

# fedextra

www.morrisfed.org.uk

The quarterly newsletter of The Morris Federation  
Summer 2016

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Edwin Dyson explains why he is helping to revive a much loved event from the 1980s

### Burn your Baldrics!

Part 1 of a polemic against the current notion of morris, with the aim of improving its image

### JMO National Day of Dance

a pictorial overview of this year's event held in York



# Out with a Bang

Priston Jubilee Morris  
hang up their bells after 39 years



# issue

**Summer 2016**



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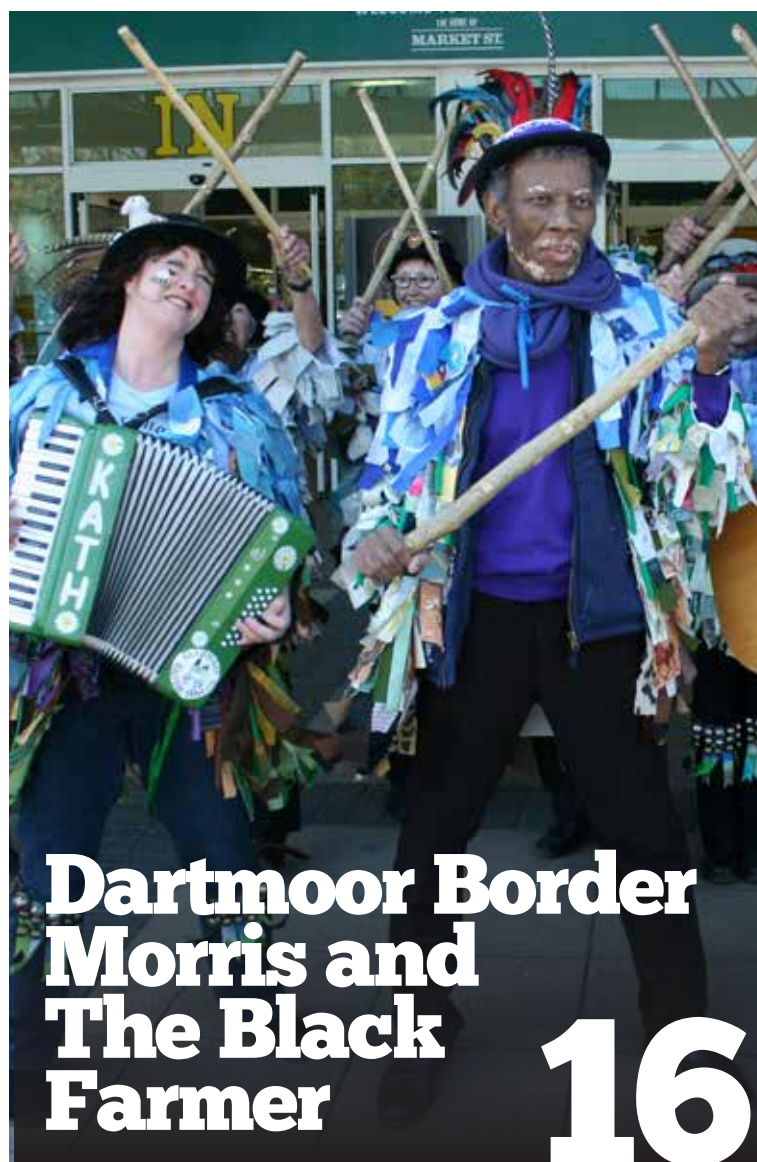
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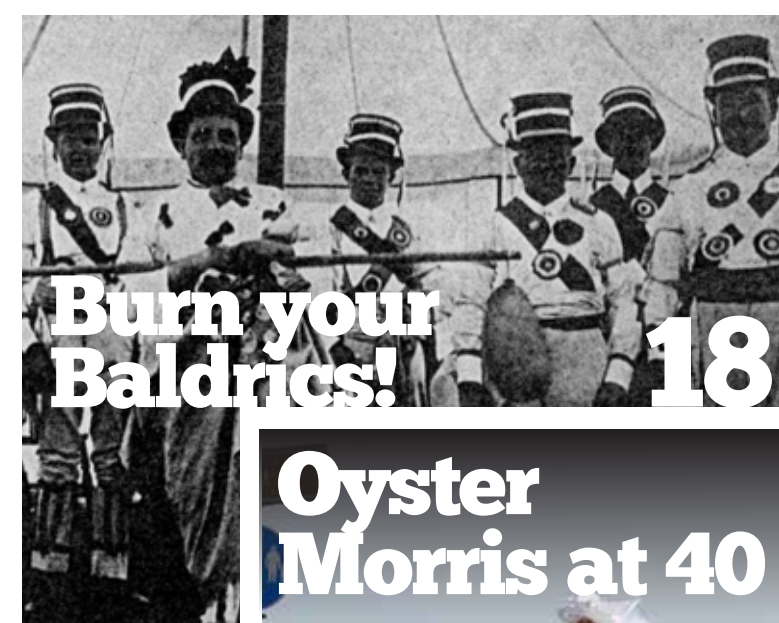
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## Cover Stars

**Priston Jubilee Morris at The Railway Inn, Clutton, 2012**  
 Photograph: Sam Ross

**Do you have a great action picture of your team that could feature on the cover of FedExtra?**

Send a high quality image suitable to print in A4 format, some background info about your team, details of where and when the image was taken, and the photographer's name to:  
[newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk)  
[www.morrisfed.org.uk](http://www.morrisfed.org.uk)



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from the  
**editor**

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

I hope you can forgive what may on first appearance seem like a moment of vanity for putting one of my teams on the front cover, but bear with me while I explain.

Firstly, they won the right fair and square when musician Ray Campbell suggested the new name for the Morris Federation newsletter - *FedExtra*, which was agreed upon unanimously by the committee from over 100 suggestions sent in from teams all over the UK.

However, it is also poignant to note that *Priston Jubilee Morris* have made the difficult decision to hang up their bells after 39 years of morris dancing.

It is always sad to acknowledge the passing of a team, and even more so when you've been involved with them for the best part of 10 years.

However, never a side to go out unceremoniously, *Priston Jubilee* left the morris circuit with great gusto, seeing in both the dawn on 1 May and (considering the state of the weather) performing for a rather larger than normal crowd at the local Mayday fair.

If nothing else, *Priston Jubilee Morris* contributed greatly to its home village of Priston over the years, helping raise money for the village hall and other local events. It's a shame to say goodbye, but at least they went out on a high note, rather than fading into obscurity.

But as one side comes to a close, new dance teams are emerging. I wish you all many happy years of dance, and hope that maybe you will pick up a few experienced dancers from teams past. Such is the way of the morris! **Sam**

deadline for next issue: **16 Sept**  
next issue publication date: **31 October**

## 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

Contact all Morris Fed members: broadcast@morrisfed.org.uk

Update your team's contact details: contacts@morrisfed.org.uk



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President's  
**prologue**

**Hello!** I hope you all had a wonderful St George's Day and May Day - it was great to see so much dancing going on for both!

The Joint Morris Organisations' National Day of Dance in York was a huge success - thank you so much to Minster Strays for hosting it on behalf of The Morris Federation, and especially Wendy Bostock who more or less single-handedly organised the event. Some wonderful memories, especially seeing so many teams converge on the Eye of York for a massed Circassian Circle at the end of day, which I hope you all enjoyed. The next Joint Morris Organisations' National Day of Dance will take place on Saturday 13 May 2017, hosted by Leicester Morris Men on behalf of The Morris Ring.

So, I've had a few people asking what The Morris Federation have against massed dances? What we mean by massed dances in this context is lots of teams dancing the same dance, together in the same place, at the same time. We're not wholly opposed to them, but just don't promote them, and some teams choose not to do

them. In some circumstances it works, e.g. The Morris Ring Squire's Choice, but more often than not, unless all the teams have learnt and practised the same version, using the same music at the same speed, it can result in a bit of a mishmash. When you've practised all winter to get a dance just as the team want it, it's a shame to lose that performance standard for the sake of massed effect; differences in style do show! Massed dances might be fun, but if performed in public, slightly differently and not quite together, do they really promote morris at its best?

