing what they do best - tea shops. They decided to dance and drink in 25 tea shops spread over the year. Roy and Marguerite shared the love of tea shops and introduced Fleet to many. For Fleet's recent 30th birthday, members past and

present attended and Roy and Marguerite were the first to arrive and the last to leave. It was a joyful occasion.

Alton changed from being men's Cotswold to a mixed border team around 1993. Roy introduced Steve as the person who had turned Alton into an excellent border side. Steve was chuffed, as Roy's opinion meant so much to him as it did to everyone else. Roy was an inspiration to many and respected by all who knew him.

Roy's passion for all things morris was very contagious

and his encouragement for Fleet Morris to foster a unique character and style led Wendy Morris to develop the role of the fool and become the 'Tooth Fairy'.

She was not a natural dancer and Roy tolerated her efforts with much patience and good humour whilst gently guiding her in this very important position in the side. He encouraged Wendy to use the character to engage with the audience, particularly the children to whom she gave a candy set of false teeth or candy toothbrushes.

His sense of the absurd and playfulness allowed Wendy to take on this role and build her confidence. She decided that if Roy could dress in an Andy Pandy outfit to accompany the morris then it was quite appropriate for her to dress in a tutu with hooped socks and Doc Marten boots!

She enjoyed getting a rusty pair of pliers out and offering to extract teeth from the mouths of the watching crowd. At one time she was accompanied by our 'National Elf', Graham, the son of another early member,

Yvonne. Graham administered anaesthetic in the shape of a stick. Their efforts were usually declined! Roy greatly enjoyed the pantomime and egged Wendy on with much enthusiasm.

When Carol Whittaker joined the side in 1990, the mighty presence of Roy standing at the front watching her feet and telling her, 'You don't do it like that!' used to fill Carol with fear. However, she very quickly realised Roy was really a pussy cat with a lion's heart.

Roy's passion for this sport of ours, rubbed off on Carol and under his tutelage she came to love the morris and Fleet in particular. After a time, with his support and encouragement she became foreman of Fleet Morris and used many of his teaching ideas to pass the morris on to others. She has taken on the role again recently and Roy's voice still runs through her mind.

Fleet's 30 years of memories could fill a book, but Fleet Morris thank Roy for the dance, the fun, the inspiration, but most importantly, the laughter.

Extracts previously published in Morris Matters (v35, no.1)


Charities supported by Roy and suggested as beneficiaries of any donations made in his memory

The Vaughan Williams Memorial Library (VWML)
Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London, NW1 7AY
www.vwml.org

Roy collected thousands of hours of film and video from across the UK and world and the VWML is one institution who he has entrusted to preserve and share these resources. Please state you would like the donation to be used for the upkeep of Roy's work in the VWML, otherwise the funds will be used for the general running of the EFDSS.

Explosion! Museum of Naval Firepower
Heritage Way, Priddy's Hard, Gosport, Hampshire, PO12 4LE
www.explosion.org.uk

Roy had an interest in rockets, the Navy, but also in empowering people, especially children, to learn. The Explosion! museum is run by one of Roy's close friends and is to receive Roy's work materials.



The Journal of all things Morris!

Tunes - Pictures - Notation - Views
History - Reviews - and much more!
Published twice a year. only £6

Please subscribe to:

MORRIS MATTERS
27 Nortoft Road
Chalfont St. Peter
Bucks
SL9 0LA

Contributions always welcome.

Morris Matters

Roy's legacy

40 YEARS ON, FLEUR DE LYS LADIES MORRIS FROM GODALMING, SURREY, AND INVICTA MORRIS FROM OTFORD, KENT, ARE STILL GOING STRONG. BOTH OWE THEIR EXISTENCE TO ROY AND MARGUERITE DOMMETT FOR THEIR COMMITMENT, PERSISTENCE, AND UNWAVERING ENTHUSIASM IN HELPING THEIR TEAMS TO SUCCEED.

Roy came to Fleur de Lys as foreman when we were a very new side, stayed for several years, and made a point of coming to watch us each season, always with Marguerite, who spent every practice session



busily knitting socks and other items for her boys.

FLEUR DE LYS

Roy's enthusiasm was infectious. He taught us so many traditions and so much about the history of morris, but always with a sense of fun.

He was determined that stave dancing would not be forgotten and that we would be a side to carry on the tradition. On Roy's suggestion some of us went to the Rural Life Museum in Reading to see the traditional stave heads and we got a fleur de lys copied, which we still have on our staves today.

I remember him at Sidmouth dancing a stave dance with a group of friends - none of them in kit - and somehow all of them seemed to be the

Roy didn't demand perfection, but he wanted life and commitment in the dancing. We are proud to have known him as a friend and teacher.

same shape and size as Roy, charging up and down the seafront, having a great time to *Over the Hills*.

Afterwards he told us that was how stave dancing should

be done - with vigour, energy and love.

MARIAN MUSKETT

Fleur de Lys, will be celebrating their 40th year with a day of dance on Saturday 23rd July from 11am - 10pm. There will be dance locations around the Godalming as well as a coach to take sides out to local beauty spots. The afternoon will see a mass dance at the bandstand, followed by a cream tea, pub music sessions, and a ceilidh. All sides are cordially invited. Contact: jane.burton@btinternet.com or visit: www.fleurdelysmorris.com

INVICTA MORRIS

Without the encouragement that Roy and Marguerite gave to founder member Jill Rowan, it is unlikely Invicta Morris would have formed.

JUDITH BIRD

Early in the 1970s Jill discovered the joy of morris dancing and made it her aim to form the first women's group in Kent.

In 1976, in a draughty Hall in Wrotham, Roy and Marguerite spent a whole day with Jill and her group of willing volunteers, teaching the history and the foundations of morris dancing.

From then on Invicta went from strength to strength. They took the Kent invicta (prancing horse) as their symbol, and even developed some of their own Ightham tradition dances. They moved their base to Sevenoaks and later to Otford.

In 2013 they decided to invite men onto the side, and in their distinctive red and white kit, can now be seen dancing at

local festivals and events. So thank you Jill Rowan and thank you Roy Dommett.

In celebration of our 40th year, we are holding an Ale on Saturday 17th September and welcome all to join us.

We shall be dancing around Sevenoaks during the day, and shall adjourn to The Scout Hut, Mill Lane, Sevenoaks, in the late afternoon, where we will meet together with friends old and new, to reminisce over tea and cakes. The daytime sessions are free of charge. In the evening from 7.00pm, we are holding a ceilidh at the cost of £15 per person to include refreshments. Contact Judith: owenjudeb@gmail.com

or visit: www.invictamorris.org.uk



An invitation to
INVICTA'S 40th Anniversary ALE

Day of Dance
Saturday 17 September
Noon - 4.00pm FREE
Tea and cake at the Scout Hut, Mill Lane, Sevenoaks TN14 5BX
Socialise with past members
7.00pm - 11.00pm
Ceilidh with supper included

Ceilidh
Scout Hut, Mill Lane, Sevenoaks TN14 5BX
Cost £15 (£5pp deposit by 1 May)
Approximate numbers ASAP
Beer by donation
Indoor/outdoor camping may be available dependant on numbers - please ask
Socialise with past members
See website for further details
www.invictamorris.org.uk

LAST WORDS

Roy was on Radio 4's *Last Word* on 20 November, the day of his funeral. The family broadcast the show live into the church after the service while close family and friends shared tea, cake, and memories.

The dancing is over, no more jigs will be done, the bells are now quiet, no hankies will wave, the last stick is a splinter, no more ale on the bar, and the side is... one man down

DOMMETT SANDWICH

When dancing with Roy, you had to take extreme care. This was a wise warning, but often ignored by the foolhardy.

During the Bath City Morris tour of the Cotswolds in the 1970s, one lunch break found us in Hook Norton at The Pear Tree Pub, which in those days was still divided up into a series of rooms. In the tiniest of the bars, with an extremely low ceiling there was just room for four people. "We should dance," declared Roy. "Good idea," replied Tubby and Phil. With a glance at the ceiling inches above our heads they said, "Let's do Longborough." So I hummed the tune while the three of them jumped and laughed at bumped heads and bruised

knuckles, while squeezing past each other in the heys.

On another occasion it was Swaggering Boney. Phil Butler was dancing opposite Mike Dommett (Roy's eldest son). In the fighting chorus it was agreed that Phil would punch high and Mike would duck low. As Phil lunged towards Mike, Roy quietly snuck up behind and heaved Phil up and forward so that he was sandwiched between two Dommetts. The result was three broken ribs and a very apologetic Roy!

Memories
from Barbara
Butler



ROY IN HIS ANDY PANDY OUTFIT
Photograph: Dommett Family

ADMIRAL DOMMETT

On one of his visits to the Pentagon, Roy noticed a plaque to Admiral Dommett dated in the 1700s.

After the meeting, he found that he was related and that the Admiral had used Congreave's Rockets for the first time in naval warfare - rocketry was obviously in the genes!

Also, in retaliation for an American attack on York Town (modern day Toronto), where much of the town had been burnt down, Admiral Dommett had sailed the British fleet up the Potomac River to Washington and set fire to the President's House, which had to be painted white to cover up the marks. Roy had great pleasure in announcing at his next meeting at the Pentagon that it was his ancestor who was responsible for the naming of *The White House*.



MARGUERITE, ROY (WITH CBE), AND STEVEN
Photograph: Dommett Family

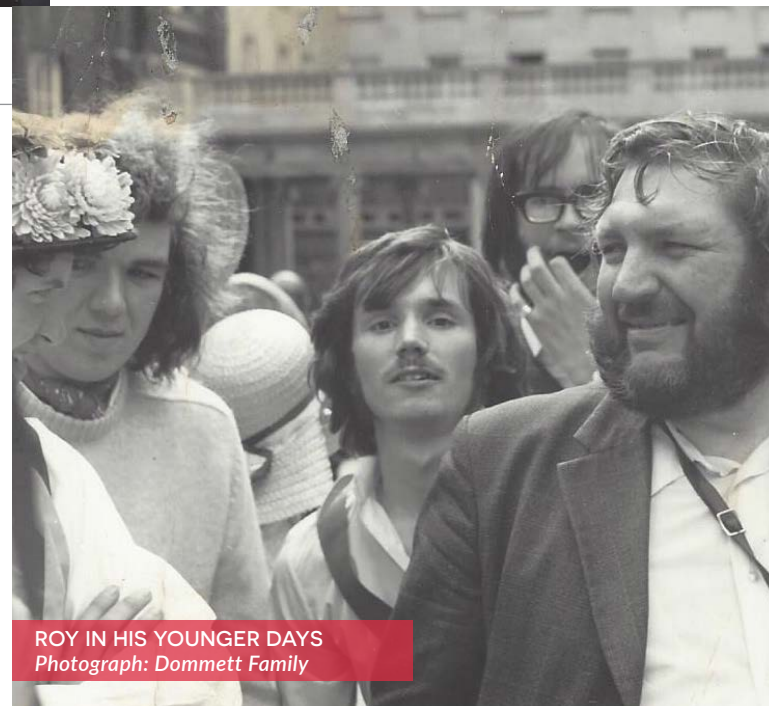
FLAT TOAST

At an early Notation Group meeting Roy, Tubby Reynolds, Paddy Davis, Val Parker, and Phil and Barbara Butler were having breakfast together.

Phil brought the first lot of toast and marmalade in and rushed back to the kitchen to watch the second batch.

Roy complained loudly that his toast was not flat and difficult to spread with butter. Phil returned to the dining room demanding to know who had been complaining. Never being one to hold back Roy raised his hand "Me!"

"Right," said Phil and raised a wooden mallet he had hidden behind his back, bringing it down so hard that pieces of toast and plate flew across the table. After a moment of shocked silence we all burst out laughing. "Well it's flat now," declared Phil and marched off back to the kitchen, leaving Roy to cover each flat fragment of toast with butter.



ROY IN HIS YOUNGER DAYS
Photograph: Dommett Family

Extracts previously published in *Morris Matters* (v35, no.1)

GOOD KING GEORGE

In an inebriated moment at the Letterkenny Folk Festival, Roy and Bath City Morris put on a Mummers Play.

Roy, in full Andy Pandey regalia, took the role of King George, who was supposed to be slain and then brought back to life by the doctor. Despite the best efforts of the Turkish Knight, King George was always the victor. In desperation the whole cast threw themselves at Roy, only to bounce off his chest and land in a heap. Roy casually leant on the pile of bodies pinning them all to the ground. Even the combined might of Bath City Morris was helpless against him.



ROY STAVE DANCING
Photograph: Dommett Family



ROY AND MARGUERITE IN LOCAL PANTO
Photograph: Dommett Family

IT'S A SMALL WORLD!

Phil Butler took Marguerite to Evensong in Keynsham

Phil and Marguerite came back from the church very excited, as the vicar had been the curate at Marguerite's church before she married Roy. A friend of Barbara Butler's, Joan, had been also been in the congregation, overheard the name Dommett and came up to them. Her husband had shared a room with Roy at Bristol University and they had been playing rugby together the day Roy lost his two front teeth in a scrum. We all piled round to Joan's house for a grand reunion with tea and cake!