You may have noticed that we have branded The Morris Federation email broadcasts with our logo. At the same time we're working on improving the email broadcast system to ensure all teams receive them. However, we have experienced a few problems with some email recipients blocking our email servers, so if your team hasn't received recent email broadcasts, i.e. 25 April Notification of AGM and 27 April Copy date for Summer Newsletter, then please get in touch. We use email broadcasts to inform you of important business relating to The

Morris Federation, such as the notification of the AGM, so it is important that you inform us of any changes to your contact details so that you continue to receive email broadcasts, and that you circulate them around your team members to keep everyone informed.

I'm sure you will have all heard about, and maybe even discussed within your teams, 'blackening up' in morris dancing. This is a very sensitive, and emotive, subject, which we have discussed at length as a committee. We are in the process of seeking legal advice, which we will share, and plan to consult with the membership at the AGM in Nottingham on 24 September 2016.

The closing date for the day of dance was 9 July 2016, but if you haven't got a team to dance it doesn't exclude members joining us for the day as a spectator and representing your team at the AGM!

I look forward to seeing as many as possible of you dancing out and about over the festival season. Happy dancing!

**Melanie**

Save the **date!**



**Morris Federation  
AGM and Day  
of Dance with  
Mortimer's Morris**

**Saturday  
24th September 2016  
Nottingham**

Team registration for the day of dance is now closed, but all members of the Morris Federation are invited to come and enjoy the dancing, followed by the Morris Federation AGM at 4pm at the Canalhouse, 48-52 Canal Street, Nottingham

Programme and information available from:  
www.morrisfed.org.uk/  
docs/2016\_AGM\_pack.pdf

## 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**







Photograph by Mark Richards

# RELEASING THE SPIRIT OF SUMMER... HASTINGS TRADITIONAL JACK IN THE GREEN

On May Day bank holiday weekend, the small fishing town of Hastings played host to the now internationally renowned Traditional Jack in the Green Festival.

Dancers, musicians, and giants descended on the town for the four-day event, offering stunning displays of traditional folk music and dance, which culminated in a grand procession through the old Town, and the slaying of *Jack* to release the spirit of summer for another year.

The participants were blessed with glorious weather over the weekend, and even the typical bank holiday drizzle couldn't dampen their spirits.

Host sides *Mad Jack's* and *Hannah's Cat Morris* welcomed dancers from many traditions, including *Black Annis*, *Young Miscellany*, and *Cuckoo's Nest* dancing Cotswold, *King John's Morris* dancing Cotswold and Northwest Clog, *Ragged Phoenix* and *Hunters Moon* border sides, and fledgling Molly dancers *Mol de Mer*, as well as the wonderful Gunther and Gisela from G&G Morris.

They were also joined by international visitors from the La Lachera springtime festival in Rocca Grimalda, Italy, as part of a very successful cultural exchange.

Throughout the packed weekend of events, morris sides took part in tours around the town, and had the opportunity to perform to a huge audience on the brand new pier, which opened this month after three

years of intensive restoration following its destruction in a fire in 2010.

On Sunday 1 May, nearly 300 people crowded onto Ladies Parlour on the West Hill before dawn to watch *Mad Jack's*, *Hannah's Cat*, and *Clausentum Morris* dance up the sun, and were treated to a glorious sunrise as all came together for a traditional mass *Bonny Green*. Sunday's events also included

a very special morris-themed church service, with a jig from Rhys Boorman and Chris Leech, accompanied by Bryony Leech (John Gasson award-winning musician).

But the highlight of *Hastings Jack in the Green* is always the release and slaying of *Jack* himself. As a heavy sea mist sat over the town, drummers, giants, morris sides, and a fantastical array of green characters gathered at the fisherman's museum to release *Jack*, a foliate giant with a handsome flower crown, to begin the grand procession alongside his entourage of mischievous *Bogies*.

Through the morning, the procession wound its way through the streets of the Old Town and up onto the West Hill, cheered on by thousands of spectators, all hoping to be 'greened' by a passing *Bogie*.



Photograph by Mark Richards

LEILA  
BATTISON



Photograph by Doug Cunningham



Photograph by Mark Richards

Performers braved the wind and rain to put on a show for the thousands of dedicated followers, and were rewarded by a break in the clouds and a magnificent ray of sunshine as *Jack* mounted the stage to be slain. As his leaves were distributed to the crowd, the spirit of summer was truly released, and the town has been blessed with sunny skies

(more or less) ever since!

*Hastings Traditional Jack in the Green* festival celebrated its 33rd year this May, after being revived by Keith Leech of *Mad Jack's Morris* in 1983. Since that time, the festival has continued to grow, and is proud to welcome morris sides and performers from all over the world.



Photograph by Owain Boorman



Photograph by Owain Boorman

It is one of the main events in the town's calendar, and is not to be missed. Next year's festival will take place between Friday 28 April and Monday

1 May, and morris sides of all persuasions are warmly invited to come and take part in what promises to be another unforgettable weekend.

## Clog Dance Workshops


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

**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October**  
**10am- 4pm in**  
**Horfield, Bristol**


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# English Folk Costume Archive

A SMALL PRIVATE ARCHIVE TO STORE AND CARE FOR ENGLISH FOLK COSTUMES

CHLOE MIDDLETON-METCALFE



Established by Chloe Middleton-Metcalfe, a PhD candidate studying English Folk Dance at Roehampton University, and former dress maker with a life-long passion for folk costume, the archive currently consists of some 50 items from a number of teams. These include: *Cardiff Ladies*, *Kitbury May Maids*, *Earls of Essex*, *Somerset Morris*, *Mr Wilkins' Shilling*, *Offcumdun*, *Twizzle*, *Tatters and Tails*, and the kit worn by *Rag Morris* for the closing ceremony

of the London 2012 Olympic Games.

There are also two non-morris items; a waistcoat worn by a member of Biddenham EFDSS in the 1950s, and an apron embroidered with Dorset feather stitching.

The archive welcomes donations of costumes, singular items of clothing



or related textile artefacts. At this stage the primary purpose of the archive is to collect materials. Contributed items are accessioned, photographed, and uploaded onto the English

Folk Costume Archive Facebook page: [@englishfolkcostumes](https://www.facebook.com/englishfolkcostumes)

Although they are kept in a domestic property, situated in Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes,

in Bath, and the Northampton Museum.

Conservation plans include the creation of unbleached

care is taken to make sure that their storage accords with museum guidance wherever possible.

As curator Chloe has benefitted from attending a number of day courses on conservation and storage at the Victoria and Albert Museum as well as work placements in the Fashion Museum

calico hanger covers to reduce contamination from the hangers.

The collection is visible by appointment and items are also used to illustrate talks across the country on the subject of English Folk Costumes. In the future it is hoped the archive will be able to collaborate with other institutions lending items for public display. There is also talk of putting the archive on tour in a couple of years or so.

If you would like to know more about the archive, or would like to donate an item please contact:

[chloe.e.metcalfe@gmail.com](mailto:chloe.e.metcalfe@gmail.com)

## "I didn't know women were



Girls who took part in the Abingdon Old English Revels in 1910  
Photograph courtesy of Duncan Broomhead

## allowed to do that!"

CHARLOTTE DOVER

### AN EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHS TO CELEBRATE THE MORRIS FEDERATION'S 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

The major revival of morris dancing took place in the early 20th century. Although Cecil Sharp was a big force behind the revival and collection of the dances, it was Mary Neal, a missionary and suffragette working in the East End of London who really started the reintroduction and teaching of morris dancing.

Neal co-founded the 'Esperance Club' in the East End of London as a way of educating and introducing more culture to disadvantaged young women. Sharp put her in touch with William Kimber and *Headington Quarry Morris Men* who went to London to teach the girls. Morris dancing was a great success with the club and soon Neal and the Esperance girls were demonstrating and teaching morris all over the country; some even went to the USA to teach it there.

The girls in the photograph (left) took part in 'The Abingdon Old English Revels' held at Fitzharris Grounds, Abingdon, on Thursday 14 July 1910.