BIRTHDAY SURPRISE

Roy's 50th birthday was a surprise event hosted by Fleur de Lys and Somerset Morris.

Roy and Marguerite joined them on a tour to Avebury. What they had not realised was that it was Avebury Fête Day and a newly formed local side had been invited to dance. As soon as Fleur de Lys and Somerset Morris started dancing, they found themselves surrounded by irate morris men. However as soon as Moonraker Morris found out it whose birthday it was, the men joined in the dancing, cake eating, and singing 'Happy Birthday'.

Roy Dommett and Tubby Reynolds were put in charge of the tea table.

"Who wants the crust?" asked Roy, while brandishing the bread knife like a machete. Hands went up from several people. So to oblige, Roy cut the crust from both ends of the loaf, then the top, the bottom and the sides. Everybody got their crust, leaving a sad little cube of white bread on the board.

THE LAST CRUMB



ROY (LEFT) AT BAMPTON, 1961
Photograph: Keith Chandler

HIGH SPEN SUCCESS

BOB
WILSON,
CAPTAIN

First place win at the
North East Rapper
Competition 2016



Rapper sword dancing evolved from the mining traditions of the North East of England.

Miners were notorious for competing at just about everything from the size of their vegetables to their village brass bands. Many coal mining villages also had a rapper team and there were numerous competitions to prove just who had the best.

The North East Rapper Competition is an occasional event, open to any team in the north east. It took place this year at St Mary's Heritage Centre on the Gateshead Quayside on Saturday the 30th January.

There were five teams competing, two from the Newcastle Kingsmen, one from Star and Shadow, and both the High Spen Blue Diamonds and their sister side The High Spen Pink Diamonds.

The rules for the competition are simple; each team 'bought' a place in the competition for five pounds and teams could enter as many times as they wished. The winner took 'the bag'!

The standard of dance was high as you would expect from solely north eastern teams each with a long history of dancing rapper, and this was acknowledged by the chairman of the judges, Mr Chris Cartridge.

The final results were:

- 1st High Spen Blue Diamonds
- 2nd Newcastle Kingsmen 'A'
- 3rd Star and Shadow

Congratulations to all who took part, thanks to the judges, Chris Cartridge, Jean Smith and John Atkinson and a special thanks to Ednie Wilson and the staff of St Mary's Heritage Centre for organising the event.

35 YEARS OF MASONS APRON



Masons Apron is a ladies North West Morris side based in long Hanborough in Oxfordshire with our members coming from the surrounding villages and towns. We wear traditional Sunday best, black skirts and waistcoats with an apron over the skirt and we dance with sticks, garlands, molliies and slings.

We are blessed with our own musicians and a brilliant Foreman, Di Shrimpton, who

has led us on many jaunts over the years, including to Bath last year to celebrate the Morris Federation's 40th anniversary organised by Mr. Wilkins' Shilling,

We have also journeyed abroad and throughout England and Wales with our loyal band

of supporters, plus dance throughout the summer and collect for charity whenever we can.

The side has several characters and much ribbing takes place. We are friendly, welcoming and supportive and enjoy our time together at festivals, always trying to dance our best but we do not aspire to be 'Pan's People'.

We have 24 dances in our repertoire, but most years we tackle a new dance to keep it fresh. We have also been known to sing!

The side has seen many changes over our 35 years, the kit, dancers, musicians and pace; but we are still strong and still have an original member dancing with us. To celebrate our 35th birthday we held an Ale in February, and will be holding a barn dance in April, a Day of Dance in June and finishing with a birthday bash in December.

I am a relative latecomer to folk, but can truly say this merry group have supported me through highs and lows. We love to dance out and would like to say thank you to all those we have met with and danced with over the years.

Visit www.masonsapron.org.uk for more information about our group.

SARAH
BARTLEMAN,
SQUIRE

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Many thanks to everyone who sent in potential names for the newsletter.

We had over 100 entries, ranging from the literal to the comical and everything in between and were most impressed by the detail behind some of them.

With so many names to choose from, a criterion was agreed upon to select a non-dance-specific name that would not exclude any of the various forms of traditional dance that the Morris Federation encompasses.

This created a short-list of names, including: Side Lines, Step Up, Foot Notes, Fed Alert, and even 'The Joy of Sets'. However, there could only be one winner and it was FedExtra.

The winner has requested to remain anonymous until the next issue, to surprise his team when their picture is featured on the front cover.

BEERCART FESTIVAL 3-5 JUNE 2016



Wakefield Morris are delighted to announce that their plans for the 2016 and third Ossett Beercart Festival are shaping up well. This year it will be on the 3rd-5th June, with the Beerfest 3rd-4th.

We have booked the Town Hall for the first weekend in June for the next few years. If you can't make it this year, then make a diary note for the future.

Nine teams have promised to come, and more have been invited. The Beercart Haul up into Ossett will be a slightly extended route with a beer break added. That should make the going very convivial.

Check out our Facebook and Twitter sites for all the most up-to-date news. Proceeds in aid of Wakefield Hospice.



BANKS OF GREEN WILLOW

**FOOL'S GAMBIT TO PERFORM AS PART OF A PROJECT
COMMEMORATING THE CENTENARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME**

ROSIE
WRIGHT

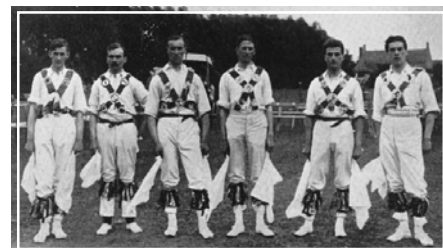
In 1916, four of Cecil Sharp's demonstration team died within weeks of each other on the Somme, changing the course of morris dancing in the 20th century. Fool's Gambit aim to celebrate the lives of these men and their contribution to the development of English folk dance.

The name of the project comes from George Butterworth's composition of the same name, one of the most quintessentially British pieces of orchestral music.

The main themes from this piece will be used in our show, as well as *The Lads in their Hundreds*, a poem by A. E. Housman which Butterworth set to music. Despite being written in 1896 this poem fits perfectly with the project, as it is about young lads going off to war and not returning.

Our performance will consist of music, song and dance, both traditional and modern. Several dances are mentioned in letters home from the front including

jigs and a longsword dance, and we will be recreating these. We are also in the process of writing some new dances to represent various aspects of the war.



Cecil Sharp's demonstration team

morris dancing, but which will come into their own for the performance of *Banks of the Green Willow*. It's great that we're finally putting them to good use!



Fool's Gambit practice longsword

Memorial at Notre Dame de Lorette and as part of the Pozière Son et Lumière. We are delighted to have the support of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission for these performances.

We will also be performing in the UK, in Ascott-Under-Wychwood, the home of Reginald Tiddy, a member of Sharp's team, and at Cecil Sharp House,

where the performances will be a collaboration with *Folk in Motion*, a wheelchair folk dance group.

Fool's Gambit Morris are very grateful to Lee Hallam, our principal sponsor, and Joseph Dunn, the founder and organiser of *Banks of Green Willow*, for making this project possible.

If you would like further information please email: foolsgambitmorris@gmail.com or visit: www.foolsgambitmorris.co.uk where you can also make a donation to the project.



Fool's Gambit Morris

Our members have a wide variety of talents, including some excellent clog dancers and a number of musicians who can play instruments not traditionally used for

The main focus of the project is a visit to France in July 2016, where we will perform at several prestigious venues including the Thiepval Memorial, the International

THE CHILDREN ARE THE FUTURE

LYNDA
HARLING,
CHAIR

The new year for Eccleston Heritage Clog (EHC) has started off on a bright and positive note despite the raging storms.

One of our long time members, Cathy, who teaches in a school in Leyland, has for the past few years, had the use of the clog bank in order to teach the Year 6 class how to clog dance.

As far as we are aware, this is the only school in the immediate area which has clog dancing as part of their curriculum. On Friday 5th February, four EHC dancers went along to the school to meet up with the class and spend an hour or so with them. What a brilliant time

we had, from the warm-up to the dance off at the end of the session. With only a few hours of lessons undertaken (they only start learning after the Christmas break) they were amazing to watch and dance alongside.

Together with the looks of enjoyment on their faces, the sheer fun of making a loud noise and their determination to match us in the dance off, can only lead to the hope that we gave them the incentive to carry on learning after Year 6 is done.

As a community group EHC's main aim is to take clog step dancing out to the community to keep our tradition alive and where better to begin than with the youngsters?

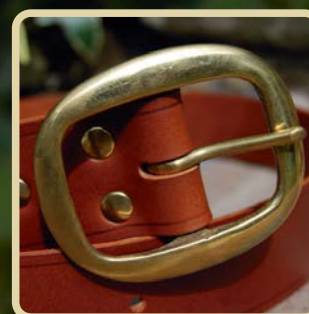
We are hoping to do more in the future, perhaps encouraging other schools to come on board.

After all, there's no better way to exercise than dance, and without a doubt, **the children are the future** for our heritage!



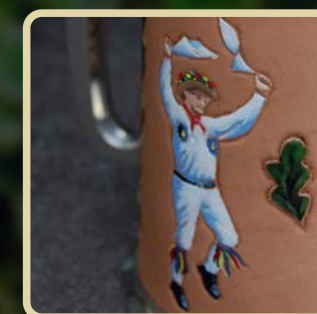
Get ready for
festival season
with...

Leather
for
Folkies



Beautifully handmade leather goods
by folkies for folkies

- Morris kit bags · Belts ·
- Instrument straps & cases ·
- Masks · Tankard wraps · Bell pads ·
- Bags, pouches & purses · Repairs ·
- One-offs and commissions ·



www.leatherforfolkies.co.uk

[facebook.com/leatherforfolkies](https://www.facebook.com/leatherforfolkies)

e: bagman@leatherforfolkies.co.uk

0114 233 6146 / 07958 15 45



Traditional British Clogs

Phil Howard - Clogs & Leatherwork

Full-time professional Clog Maker



**All clogs are made entirely on the premises using only my own soles
(not machine made) and full-grain leather uppers**

Also: re-wooding and resoling; standard and extra-hard rubber soles (shods) and heels supplied; original unused clog irons available, including clog nails

Leatherwork including: badges, keyrings, ear-rings, bell pads, belts etc.
My own work so other designs can be made.

For up-to-date prices and details of events, visit: www.nw-clogs.co.uk

☎ 0161 494 0224

✉ phil.howard.clogs@gmail.com

🌐 www.facebook.com/philhowardclogs



Then and now: Windsor Morris at Sidmouth Festival, 1977 and in Buxton, 2013
Photographs: left - Marian Ballhatchet; right - Charlotte Dover

AN EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHS TO CELEBRATE THE MORRIS FEDERATION'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY

Put together by Charlotte Dover (*Windsor Morris, Fool's Gambit, and Customs & Exiles*), the exhibition was displayed at Cecil Sharp House, the headquarters of the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS) in London, between November 2015 and January 2016, and looked at the history of women's participation in morris as well as highlighting the vibrant state of the morris today.

Eight images of current teams made a dramatic show in the foyer and stairwell, alongside four historical images of women and girls dancing in the early 20th century and 1970s.

The EFDSS were very pleased with the exhibition, and want to show several of the photographs as part of a retrospective in July.

The exhibition is currently installed at Halsway Manor in Somerset until the end of June, and following the retrospective in London, additional displays are planned for Whitby Folk Week between 20-26 August, and the Morris Federation Day of Dance and AGM in Nottingham on Saturday 24 September.

Thank you to everyone who sent photographs. Cecil Sharp House called for only a few large prints, but the exhibition and some additional photographs may be uploaded to the Morris Federation website following the various public displays this year.

Some extracts from the exhibition will be featured within the next four issues of the Morris Federation newsletter.



Customs & Exiles at Sidmouth Folk Week, August 2015
Photograph by Ben Potton

NORTH WEST

A large proportion of new teams that have been formed in the last 5-10 years and have joined the Morris Federation have been mixed.

Customs & Exiles is a North West team from Wokingham, Berkshire, which was founded in 2010. They have quickly established themselves as one of the best mixed North West teams in the country. The team has particular places in the set for the men and women, so that the shapes and patterns of the dance are shown clearly with the different colours worn by the dancers of each sex.



Star and Shadow at Warwick Folk Festival, July 2013
Photograph by Charlotte Dover

RAPPER

Sword dancing originates from the North East of England and comes in two main forms, Longsword, from Yorkshire, and Rapper from Northumberland and Durham. Rapper dances usually have five dancers each with a flexible sword. It is a particularly vibrant tradition, fast and exciting, and best shown in small places such as pub bars.

Star and Shadow Rapper and Step, from Newcastle, have English and Scottish clog dances, Appalachian step dances and Irish step dances in their repertoire as well as their rapper dances.

Tired, worn-out, jaded, faded?