There were nearly 300 performers in the Revels, including a number of morris sides made up of children from surrounding villages that were taught the morris dances and singing games by members of the Esperance Club. The interest shown locally, spurred Abingdon's own *Ock Street Morris Dancers* to turn out for the first time in nearly a decade on old June Fair Day that year.

Further images and extracts from the exhibition will be featured in the Autumn issue of FedExtra.

The 40th anniversary photos can still be viewed at Whitby Folk Week between 20-26 August, and the Morris Federation Day of Dance and AGM in Nottingham on Saturday 24 September.

If you would like to borrow the photos, the three Morris Federation pull-up banners, or other archive materials to display at an event, please contact Mike Everett: [archive@morrisfed.org.uk](mailto:archive@morrisfed.org.uk)



Martha Rhodens Tuppenny Dish dancing in Ludlow, June 2015  
Photograph by Peter Bigglestone

## BORDER

Border Morris was generally ignored by Cecil Sharp. He saw it as a 'degenerate' form of the 'pure' Cotswold Morris that he championed.

*Shropshire Bedlams* and *Martha Rhodens Tuppenny Dish* from Shropshire were founded as joint teams in 1975. *Martha Rhodens* have used a different interpretation of the traditional figures and steps, with more emphasis on the upward motion of the stepping, creating a contrasting style of border to the *Bedlams*. The two teams always perform together, and there are members of the same families within both teams.



# Dancing England Rebooted

At the tail end of the 1970s, Phil Heaton and John Shaw (of Black Cap Sword Dancers fame) decided a magnificent feast was in order and invited the best Traditional and Revival dance teams they could find to take part in a public showcase performance. And so, Dancing England was born.

Of course there's a lot more to it than that. Dancing England ran for nine years at the Derby Assembly Rooms from 1979 to 1987. It became a massive undertaking; finding the right mix of dance teams to take part, selling the event to an unsuspecting public and running the show on the night.

The rationale behind it all was to create THE Premier Dance Event. Not a one-day festival and definitely not an extended ceilidh with interval entertainment from a local traditional dance side. The message was very clear, "All you traditional dancers out there, come and look at the real thing, the proper traditional stuff, and watch the excellent dancers that we have in England."

I've spoken at length to Phil and John as I have a strong personal connection to Dancing England and wanted to find out more about one of the major events of my childhood.

Phil explained, "Both of us wanted to see all the different traditions of folk dance in England. In those days there was great emphasis on trying to be traditional, we weren't so interested in inventiveness. The idea was to research the teams as thoroughly as possible and then reproduce a dance

series that closely followed this research. For this reason our first choices were 'continual tradition' teams. This was only possible in certain areas, so for other areas reputable revival teams were chosen."

John said, "In those days there was a raging row about women's morris and sword being 'untraditional'. We called ourselves 'The Traditional Dance Event' but we were unsure about what stance to take about gender. What we did not like was a team from Kent doing Cotswold or Welsh Border Morris. We wanted them to at least come from the right area. If they did that we felt they were entitled to interpret any dance found.

"We felt that if a team were dancing Cotswold Morris they would enjoy,

and maybe learn from, watching a team that actually came from the Cotswolds."

Phil commented, "It was important to get good representation from all the usual dance styles and traditions; Cotswold, Border, Molly,

Rapper, Longsword, Step Clog, and North West. Added to the mix were the unique and the wonderful: the *Britannia Coconut Dancers*, *Abbotts Bromley Horn Dancers*, and the *Whittlesea Straw Bear*. The shows were crowned with giant creatures, kids' displays, mummers, and *Pace Eggers*, whilst not forgetting two ceilidhs with good bands and callers."

Sadly Dancing England stopped after nine excellent, ever increasing audience-size years. There was a brief addendum in 1993 with a one-off 'Daughter of Dancing England' event, again at the Assembly Rooms. The annual event DERT (The Dancing England Rapper Tournament) had its origins in the rapper competitions, held pre-evening event in the 1980s, and is

going from strength to strength.

Why might you be asking is the point of this article? I was there

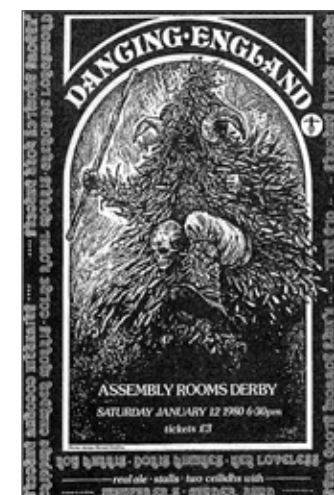
EDWIN DYSON,  
NORTHGATE  
RAPPER & DANCING  
ENGLAND

from 1979 to 1987 from the ages of 5 to 14. My dad was the ceilidh band caller in 1979, and I remember these events with fondness, hanging out with other sons of morris and watching some really good dancing. I miss Dancing England, and I know that there are many other people out there that feel the same way.

My dad was a *Dolphin Morris* man and my mum was a *Greenwood* step clogger. Together, after watching the *Iron Men* at Dancing England 1982, they formed the North West team *Sergeant Musgrave's Dance*. I dance rapper with both *Northgate* in Bath and *Taff Rapper* in Cardiff. My 12 year old daughter now dances Cotswold and Longsword with *NYFTE (The National Youth Folklore Troupe of England)*.

That is what Dancing England means to me. A bunch of people watching great dance entertainment, learning the traditions, setting up new teams, improving existing ones, and passing their enthusiasm and enjoyment down to their children and grandchildren.

I sometimes look at the Rick Scollins posters of 1979-1987 on the wall in my mum's house and see that there were some fantastic teams booked to appear. At the same time I feel a little sad that too many of them are no longer performing.



POSTERS FROM  
THE PREVIOUS NINE  
DANCING ENGLAND  
EVENTS. LOOK OUT  
FOR THE POSTER  
ADVERTISING THE 2017  
REBOOTED EVENT

It's still important, I think, to make a distinction between the Traditional and the Revival, although Kev Theaker from *Mons Meg Rapper* and the excellent editor of *The NUT* raised an important point; are the Revival teams from 1979 etc. possibly now to be considered Traditional? An interesting point, which I'm not going to go into here.

All the above is why, for the past five years, I have been suggesting to Phil and John that it could run again. That Dancing England could again take place to entertain, to inform, and to amaze an

appreciative family audience, whilst they watch traditional dancing at this unique celebration of English cultural heritage.

A revived Dancing England would have the same great mix of the Traditional and the Revival. It would again be a professional, well managed show with lighting, blackouts for dramatic effect and a great MC in control. There would again be stalls, archival films, workshops, a ceilidh or two, and plenty of real ale.

An event like this takes a lot of effort and money to organise. We have run a

successful crowdfunding exercise through Indiegogo, raising £2360 courtesy of 58 generous individuals, and we are grateful to *The Morris Federation* who have also contributed by sponsoring the event

So yes, ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls. Please make a booking in your diary for 18 February 2017. Dancing England will be running once again for your pleasure at Sheffield City Hall.

Visit: [www.dancingengland.co.uk](http://www.dancingengland.co.uk) or find and like us on Facebook: [@dancingenglandnew](https://www.facebook.com/dancingenglandnew) for more info.





In April 2016 The Shropshire Bedlams and Martha Rhoden's Tuppenny Dish organised a day of dance for morris sides from across Shropshire.

Saturday 9 April was a bit damp, but the dancing was excellent and everyone had a great time. Visiting teams included: *The Shrewsbury Lasses*, *The Bull & Pump Morris Men*, *The Ironmen & Severn Gilders*, and *The*

*Leominster Morris*. Most dancing took place in Bishop's Castle, with the last spot at The Powis Arms, Lydbury North, where all the dancers posed for this Shropshire Morris group photo.