If it's you, I can't help... but if it's your morris kit that needs a lift, contact Jenny for new

- baldricks
- rosettes
- armbands
- bell pads
- waistcoats
- skirts
- shirts
- trousers
- handkerchiefs
- sashes
- stick bags
- britches
- hoggars

... and more

Satisfied customers include Westrefelda, Chelmo Champs, Berkshire Bedlams, Pecsatan, Winkleigh Morris, Hageneth Morris Men, Silkstone Greens, Garston Gallopers, Northfields Morris, Sproughton Long Blades, Redbornstoke, Rattlejag Morris and various school sides.

Jenny Everett

20 High Street, Sutton on Trent, Newark, Notts. NG23 6QA
01636 821672 / 07931 514510 jenny.l.everett@btinternet.com

DITCHLING MORRIS 30TH ANNIVERSARY 1985-2015

HIGHLIGHTS FROM DITCHLING'S
30TH YEAR, INCLUDE:

MAY DAY, SALISBURY, AND A WIN FOR FATHER
AND SON JACK AND LEON HOGSDEN AT THE
JOHN GASSON JIG COMPETITION AT SIDMOUTH



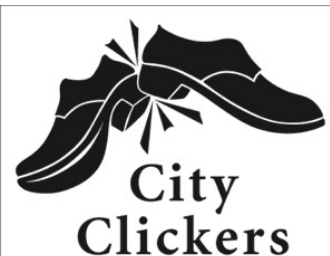
Clog Dance Workshops

This year's City Clicker's clog dance
workshops will be held on:

Saturday 15th October
10am- 4pm in
Horfield, Bristol

Four different levels of class available
Price £25 including tea, coffee and biscuits
Light lunch available for £5

For more details or to reserve your place
please visit: www.city-clickers.org.uk
or email: city_clickers@hotmail.com



GARLANDS AND MAYPOLES WITH JERUSALEM JAMMERS



It can feel slightly dangerous at times keeping the base
steady and trying to advise dancers which way to go



A Barber's Pole at a sunny school fete
with musician Karolyn on accordion



A good looking 'Spiders Web' in ideal conditions:
ladies of similar height and a quality hall floor

Trefor Owen

**Gweithdy Clociau
(The Clog Workshop)
Henbont Road
CRICIETH
Gwynedd**

LL52 0DG
Home tel: 01766 523 695
Workshop/Mobile: 07712 822 453
Email: treforowenclogmaker@gmail.com
WEB: treforowenclogmaker.co.uk



**Clogs, Rubber shods, Fancy Laces, Badges and bits supplied as always
"Good metal" Clog Irons fitted at the Workshop.**

**We make ALL our own Uppers, Rubbers and all our own Wooden Soles using only
sustainable, local wood sources.
Very few "Tree Miles" are run up in our business.**

We can now make Clogs with Vegetarian Uppers though the colour range is limited.

Sadly we don't make the Nails yet – but I am working on that!



Hook Eagle Morris Men celebrating 25 years of dancing

HOOK EAGLE MORRIS MEN ARE CELEBRATING THEIR 25TH YEAR, AS THE SIDE CONTINUES TO GO FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

The Eagles have been an ever-present part of life in Hook and surrounding villages in north Hampshire since 1991.

The side was initially created as part of an auction of promises raising funds for an extension



to the St John the Evangelist Church in Hook. With help from nearby Yateley Morris, the vicar and some men of Hook learnt to dance and performed at the 1991 church fete.

Hook Eagle quickly gave up its initial flirtation with Cotswold style morris and moved over to dance in the Border style (we like big sticks). This also brought the advantage of blackened faces for disguise and general merriment.

Over the past 25 years, we have developed our own 'North Hampshire' dances, such as: *Hook Tandoori*, *Far Canal*, *Rotherwick Lead Miners* and *Le*

Fresne Porret, as well as dances named after all our local pubs, including: *The Raven*, *The White Hart* and our spiritual home *The Crooked Billet*.

These are mixed in with other vaguely traditional dances like *Hay-on-Wye* to make a repertoire of

around a dozen or so that are in general use.

All of these are accompanied by the famous 'Hook Wall of Sound', a multi-talented and multi-instrumented bunch who keep threatening to drown out the dancers' ability to think and dance at the same time.

Our dancing has earned us numerous media appearances and in the past year we've appeared in *Private Eye*, upmarket fashion magazine *Pylot* and the world-renowned *Pharmacist Work and Lifestyle!* While our annual wassail in Hartley Wintney has become an established part of the

paparazzi circuit, resulting in coverage in local, national and international media.

Hook Eagle Morris Men will be continuing their long-standing tradition of raising funds for local charities in 2016. Donations from our tin-rattling will be going towards the local Base Youth Club and a new group looking to support those undertaking Duke of Edinburgh Awards.

Our packed programme for 2016 includes performances at events in Hook, Odiham, Rotherwick and other local villages. We will also be returning to well-established haunts, including Oxford Folk Festival and Rochester Sweeps Festival and the once-every-four-years Sheep Day in Overton. Full details at: www.hookeagle.org.uk

A special highlight to mark our 25th anniversary will be a day of dance on St George's Day, Saturday 23rd April. Sides from across the south of England are threatening to join in the fun, including Basingclog Morris,

Berkshire Bedlam, Bloodstone Border, Borderline Morris, Fleet Morris, Full Moon Morris, Knockhundred Shuttles, Loose Women, Mayflower Morris, New Forrest Medlars, OBJ, Pilgrim Morris Men, and Seven Champions.

The day will start around lunchtime in the Bury, Odiham, after which everyone will set off by coach to dance at various local pubs and the Andwell Brewery. For those who survive, Hook Eagles will be hosting a 25th birthday barn dance in the evening.

Recent research has again suggested that music, exercise and good friends are the key to happiness (with beer just adding to it) — we've got all of those, let the good times roll.



JONATHAN BUISSON, SQUIRE

Wassail!

There's a lot of it about in January here's just three accounts from what's become a busy season for many morris sides

TWO HEADED SHEEP MORRIS

HILARY CHADWICK

The Apple trees in Egremont community orchard in Cumbria should fruit well this year. Two Headed Sheep Morris met in the usual drizzle on the afternoon of Sunday 31st January in the orchard opposite the cemetery.



Toast was hung in the branches of the trees and mulled ale both poured round the roots and consumed by the dancers. Dances were performed around the trees with singing and much banging on the ground with sticks to wake them.

This is the third year the ceremony has been performed in Egremont watched over by an increasing number of people both by the orchard and passing traffic on the A595.



Each year the apple crop has improved. We shall be back next year!

PRISTON JUBILEE MORRIS

On Saturday 16th January, proceedings commenced on the village green with dancing from Priston Jubilee Morris.



JOHN WILKINSON

Guns fired, party poppers popped, tins banged, and a good time was had by all with the passing of the wassail cup of mulled cider.

The crowning of the wassail queen was then followed by the procession to the orchard where the ritual began with the queen placing a piece of toast in a bough of the wassail tree and pouring cider around the roots to attract Robin Goodfellow and the other good spirits to ensure a good harvest.

Then came the part we were all looking forward to, the scaring away of the bad spirits!

Refreshments and raffle at the village hall raised over £150 for Children's Hospice South-West.



CROOK MORRIS

Wassail comes from the Anglo-Saxon phrase 'waes hael', which means 'good health', and every year on the closest Saturday to the 17th of January Crook Morris, with help from The Kendal Revellers, meet at The Row in the Lyth Valley and wassail their damson tree.

This slightly odd tradition consists of making as much noise as possible while we approach the tree to scare away the evil spirits, pouring damson beer into the roots and hanging toast off the branches.

higher than the Eagle by hiding on the Eagle's back, therefore becoming the King of the birds) and addresses the tree.

We also pass around our very own wassail cup, which has three handles to make it easier

While standing around the tree we also sing a number of wassail songs and traditional carols, lead by The Kendal Revellers. The Master of Ceremony for this annual event is Simon Gillow who leads us to the orchard, explains the story of the Wren (who flew



to pass around, but because we're wassailing a damson tree

SAM MASON

we don't fill the cup with spiced cider, we

fill it with hot spiced damson beer!

The Wassail Day continues with morris dancing and singing outside the orchard. When the dancing has turned our fingers numb and our noses red we zoom up the road to The Hare and Hounds at Bowland Bridge, where thankfully the fires are roaring.

The rest of the afternoon, and the evening, is then spent singing, dancing with Westmorland Step and Garland



Dancers, eating, drinking, and mumming a traditional play with Father Christmas, St George, the Dragon and many more interesting characters.

Although it's a good excuse to get together with friends and have a good sing and a dance (and a few drinks), the real purpose of wassailing is to encourage the tree to bear more fruit by scaring off the evil spirits and wishing the tree good health.

So the only way to find out if it has worked is to wait... oh look, there's some damson beer left...

REMEMBER WHEN IT ALL BEGAN?

LYNDA HARLING,
CHAIR



EHC practice session, February 2016

Now the hustle and bustle of Christmas is all but a distant memory and our newcomers are settling in and beginning to dance the steps they have learned alongside the 'old-timers', we found the conversation turning to, "I remember when I first started clogging...", so we decided to conduct a very small survey along the lines of: *Why did you come to clog dance class and now you know some steps and tunes what do you think?*

We've all been there, where our left leg will definitely NOT do what it's supposed to do; and "there is no way I can hop on one leg **and** click my heels" is a common cry from the back of the room. So, with the greatest of understanding, sympathy, and support from the ones who bear the scars, the comments below sum up the thoughts, feelings, hopes and challenges that dancing in clogs brings to us all...

I've probably had to miss more classes than I've been able to attend since beginning last year, so I'm picking steps up very slowly but Alex, our teacher, is very patient! It's great fun, I go home feeling much more energised than when I arrived, and it's a great feeling when 'how to do a step' clicks. I just wish I'd started when I was younger and fitter.

What's it like being a clog dancing beginner? Well, when you first start there's no way that you can imagine being able to do any sort of sequence as you learn

a step or shuffle then move onto something else. However, before you know it you are putting it all together and it all makes sense and flows and you just know it's right by listening to that sound of the clogs, which is like nothing else. I LOVE IT!

Kath

I started clog dancing 18 months ago. The first question people usually ask is "Why?" and "How did you get started?" When we were about two my twin sister and I had a pair of red clogs and I love looking at old photos of us sat on the step in our garden and remembering what a lovely childhood we had. A couple of years ago my sister bought me a beautiful pair of red clogs.



Whenever I wore them people asked, "Clogs, can you dance?", and I'd reply, "No, but I'd like to." I looked online and found Eccleston Heritage Clog. At first I thought hmm...not sure how I will do and if I'll like it, but I'll give it a go. It took several weeks but I'm hooked! I love it, it's great fun, challenging, and makes me feel happy. I have met lovely

people who started with me and members who are in advanced classes. The teacher is very inspiring and very patient!

Helen

AND FROM OUR MUSICIAN...

When my employer decided that I had out lived my usefulness and suggested I might like to apply for early retirement I started to look for ways to fill my newly acquired extra leisure time.

Basket making with the U3A didn't hit the spot, nor did computer classes for silver surfers or indeed spending the afternoon in the pub with my pals. I wanted something a bit more lively and stimulating.

to more experienced dancers. The dances they learn include hornpipe, waltz and Lakeland steps; Lancashire Irish; Pat Tracy's 'A' routine; and the 10 steps of the Sam Sherry waltz. They also choreograph routines, in particular street dance and ragtime sequences. The music required ranges from traditional waltzes, reels, hornpipes and Irish jigs through to more jazz-style tunes such as 'Ain't Misbehaving', 'Five Foot Two Eyes of Blue', 'When the Saints Go Marching In', and 'On the Sunny Side of the Street'.

Playing music for a very exacting and demanding group of mainly women dancers can be quite a tough test for any musician, let alone someone who is still very new to the job. My playing can be either too fast or too slow; speeds up or slows in the middle of tunes; too many As and not enough Bs; too lumpy or too smooth; we have trouble deciding which is the best tune for each dance. Although, sometimes it is just the way they want it to be.

I have met lots of nice people and had the satisfaction of watching beginners turn into competent dancers as well as helping to preserve our heritage and bring it to a wider audience.

Chris



Eccleston Heritage Clog

The weekly class takes in all abilities from absolute beginners

LEGACY MORRIS

Is it just this winter, or are lots of the old 'greats' dying off?

Maybe it's just an age thing. Mike and I dutifully made our wills when we married, but we have never given a thought to what will happen to the morris 'stuff' that we have.

When I think hard about it, I realise that although our families know that we are mad about morris, they may not feel the need to pass on any photos or paraphernalia to one of the morris organisations.

There was a recent incident of a notable person within the tradition who died

and their family were found to be turfing all their books into a skip. Fortunately, someone within the morris happened by and was able to perform a rescue mission.

You may not think that you have much of interest to anyone else, but your photographs of dancing over the years, old kit, bits of notation, collections of badges, programmes, musical instruments etc, may be worth considering. It's all much less traumatic if you leave instructions.

The Morris Federation is happy to store items

in the archive, or redirect them to a more suitable home so that they are not lost to future researchers.