# SHROPSHIRE MORRIS

PETER  
BIGGLESTONE

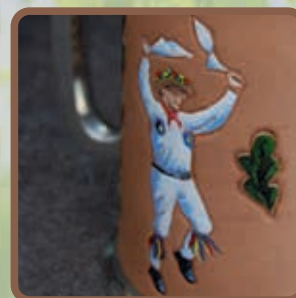


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## diary dates 2016

**10 September**  
Bill Gibbons 200 Jig Challenge  
Eanam Canal Wharf, Blackburn  
[www.allaboutclog.org](http://www.allaboutclog.org)

**17 September**  
Invicta Morris 40th anniversary  
Sevenoaks, Kent

**17-18 September**  
Clog Weekend featuring:  
Lancashire & Cheshire Clog  
Competitions on Saturday 17th  
and workshops on Sunday 18th  
[www.clogcomp.org.uk](http://www.clogcomp.org.uk)

**24 September**  
Morris Federation Day of Dance  
and AGM  
Nottingham

**8 October**  
Sword Dance Union Longsword  
Competition  
Goathland

**9, 16 & 30 October**  
Tudor dance with Peter Barnard, Kate  
Billmore, and de Mowbray's Musicke  
Winterton Church, Winterton near  
Scunthorpe

**11 October**  
Lynne Spicer with Grantham Danserye  
and City of Lincoln Waites dance  
workshop a.m. and de Mowbray's  
Musicke workshop p.m.  
Allington Village Hall, near Grantham

**28-30 October**  
Fools and Beasts Unconvention,  
Caryford, Somerset

**20 November**  
Playing music for historical dance  
with Peter Barnard, Kate Billmore,  
and de Mowbray's Musicke  
Winterton Church, Winterton near  
Scunthorpe

## diary dates 2017

**18 February**  
Dancing England  
Sheffield City Hall  
[www.dancingengland.co.uk](http://www.dancingengland.co.uk)

**25-26 March**  
Histories of the Morris in Britain  
Cecil Sharp House, London

**7-9 April**  
DERT (Dancing England Rapper  
Tournament)  
Kendal  
[www.dert2017.co.uk](http://www.dert2017.co.uk)

**28 April - 1 May**  
Jack in the Green Festival  
Hastings

**13 May**  
JMO National Day of Dance  
Leicester

Know of an event that should be featured here?

Send details to: [newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk)

Please note that there may not always be space to print all events submitted.  
The Morris Federation is not responsible for events organised by external organisations.



# JMO NATIONAL DAY OF DANCE

Over 50 dance teams from across the three morris organisations took to the streets of the city of York on Saturday 23 April 2016, St George's Day, for the annual national day of dance. The day was hosted by Minster Strays and The Morris Federation.



Beverley Garland Dancers  
Photograph by Melanie Barber



Clogrhythm  
Photograph by Mike Everett



Wayzeoose Border Morris  
Photograph by Mike Everett



Powderkegs Border Morris  
Photograph by Mike Everett



Bishops Morris  
Photograph by Mike Everett



Saddleworth Morris Men  
Photograph by Phil Gray



Five Rivers Morris  
Photograph by Mike Everett



Ripley Morris Men  
Photograph by Mike Everett



Southport Swords  
Photograph by Mike Everett



Waters Green Morris  
Photograph by Mike Everett



Maids of the Mill (Netherlands)  
Photograph by Ali McKenzie Wilcox



Minster Strays  
Photograph by Mike Everett



Peterborough Morris Men  
Photograph by Phil Gray



Circassian Circle  
Photograph by Mike Everett





# Dartmoor Border Morris

**HOW DID A SMALL FAMILY-BASED MIXED SIDE FROM MEAVY, NEAR DARTMOOR, COME TO BE INVOLVED IN A MULTIMILLION POUND ADVERT FOR SAUSAGES?**

One evening in July 2015, the phone rang. On being asked, "Is this Dartmoor Border Morris?", I got out my pen and paper ready to take details of a possible booking. The voice mentioned that he was Wilfred Emmanuel-Jones, the owner of *The Black Farmer Company*, and asked if I had heard of him? Smelling something was cooking, I replied that I had and asked how I could help.

Wilfred asked if I could arrange for Dartmoor Border Morris to travel to his house (about 20 miles away) and film a television advert in his front garden, two weeks on Monday.



I explained how morris dancing is a hobby, an escapism from the trappings of daily life, and that most of our members had full time jobs. With just two weeks notice, there was no way we could oblige, but if he could bring the whole event forward by one day, things might be different. He needed to talk to the production company, but after 24 hours a date was set.

As Bagman, things became frantic, emailing/texting the side explaining who, why, what, and when, hoping we could muster enough members to attend. There were hundreds of questions being asked, but not enough answers. How many dances were we expected to do? What were we dancing on? How long were we going to be there? Several phone calls to the production company were made.

The great day came, and while other local morris sides were performing at Sidmouth Folk Festival, we were in Wilfred's garden talking with British director Tony Kaye and exchanging ideas of how a morris side should appear in the advert.

Should we just do one of our dances? Wilfred wanted to be seen to be actively involved with the dancing,

so after a brief run through *Tinner's Rabbit*, our Foreman, Wilfred, and Tony all came up with a plan.

It's amazing how long it took to actually film those 25 seconds that we appeared in the film, when we were in his garden for around three and a half hours. However, the scenes of us following Wilfred in the field were a bit tricky, as there were loads of fresh cow pats everywhere, and trying not step in something squishy amongst the long grass was a challenge.

That was back in the summer of 2015 and things went quiet for a while. In February we were told that the commercial had been completed and after



a private viewing, a launch date of 8 April was announced. Then, in the first week of April my son and I were surprised

to see a photo of Dartmoor Border Morris on the back of a packet of *The Black Farmer Company* sausages, and while out at my daughter's fifth birthday party, our advert started playing on the big screen TV.

A plan came through my head for St Georges Day. Normally, we'd take to the pub to dance, but instead, we invited Wilfred to make a special appearance at some local supermarkets. Wilfred was delighted with the idea and pulled a few strings with 'the big boys' to make it happen. In the local Tesco, we morris danced, with Wilfred leading the procession, down through the fruit and veg.

At the beginning of May, at Upton Folk Festival, we and were given a very warm welcome. It was great to be addressed as 'that famous side off the telly' and thanked for helping to promote morris dancing to the general public.

We are now back at Meavy for the summer dance season, and life goes on, enjoying dancing at pubs and sipping the odd ale. You can still see the advert via our website: [dartmoorbordermorris.com](http://dartmoorbordermorris.com) and do have a look at 'the man behind the brand', as there's a lot more to Wilfred than gluten free sausages!

Photographs by Mark Tregaskis

**TREGGIE, BAGMAN**

## PRISTON JUBILEE MORRIS OUT WITH A BANG 1977-2016



Photograph by Kerry James



The final performance at Priston May Day 2016



The first performance in Priston, 1977

**COLIN EMMETT**

Alive and sticking, Priston Jubilee Morris danced with friends Somerset Morris on a local hilltop at 5am on Sunday 1 May, greeting the most spectacular dawn seen for many years, followed by the now traditional full English breakfast for 30 people in the village hall (thanks to Phil Gray, the chef).

Monday dawned grey and overcast but clean white kit and polished bells were donned again. Sadly, this would be the final public performance for Priston Jubilee Morris, appropriately in our home village during its Mayday celebrations.

The forecast rain arrived during the dancing but did not stop the clashing of sticks and the cheering of the crowd, including many ex-dancers witnessing this historic moment.

Formed as Priston Jubilee Morrismen in 1977 at the time of the Queen's Silver Jubilee, our side was originally formed as a one-off, but took on a life of its own to become an integral part of village events, performing Cotswold morris dances from the traditions of Bampton, Fieldtown, Brackley, Hinton, and also our own, Priestley.

Our dancing has continued to entertain crowds at village fêtes, festivals, days of dance, pubs, and local

events for nearly forty years. Unfortunately, village life has changed, new recruits have not come forward, and the core membership have, shall we say, matured, bringing the dancing to a close. However, long established friendships have been made, a lively social scene continues, and some of the more energetic members are continuing to dance with other local sides.

Priston Jubilee Morris would like to thank the local people and our many morris friends, for all of their support and camaraderie over the years. We also acknowledge the Queen

on her 90th birthday, before becoming part of the history of her reign.

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Many thanks to Ray Campbell for suggesting the new name for the Morris Federation newsletter.

It was one of several that Ray suggested, along with over 100 entries sent in from around 30 teams, but from a short-list selected from all the entries received, the committee agreed that FedExtra was the most all-encompassing.

Thanks Ray!



Photograph by Kerry James



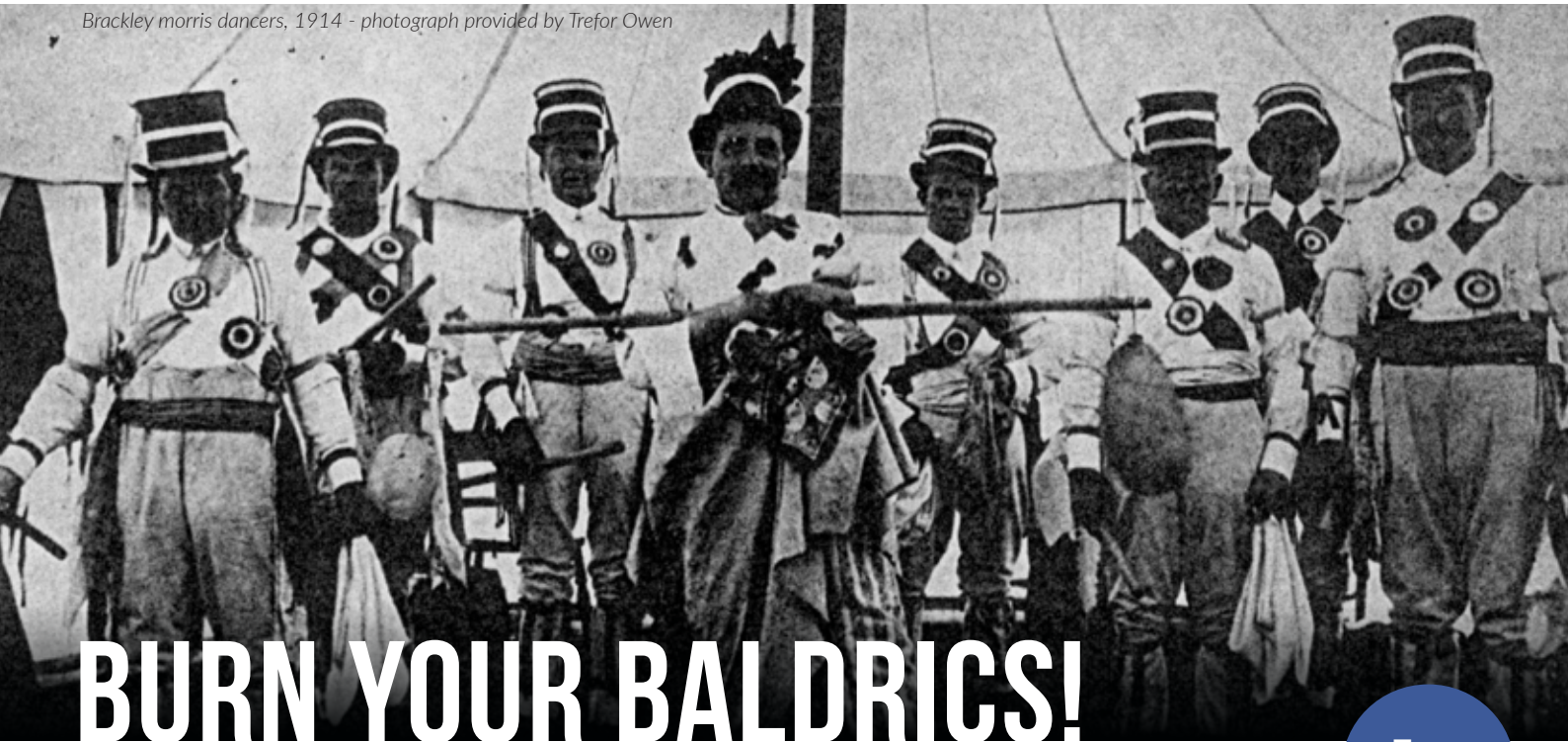
Breaking dawn - 1 May 2016



Bath Flower Show, 2006



Brackley morris dancers, 1914 - photograph provided by Trefor Owen



# BURN YOUR BALDRICS!

## Making a morris for the third millennium: a polemic (Part 1)

**We are a strange group. To the outside world, the idea of grown people reading eagerly, and earnestly discussing as farcical a thing as morris dancing is proof that we are simple minded, unworldly, inward looking and humourless. They picture us, in our anoraks and woolly hats, earnestly pursuing an activity which is on a par with stamp collecting or adults playing with model train sets. The outside world has a message for us: we should get real, get a life.**

Which of us records on job application forms our enthusiasm for morris? If we were in jazz bands, or played golf, or wrote poetry, or ran marathons, we would consider recording these enthusiasms, feeling they say something good about us. We aren't too sure what our love for morris says about us.

Evidence of the outside world's opinion of our common passion is easy to find:

- Man in building supplies shop, to me, about an acquaintance: "He's one of those silly buggers who prance about with bells on their legs."
- Women who belong to a medieval society, discussing her daughter's boyfriend, whom she had encouraged to join our morris team: "Of course, the trouble is everyone thinks morris dancers are a load of woofers."
- From the letters of Edward Burra, 8 June 1965: "There was a large troupe of morris dancers

suddenly appeared on Sunday and danced outside our door on the green sward and dog shit. I was laying in a trance feeling sick in my bedroom and I heard a sort of bawling and clicking of sticks being knocked together, and there they were trolloping round with straw boaters trimmed with daisies and all and a strange transvestite looking exactly like George Orwell in a tweed shirt and carrying a parasol was threatening people and terrifying them into giving money! It was winsome. Well dearie!"

- From the 'Observer' life magazine, 11 June 1995: "Pub going will soon be an eccentric hobby, entirely respectable but profoundly uncool, like morris dancing or pigeon-fancying."
- BBC discussion forum 2005 about whether morris should feature in the Olympic opening ceremonies: "Please, it's hard

enough trying to defend being English at the best of times. Don't make it even harder by showcasing to the world one of our more embarrassing traditions." "If it was as popular we all seem to think, then morris dancing would have advanced culturally and be relevant to modern English society." "Do we really want to bore the whole world with boring morris dancing that doesn't represent 'multicultural Britain'?" "Are they serious? Morris dancing is one of the things from England that I was glad to leave behind! Even its comedic value wears a bit thin after a few minutes." "I am very surprised to discover that today isn't April 1st. Seriously though, we don't often get the chance to host the Olympics, and won't again for a long time, I'm sure we can find something a bit better to show ourselves off to the world than morris dancing." "Morris dancing is an old, outdated and very minor aspect of

British culture as a whole."

I want to argue that this is the single greatest challenge facing us all today. Roy Dommett told us that there are now more people dancing morris than ever in history, and also (perhaps mischievously - but then perhaps Roy didn't watch the same teams as I do) that our morris is technically more together, more practised than ever before. Yet it seems to me that morris has a worse public image than ever before. We aren't any longer feared as potentially riotous or drunken hooligans, likely to frighten the horses and scandalise ladies or offend gentlemen; instead we are patronised, patted on our simple heads and sniggered about, as one treats a six year old when Father Christmas is discussed. Everyone else sees the ridiculous nature of what we do, and wonders that we do not too.

I don't find in the image of morris in the past this contempt. I find, from work such as Keith Chandlers' *Ribbons, Bells and Squeaking Fiddles*, the summary of attractions for those joining morris teams in the nineteenth

century as including, "personal pride derived from the conferment of individual status, entertainment and 'kudos' which performance offered the dancers."

Are we happy with this contempt, or at best amused tolerance? As consenting adults in private, or as exhibits in the heritage industry theme parks, we are welcome to continue our games, but we mustn't pretend they are worthy of modern consideration. Compared with Tai Chi or jogging, or aerobics or playing in a rock band, morris is frankly farcical. No one with self respect would be seen dead doing it. How did we get into this fine mess? And equally to the point, how can we get out of it?