We had our first legacy donation last year too, to start a research project on women in the morris, such a lovely way to celebrate a life spent dancing.

So, why not stop and think about death for a moment, and let your family know what you want to happen to your morris 'stuff', and maybe mention a legacy donation.

Here's to the next life, no creaking joints, no hangovers and no team politics!



MONEY MONEY MONEY

If you had £1,000 to spend supporting morris, sword, and traditional dance, what would you do?

In addition to the current bursary scheme, we have earmarked the funds from our CDs to be used for new projects that will help young dancers. We expect to raise about £1,000 so need your ideas.

It could be something that you want to organise or an idea that could be arranged locally or nationally such as workshops, dance tutors, or kit for a school side. Whatever it is, we want to hear about it, so please contact any member of the committee.

Buy the CDs directly from The Morris Fed, and £10 from each sale - that's everything except postage - goes to this fund.

MIKE EVERETT,
MF ARCHIVE
OFFICER

hobgoblin music
since 1976
BRITAIN'S FOLK & ACOUSTIC SPECIALISTS



SUPPORTING LIVE MUSIC FESTIVALS
Sidmouth, Cornwall,
Crawley, Oxford, BMG,
Riseley, Tenterden, St Ives,
Broadstairs and more

Our nine shops stock all kinds of acoustic & folky musical instruments from Britain and around the world!
Our expert staff are always on hand to give you free, friendly advice.

BIRMINGHAM | BRIGHTON | BRISTOL | CANTERBURY | CRAWLEY
LEEDS | LONDON | MANCHESTER | WADEBRIDGE

World famous mail order service - 0845 130 9500

www.hobgoblin.com

MAYBE MORRIS

25TH BIRTHDAY AND 2015 WEEKEND OF DANCE



First kit (1990)

2015 marked the 25th birthday of Maybe Morris.

My first kit appeared on the scene at the 1990 Rochester Sweeps Festival. Being a team of one, I was limited to dancing my solo jig, *Ladies of Pleasure*, after having found a friendly musician. However, this didn't stop me from dancing with a great many teams at the Rochester Festivals each year, as well as other teams at their weekends of dance or visits to Europe (France, Holland, Belgium and Germany). The tally was over 40 teams and I became a member of some on the way.

At one point I had seven different kits hanging in my wardrobe. My biggest worry was that one day I would go away with the wrong one in my suitcase!



Weekend of dance in Arundel, 2015

I remember once driving from Gatwick Airport to Yeovil in Somerset straight after work for Treacle Eater Clog practice, as I was dancing with them in France the following weekend, and I got back home at about 1am.

Inevitably, I was asked "So when's Maybe Morris having a Weekend of Dance?" This had never occurred to me, but once the idea had been put in my head I was idiotic enough to follow it through.

The first weekend of dance in 1998 was a great success with lots of dancing, big audiences, and glorious sunshine the whole weekend. On the Friday evening, whilst sitting outside the pub, a Spitfire put on a wonderful aerobatic display directly above our heads. Then, on Saturday we were part of a typically English village setting: morris dancers, a wedding at the church next door complete with coach and horses for the bride, groundsmen preparing the field in front of the pub for the cricket match, and the sun was shining in a clear blue sky - a real chocolate box picture straight out of an artist's dream.

The second weekend of dance was in 1999 and then they were held every other year until the tenth Maybe Morris Weekend in 2015. As if to outdo the Spitfire display on that first weekend, the Red Arrows flew across on the Sunday morning in 2015, very low and directly above our heads. That certainly got everyone's attention!

There weren't as many people in the audience at Arundel on Saturday (gone are the days when the crowd was six deep) but there was excellent dancing by everyone. To go out with a flourish, there was a trip on a narrowboat on the Wey & Arun Canal on Sunday morning then dancing at the pub by the landing stage. About twenty of us stayed over until Monday so we had a good singing/music session at the campsite on Sunday evening. All in all a great weekend.

Those taking part were: Red Stags, Sompting Village Morris, Babylon, Broadwood Morris Men, Mad Jacks, Dawn Connington, Penshurst Morris, Far Canal, Sun Oak, Ian Cox Scratch Team, and Old Shoreham Buccaneers.

MAY
LITTLETON,
MAYBE
MORRIS



I would like to thank all the people who have supported Maybe Morris at my weekends over the years. Special thanks go to Red Stags and Sompting Village Morris who have made it to every single one.



Maybe Morris in action

Please don't think that this is the end of Maybe Morris. I grew out of my first outfit some years ago due to the dreaded shrinking virus in my wardrobe. The latest fits a bit snug but Maybe Morris is still going strong, although knee problems makes it look as though my dancing days are over, so perhaps I should blow the dust off my melodeon.

My motto is still the same "Have Kit, Will Travel" so don't forget to invite me and my dog Molly, to your weekend of dance.

OBITUARY: JOHN THOMAS ROSE AND CASTLE MORRIS

STEVE
BRADY,
BAGMAN



It is with the greatest regret that Rose and Castle Morris Men announce the death of their longest-serving, active member, John Thomas, who passed away following a stroke on 27th October at the far too young age of 69.

'JT' as he was widely known, was a founder member of Rose and Castle in 1977, before which he danced with Akeley Morris Men. From then until his first serious illness in late 2000 JT was a stalwart dancer, rarely missing a dance out, weekend away, or practice.

He was an accomplished melodeon player, who contributed a number of our favourite dance tunes, and was also active with a number

of other local sides, notably Redbornstoke Morris and, in his latter years as a musician with Old Mother Redcaps.

JT was an affable, jovial, and social man, whose knowledge of morris and folk music was at least matched by his expert appreciation of a decent pint of real ale and a good traditional pub. He was also an authority on steam railways and actively involved in their preservation. His good humour and wealth of interesting conversation and anecdote won him many friends.

In 2001 John was fortunate to survive a very serious illness, which severely limited his

mobility, and put paid to his dancing days. However, JT continued to be a hard-core musician to Rose and Castle, turning out in all weathers, and joining the side on away gigs even when confined to a wheelchair. His wife Frances was the rock who supported him through these often difficult latter years.

His passing prompted a flood of condolence and tribute from both morris and folk circles, nationally as well as locally. John's funeral in Milton Keynes on 9 November was packed to the doors with friends and family, including members from at least a dozen morris sides around the country.

As JT would certainly have wished, the funeral was followed by a gathering at Rose and Castle's home hostelry, *The Boat* at Stoke Bruerne, at which many a pint of good English ale was sunk in his memory.

Farewell, JT.

We will always remember, and miss, you, but, thanks to commitment like yours, the morris goes on...