One form of defence of morris is to appeal to the past. We are preserving traditions - keeping going something which has been around for centuries - and, in some ill-defined way, this convinces us we are engaged in important work. If museums and historic houses matter, so does morris. But this origin in the past isn't unique. If we look beyond the museums and the heritage trails, many other everyday activities can be traced to early historic origins. If we look at other sports of our times - in the original sense of recreation or leisure activity - it is easy to discover their origins in the past. We can trace football back to medieval times, and circus, pantomime, and drama (comedy, tragedy, and musicals) just as far. We can see in the TV sitcom, or the premier division Saturday fixture, a clear link in motivation, conventions, and aims with the fifteenth century or earlier.

The key difference between these other survivals from the past and morris is that they have suffered the rough and tumble of commercial and leisure time competition, and have evolved in accordance with these pressures, whereas morris was 'saved' from extinction, revived by people from a different background

and set of assumptions from its previous performers. It now reflects the assumptions and prejudices of its revivers, not its earlier participants.



Bampton morris dancers, 1927



Morris dancers performing 'Flowers of Edinburgh' in Cirencester, 1927

The English disease - the class system - is at the root of this. Whether we look at Mary Neal's objective of offering working class girls something to distract them from the gin shop, or at Sharp's blind prejudice in favour of a pre-Christian priesthood, we see the upper middle classes taking elements of an essentially rural or urban working class entertainment, and fitting these elements to their preconceived aims. What didn't fit in they discarded. The vulgar, the commercial, the elements whose origin was clearly recorded in the recent past - these were not part of the 'true' morris.

But it would be wrong to put all the blame on the early collectors. We need to look too at the revival and what they made of the morris which Sharp, Neal and others had handed to them. The revival after the first World War started in the universities. Bright and idealistic young men

from privileged backgrounds came to what seemed to them a pure and uncorrupted survival from an innocent age. After the appalling revolution of the war, innocence was an

attractive quality. To a generation beset by mass unemployment, industrial unrest, questioning of all the old certainties and the apparently unstoppable triumphs of communism and fascism, there must have been enormous appeal in an activity which had nothing to do with any of this, but which appeared to relate to some deeper need in the human psyche.

If the morris came from pre-history, it expressed something important to which we should return for sanity in an insane world. The elite of the 20s and 30s, their position threatened by assertive women and a demanding working class, grasped gratefully at the morris. Male bonding was here sanctified by the appeal to ancient (and thus fundamental) continuity. We can all of us only interpret new things in the light of what we already know. Men of the 20s and 30s knew about clubs - at university,

in their business, and professional life. To the organisation and interpretation of the morris, they brought those experiences.

I am a different generation and a different class, by origin, but I recognise some of the ways those men approached the creation of the revival. My father was for nearly 70 years deeply immersed in the *Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes* - the Buffs, or 'poor man's freemasons'. With aims which include mutual support and charitable works, the Buffs have created a mythology and a ritual. Its origins are in reality Victorian, yet it claims (in this case with tongue in cheek) an origin in ancient history - 'before the flood' (antediluvian). It organises itself in lodges (echoes of drumming in the woods), and has arcane titles for its officers - 'Provincial Grand Primo'. Its membership is self-elected, and must be male. It has its rituals and its fancy dress - regalia to indicate office, long service and membership. In 2016 it is dying with its (mainly elderly) membership. Young men don't see it as an attractive organisation to which to belong; young women aren't allowed.

Many of these aspects of the Buffs' organisation are replicated in other societies - the *Freemasons*, the *Round Table* - and in parallel institutions - Oxbridge or city men's dining clubs, university societies. I want to argue that many of these were imported unthinkingly into the revival, and are responsible for much of the ridicule morris attracts. If we want to make a morris for the next hundred years, facing up to these irrelevant remnants of the recent past must be our starting point.

*The concluding part of 'Burn your baldrics!', will be included in the autumn issue of FedExtra, wherein Tony will identify the attributes of the modern morris which seem (to him) to lead to scorn and mockery and which he believes to be additions of the revival, rather than essential parts of morris itself...*



# HOOK EAGLES

## 25TH ANNIVERSARY

**HOOK EAGLE MORRIS**  
**MEN MARKED THE START**  
**OF THEIR 25<sup>TH</sup> SEASON**  
**WITH A DAY OF DANCE**  
**ON ST GEORGE'S DAY**

With 15 visiting sides, over 200 dancers and musicians, and four coaches to transport them all to local villages, pubs, and a brewery. Visiting sides were: Jackstraws, Pilgrim,

Seven Champions Molly, Knockhundred Shuttles, Borderline, Berkshire Bedlam, Full Moon, Fleet, Bloodstone Border, OBJ, Basingclog, New Forest Medlars, Mayflower, Yateley, & Loose Women.



All photographs by Jonathan Buisson



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# DHDS

Dolmetsch Historical Dance Society

The Historical Dance Society are organising a conference in partnership with The Morris Federation, The Morris Ring, and Open Morris, to be held at Cecil Sharp House from 25-26 March 2017.

The focus will be morris dancing in all its forms, including rapper, long sword, molly, and other ceremonial dance within the British Isles, and its history up to recent times.

The Society are looking for contributions from practitioners and scholars to share practice, archival research, oral history and local custom. This may be in the form of papers and talks for 30 minute slots to include discussion time, or workshops of 90 minutes, or posters. The following topics are suggested, though others may also be of interest:

- Morris within specific historical periods (incl. 20th century)
- Morris within specific contexts; English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish; morris on the move; external influences on morris in Britain

- Histories of morris sides, both national and local
- Morris and calendar customs
- Morris as national identity
- Comparative histories; historical development
- Morris music and instruments
- Costume, equipment, and characters
- Morris in literature, morris on the stage; representation in other art forms
- Issues: gender, age, teaching, public perception, decline/renaissance
- Forms: Cotswold, NW Morris, Border Morris, Rapper and Sword, Molly dancing

Please send your proposal (with a 300 word biography), stating whether for a

# CONFERENCE

## THE HISTORIES OF THE MORRIS IN BRITAIN

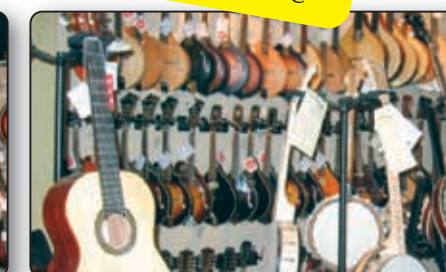
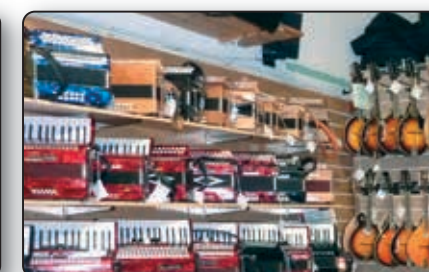
paper, workshop or poster to Anne Daye, 96, Dover Crescent, Bedford, MK41 8QH, or [conference@thds.org.uk](mailto:conference@thds.org.uk) by 31 August 2016.

In addition, The Historical Dance Society are running a series of workshops around the country:

- Sundays 9, 16 and 30 October, Winterton Church, Winterton near Scunthorpe. Peter Barnard and Kate Billmore teaching Tudor dance with de Mowbray's Musicke
- Saturday 11 October, Allington Village Hall, near Grantham, Lynne Spicer with Grantham Danserye and City of Lincoln Waites dance workshop a.m. and de Mowbray's Musicke workshop p.m.
- Sunday 20 November, Winterton Church, Winterton near Scunthorpe, playing music for historical dance with Peter Barnard and Kate Billmore with de Mowbray's Musicke

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# May Day revelries

## THREE SHIRES LADIES CLOG

Having experienced rain, snow, hail, sunshine and wind in the preceding few days, the first thought on waking on the morning of 1st of May was "What is the weather going to be like?" But all was well, no rain, hail, or snow, and there was a little bit of sunshine if you looked hard enough...

Three Shires Ladies Clog joined Harthill Morris for their annual May Day tour. We all met at the Wood Yard in Harthill, boarded the coach and were soon en route to Crystal Peaks where we danced, mainly to ourselves, outside the entrance to the shopping centre, before moving inside to find a small but appreciative audience.



Back on the coach, we travelled through the outskirts of Sheffield, spotting swathes of bluebells, cowslips and wild garlic along the hedgerows and in the woods, before making our way over the hills through the beautiful South Yorkshire countryside to Grenoside.

After a few dances in the windy and cold car park of the Red Lion pub, we adjourned inside for some very welcome warmth and a delicious buffet, before continuing on to Wentworth Woodhouse, a magnificent 18th

LESLEY ELLAM

century building set in 250 acres of parkland. Here we danced in front of the impressive façade, but had to hang on

to our garlands to stop the fierce wind from snatching them away. A cup of tea in the tea room of the house, and then we moved on again to the George and Dragon, made more enjoyable by the antics of two little boys who, wearing borrowed morris



hats, ably assisted the musicians by shaking the jingle bells.

Finally we departed to the Well at Harthill, which had been dressed with a collage depicting two morris dancers, to celebrate



Harthill's 40th anniversary. A larger crowd awaited and both sides danced before repairing to the Beehive Pub for tea and cake.

Where else could you get a complete day out, with a tour of South Yorkshire by coach, a visit to a stately home, a buffet lunch, three stops for 'liquid refreshment', and tea and cake, all for a fiver? The drawback? You have to be a dancer or musician to take advantage of the special price (and have a contribution from Harthill Morris). If you would like to take advantage of an outing like this, come join us! Phone Lesley Ellam: 01909 770129 or visit: [www.threeshiresclog.org.uk](http://www.threeshiresclog.org.uk)

## RAMPANT ROOSTER MORRIS

Based in Dorking the Rampant Rooster have a tradition of dawn awakening on Box Hill, as guests of Kingston Morris and joined by Ewell St Mary Morris Men.

No swirling mists, driving rain or icy gales this year!

In the calm, clear 5am twilight we started by dancing to the crescent moon. As the sun rose, and the countryside below us

was touched with gold, we capered clashed, hockled, and finished with a group Bonny Green. The sun was well up when we retired for breakfast, confident that summer had indeed returned.

In the late morning and early afternoon we were thrilled to entertain the visitors to Denbies Wine estate, our local vineyard and one of our favourite places to dance.

There is always a friendly welcome from the staff and visitors enjoying a relaxing day out.

With the encouragement of our enthusiastic audience we summoned up the energy for a final May Day fling and then returned home for some well-earned rest.

ANN WADE



Photographs by Cat Fereday

## FIDDLESTICKS NORTH WEST

5am on the 1 May saw a hardy group of Fiddlesticks North West dancers and musicians arrive at St James Hill, Mousehold Heath, Norwich, to join with local sides Kemps Men and Golden Star Morris, to dance in the dawn.

With brisk dancing on a frosty morning, each side performed three or four dances to an appreciative audience before moving into the city to dance again at 6am outside the Forum, to a sparse crowd and with the sun reflecting off nearby buildings.

The surface outside the Forum is brilliant for Fiddlesticks as the percussive sound of the clogs can really be heard and at this

venue we gave two dances their first outing: Knutsford - learnt by some of the side at Whitby Folk Week, and Mossley Sling Dance taught to us by Manor Mill on a dance swap day.

At 7am we all moved to Norwich Cathedral, where we danced in front of the West Door, on a cobbled surface. Here we were joined by the Dean of Norwich Cathedral,

other clergy, and the mayor of Norwich, who took part in The Rose, one of our dances when the move 'Knot' took on a literal meaning, much to the amusement of the audience and other

sides, before we untangled ourselves never once missing a step. Not only did we bring in two new dances but one of our younger members

performed for the first time in public and was duly presented with her Fiddlesticks badge.

We were all very pleased to refresh ourselves with a hearty breakfast at the Britannia Cafe before travelling to Ludham on the Norfolk Broads, where Fiddlesticks were booked to perform at the Arts and Craft Fair held at St Catherine's Church. We performed for an hour to an enthusiastic audience, before sampling the delights



offered at the tea room or pub, before wending our weary way home. All in all a very enjoyable day, dancing on a variety of surfaces, to different audiences, on a very bright and warm Mayday.



## National Morris Weekend

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](mailto:valemorrisinvitations@yahoo.co.uk)  
or visit: [www.nationalmorrisweekend.co.uk](http://www.nationalmorrisweekend.co.uk)  
for all prices, booking forms and information





# Oyster Morris

## a year of celebrating being 40

Oyster Morris kicked off their 40th anniversary season at the beginning of April with their Fool's tour, where they were joined in Ramsgate by *Wantsum Morris* and *Bower Street Morris* for a day of dance taking in bracing sea breezes and beautiful sunshine.

St George's Day followed and provided another day of dance, but in Canterbury with guests *Maenads* and *Knots of May*. The first dances were performed in St George's Street (where else?) and the afternoon was spent outside the Marlowe Theatre where, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was being performed to

commemorate the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death.

Having barely had time to draw breath, the following weekend we welcomed *Rivington Morris*



Rivington Morris

as guests for the Oyster May Weekend. This is traditionally seen as the highlight of our regular annual programme; three days of dance culminating in the Whitstable Jack-in-the-Green celebrations.

A leisurely Saturday tour took in picturesque Chilham Square, a traditional village pub for lunch and a trip to the beautiful Godinton House gardens near Ashford.

Canterbury was again the location for the dancing on Sunday and the weather was so kind that we could all relax in the sun in the White Hart garden over lunchtime. Our guests were particularly pleased with the weather, having left wintry conditions back home.

Sunday night has always been party night and being our 40th, we invited as many of our former members as could be found to join us. We were pleased that around 40 of them came, which seemed a fitting number, and all went home with a piece of birthday cake and a special anniversary mug.

On Monday, the big day arrived, and eight sides danced and processed through the streets

of Whitstable.

At one o'clock the Jack-in-the-Green accompanied by Maid Marion and Robin Hood made their way through to the front of the procession, leading everyone up to the castle where the singing of the May Song and a final dance ended the weekend's festivities.

Oyster Morris are currently looking forward to our next big event this year, a joint weekend celebration in Bedfordshire with good friends *Redbornstoke Morris* (who are also celebrating 40 years), and other guest sides. We would like to send special 40th anniversary greetings to all sides who share 1976 as their date of formation and hope that they all have a very special year in 2016, and would also like to thank all those sides who have danced with us over the past 40 years for helping us to have so much fun and leaving us with such good memories and lasting friendships.



Oyster women

MARGARET & PETER DARBY

# RECRUITING FOR A NEW TEAM

ASH BROWN



## GOTHIC MORRIS 'SCREAMING BANSHEES' SHARE SOME RECRUITING TIPS FOR NEW TEAMS...

As a new team in a town where other teams are already established, we find this hard. We started off with three dancers and one drummer, we knew we were small but we also knew we just had to get out there, show our faces, and generate interest. We did this even though some mocked us.

We put up notices in local shops, and are now looking to advertise in local papers. We are also working on a workshop to deliver to schools and colleges and we have tweaked our old dances to make them tighter and better presented.

My advice to new teams is, don't be put off if you are small or don't know whether you're any good, just get out there and take note of what people are saying - we were fortunate that we had some experienced dancers come and give us advice.

Above all, remember to enjoy yourselves and don't be put off. Find a style, make sure you have a good presentation to the public, and keep working on it.



## 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
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- bell pads
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- skirts
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- ... and more

Satisfied customers include Westrefelda, Chelmo Champs, Berkshire Bedlams, Pecsactan, 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](mailto:jenny.l.everett@btinternet.com)

## Trefor Owen

### Gweithdy Clocsiau (The Clog Workshop)

### Henbont Road CRICIETH Gwynedd LL52 0DG

Home tel: 01766 523 695

Workshop/Mobile: 07712 822 453

Email: [treforowenclogmaker@gmail.com](mailto:treforowenclogmaker@gmail.com)

WEB: [treforowenclogmaker.co.uk](http://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!***





# Fools and Beasts Unconvention 2016

Hosted by Wyvern Jubilee Morris

Castle Cary, Somerset

28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> October 2016

Open to all budding or experienced Fools, Beasts and Morris Characters from any team from the Ring, Open or Federation. A truly JMO event!