National Morris Weekend

We are now full for 2016

Enquiries welcomed for next year's event 16-18 June 2017

All traditions are welcome to join us to dance in picturesque villages and towns in the beautiful Vale of Evesham, plus: evening ceilidh and sessions, processions through the town centre, and the presentation of the Evesham Stick.

Book early as we are limited to 450 places

contact us at: valemorrisinvitations@yahoo.co.uk
or visit: www.nationalmorrisweekend.co.uk
for all prices, booking forms and information



HASTINGS TRADITIONAL JACK IN THE GREEN

FRIDAY 29TH APRIL - MONDAY 2ND MAY 2016



**JOIN US FOR A WEEKEND OF DANCING,
MUSIC, AND MORRIS MERRIMENT!
WITH CONCERTS AND CEILIDHS FROM**
- JIGALOTS -
- GARRY BLAKELEY -
- PEEPING TOM -
- THE COPPER FAMILY -
**AND THE GRAND PROCESSION
ON BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY**

**PLUS!
CHARITY
COLLECTION
COMPETITION
ON SUNDAY!**

Photos by Mark Richards and Carole Green



Paul White's DIARY

New dancers impress – and how to survive the wassail

And when we started learning a freshly-minted dance, new to every one of us, she coped with it

admirably. Even the torturous and mystifying sticking-routine failed to have her baffled. In a couple of weeks' time I expect she will have all our dances under her belt and will play a full part in this summer's varied pattern of performances.

It's the same story with Angie, who joined the side this season. She is already a confident dancer, and is enjoying every minute of the whole strange morris-dancing experience. Maybe it's got something to do with their age. Definitely the younger side of forty. Young blood eh? It's an idea worth exploring.

And so is cider. And there was plenty of that flowing when we went a-wassailing.

an old steam engine, plonked in the middle of the farmyard and stuffed full with old pallets and other combustible material. There was dancing, there was music, there was singing and there was the wassail.

Now, to my mind, these things can go on a bit. But here, they got it just right. A couple of hundred of us trudged down the field and performed the ceremony at just one, magnificent – and, I hope, grateful - tree. And apart from the final religious element, it was a grand do.

Back to the party for a bit of bopping about. Mark and I were well into the dad-dancing and the women-folk were showing us up rotten. We wondered why it was that while blokes of a certain age dance as though they are extras from the original series of Thunderbirds, still attached to our strings, our partners suddenly move like teenagers; limbs, bodies and arms smoothly executing routines that would grace any dance floor.

The barn was heaving. Bemused, amazed, but appreciative French visitors joined in the spirit of the occasion; a Canadian visitor

was visibly impressed with my puppet-dancing; there was even a star of radio and television joining in the fun and holding tight on to her cider flagon.



*Cat's Eye perform in the barn at Haywood's Farm
Photograph by Jeremy Northcott*

Bedtime beckoned and we wandered off for a quiet nightcap and sleep. And sleep we did. Despite the noise (we were camped just yards from the action), there was no problem nodding off.

We woke next morning to learn how things had progressed. There had been various forms of alcoholic apple drink available. One - a spirit described as tasting like anti-freeze, hence the necessary dash of Ribena - should certainly have been avoided.

The last great survivor of the night (who shall be nameless - Steve) was discovered at 4.30am leaning against the Portaloo. Remarkably, he joined us for a cuppatea at a reasonably early hour and managed a coherent conversation. Wassail!



*Torch-lit wassail at Haywood's Farm with Cat's Eye
Photograph by Jeremy Northcott*

Caroline arrived, took some basic guidance from Martyn and lined up for the first dance. Her baptism of fire. I didn't mind so much because I get confused. Many of the dances have similar moves and one merges into another in my ageing brain. So a little refresher before we started was a welcome gift to me.

Our newcomer grasped it all and once the chorus and figures had been explained, she danced it through from start to finish with ne'er a hitch. She's far too good for the likes of us! It just won't do.

Being well-versed in the perils of over-indulging, of mixing drinks, and of giving in to the encouragement of others who extol the virtues of evil-looking brews, we stuck to beer and headed off for the comfort of the motorhome before the drinking began in earnest.

The evening was warm enough, helped by the fierce glow of what looked like the boiler from

Journalist, editor, ukulele player, and singer, Paul White has been dancing the morris since the year 2000. He is a founding member of both Wreckers and Cat's Eye in Cornwall, helped form Couptrain Morris (France) and Turncoat, and has also danced with Lodestone. Paul can be found in Europe introducing fellow campers to the joys of morris, using baguettes, umbrellas, or tent poles for sticks.
contact: pwhite420@btinternet.com twitter: @morrisbells or Facebook



MORRIS FEDERATION AGM AND DAY OF DANCE WITH MORTIMER'S MORRIS NOTTINGHAM – 24TH SEPTEMBER 2016

The Morris Federation and Mortimer's Morris extend a warm welcome to all members of the Morris Federation to join us in a day of dance in Nottingham on Saturday 24th September 2016, followed by the Morris Federation AGM at 4.30pm (4pm sign-in) at the Canalhouse.

Our base for the day will be the function room above the Canalhouse:

**48-52 Canal Street,
Nottingham, NG1 7EH
Tel: 0115 955 5060**

We will have the function room for the whole day and will have someone there all the time, so it will be possible to leave stuff here while you are out dancing.

This will also be where you need to register in the morning between 9.30am and 10.00am, and will be the venue for the AGM in the afternoon.

The function room is wheelchair-accessible via a lift.

All dance spots are close to the city centre and within easy walking distance from the Canalhouse and from each other. Mortimer's Morris stewards will show you the way.

There will be a scheduled lunch break and sides can make use of one of the many eating establishments in the city centre.

There will be a ceilidh in the Canalhouse in the evening with the well-known Peeping Tom Ceilidh Band, with Martyn Harvey as caller; a chance to wind down and enjoy good company.



The Canalhouse is a canalside pub in a former Fellows Morton and Clayton canal warehouse dating from 1894. It specialises in real ales and ciders, as well as stocking over 250 world beers. Food is available and the management has indicated that they will not be averse to music sessions in the bar.

The Canalhouse is less than a quarter of a mile from Nottingham railway station and from the Station Street tram stop. Note that there is no car parking at the Canalhouse.

A booking form is enclosed, but the proposed programme and information on transport and accommodation can be downloaded from the Morris Federation website: www.morrisfed.org.uk/docs/2016_AGM_pack.pdf along with a copy of the booking form.

If your side would like to join us, please return a completed form by 9th July 2016. Places at the ceilidh are strictly limited and will be sold on a first come first served basis.