This year's unconvention will be based at Caryford Community Hall, Somerset, BA7 7JJ, and will involve workshops, Saturday bus tour to Wells and Cheddar Gorge, with Wyvern Jubilee and guests Enigma Border Morris. The Feast will follow at the Hall. On Sunday we will have the AGM of course - your chance to have your say, followed by a walking tour of Castle Cary.

Accommodation is indoor camping; there may be provision for outdoor camping and Motorhomes, to be confirmed. Please indicate at time of booking. Sorry, no dogs allowed.

We have been able to keep the cost at £65 per person, which includes all meals except Sunday lunch, plus coach trip etc.

**Closing date for Applications 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

Yours,  
Robert Chisman, Scrivener and Convenor

Delegate 1).....Fool/Beast/Other.....

Delegate 2).....Fool/Beast/Other.....

Team:.....

Address for correspondence.....

Tel. Day:.....Eve:.....email.....

Any Special Dietary needs.....

We anticipate having ..... further applicants, if places available.

Return this form with a cheque for the full amount (£65 p/p) payable to:

'The Illustrious Order of Fools and Beasts'

To: Robert Chisman, Fools and Beasts Convenor

1, Treverbyn Road, St. Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4EU

Tel:01726 681 78 mobile 07970 063 922

or pay by BACS - please ask for details

email: [triggertrouter1@aol.com](mailto:triggertrouter1@aol.com)

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Trigger Morris-Horse



@TriggerMHorse



## Paul White's DIARY

Get it right, says the squire. And a good thing too.

of kit should take time to look at themselves from the outside.

That's it! The last practice of the season is done and thoroughly dusted. Now to hit the road. But not before a dire warning from our squire/foreman. If you don't know the dances by now, he told us, you will find yourself not dancing out. So make sure you know what you are doing. I have never heard him so masterful!

In that all the dances are new to me and that we joined the side just this season and that we took two months off, this edict from the squire had me ever so slightly quaking in my morris boots. And quite right too. Because there is a lot of sloppiness around.

There are plenty of great border sides which are innovative, inventive, entertaining and eye-catching. However, the exuberance of border is not enough to cover up the wrong moves, forgetfulness and downright unreadiness of many sides we stop a-while to watch, learn from, and support.

Oh it doesn't matter if you forget a bit and wander round the set looking bewildered. As if you have no idea what you are doing there. It's a laugh isn't it! No. It just looks rubbish. Especially if it is a normal feature of your side.

And while I'm at it, there is the scruffiness factor that should be taken in hand. Tatters can be, by their very nature, tatty. And those border sides that choose to wear this fine form

Go and stand in the crowd (well, next to the bloke with the Jack Russell on a string standing on the pub step having a fag) and have a good, critical peruse. Long ones, short ones, curly ones, sparse ones, fulsome ones and mucky ones. Some done up, some undone; some with long sleeves, some with no sleeves.

To be fair, keeping them clean is a nightmare. Several seasons of sweaty dancing, the odd spilled beer, fag fumes, rain attacks and general exposure to the heaving masses are all factors that take their toll.

And you can't bung a tattered jacket in the washing machine. Or can you? Think of the ironing! But if you keep them rolled up in a carrier bag for six months, it's no wonder they look a mess when you re-discover them in the car boot when it's time to get out on the street again.

It doesn't stop at tatters. Boots, shoes and trainers. All can be seen being shuffled about by different members of the same side. Socks of varying hue; shirts in many different styles.

When I first got involved in the morris I was delighted at the informality of it all. So I was taken aback in equal measure when there was serious talk of writing a constitution. What do these jolly, carefree,

dance-and-music-crazy folk want with such a burdensome thing? A constitution is for the politicians, the corporates, the pedants and the lawyers to enjoy. But I've changed my mind. And one thing every morris constitution should contain is kit rules.

Just like our squirey person laid down the law on dancing skills, so the kit should be enforced. Many sides do this, of course, and look much the better for it.

snippets" of old morris dances - and a handful of complete dances - from Herefordshire, Shropshire, Worcestershire and surrounds.

He writes of this process: "...I decided to impose a unity of step and style, then fit the information to that, rather than start with the collected material, and work towards some kind of synthesis of all the disparate elements."

It was while walking his dog that he came up with the now familiar border stepping. He took "outrageous liberties" by piecing bits of dances together to make new hybrids. Gaps in the final piece were filled with "a considerable sprinkling of home-made fairy dust."

These were the dances performed by the newly created Shropshire Bedlams. And they initiated a style all of their own: "by whooping and yelling, by covering our arms with bells and waving them about wildly..."

As to kit, John writes: "Picking out some of the more commonly mentioned points of fashion among Shropshire morris dancers, I arrived at black top hats decorated with feathers, tattered jackets and, later, one ring of bells below each knee. And of course, blackened faces and hands."

Ahhh, tradition. It grows on you.

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](mailto:pwhite420@btinternet.com) twitter: @morrisbells or Facebook





# Morris goods and Morris Federation merchandise

## PUBLICATIONS

### Cotswold Glossary:

An invaluable reference book including definitions of steps and figures found in two or more traditions; a cross-reference to all Cotswold traditions and types; terms used by different authors for the same movements; Morris musicianship and much more. **£6.00**

### Adderbury:

The history of the tradition, copies of original notation from the Blunt manuscript and modern notation with easy-to-follow diagrams for 13 stick and 13 hanky dances. Includes photographs and music. **£7.90**

### North West Morris:

Notations, illustrated with figures and diagrams for ten of the best North West Morris dances. **£6.50**

### Wheatley:

Wheatley is a very pleasing tradition to dance and yet one of the most straightforward. This book was produced from a complete review of source material and includes current practice and innovation. **£5.60**

### Hinton:

Traditional and creative Morris. **£6.10**

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Provides background, complete notation, pictures and music for the Abram Circle dance. The dance originates from the North West but has a different structure to most North West dances. **£5.60**

### Molly:

Dancing into the Twenty First Century. **£5.50**

## BOOKLETS

**A series of A5 booklets with between 8 and 20 pages**

**Warm-up exercises:** Clear diagrams and careful explanation of exercises designed to prepare dancers and reduce the risk of injury. **£1.80**

**Raglan Bantamcocks Morris:** characteristics of the tradition, notation and some music. **£3.20**

**Twenty Years On, 1975-1996.** **£1.20**

**Women and the North West Morris Dance.** **£1.20**

**Beginners and Basics:** Roy Dommett's ideas on the basics of Cotswold. Essential reading for leaders and foremen. **£1.50**

**Border Morris: a brief outline.** **£1.20**

**A Few Facts About the Morris.** **£1.30**

## CDs

### "And the ladies go dancing..."

Double CD of various artists, celebrating 40 years of the Morris Federation. **£11.00**

### "The Adderbury Morris Men sing and play the music of the Adderbury tradition". **£11.00**

**Special offer!** Adderbury Morris Men CD plus a book on the Adderbury tradition. **£15.00**

## BELLS

Please state brass or nickel plated when ordering bells.

Sizes are approximate, as supplied by the manufacturer, and are measured as the diameter from the outside of the rim, across the slot.

	25	50	100
¾"	£11.00	£19.00	£35.00
⅞"	£13.50	£23.50	£44.00
1"	£14.00	£25.00	£47.00
1⅛"	£15.50	£27.50	£52.00
1¼"	£21.50	£40.00	£77.00

## MORRIS FEDERATION MERCHANDISE

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4" diameter bearing the Morris Federation name and logo – self-adhesive for music cases, files, etc. **£0.90**

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Natural calico shopping bag, with gusset, displaying the Morris Federation logo on one side and the names of traditional forms of dance on the other. **£4.00**

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[www.snappycrab.co.uk/products/107/morris-federation-40th](http://www.snappycrab.co.uk/products/107/morris-federation-40th)

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**Please contact the Morris Federation Treasurer for a form:**

Jenny Everett, Willow Cottage, 20 High Street, Sutton on Trent, Newark, Notts NG23 6QA

01636 821672

[treasurer@morrisfed.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@morrisfed.org.uk)

**or download a form from the Morris Federation website:**

[www.morrisfed.org.uk/docs/shopuk.html](http://www.morrisfed.org.uk/docs/shopuk.html)