



Newsletter ***Winter 2012***



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www.morrisfed.org.uk

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EDITORIAL

Whereas I occasionally have difficulty in finding a suitable photograph for the front cover, I was spoilt for choice in this issue, with any one of half a dozen in contention. Some seemed to fit more naturally into the context of an article or into a themed page of pictures, and I'd already done the Olympic connection. So it's the young ladies of Maltby Phoenix Rapper that take pride of place this time, but do please keep sending pics. I publish as many as possible.

There was also a very good variety of material in the articles submitted. I hope you all find them as interesting and informative as I did. Once again it is very encouraging to see a lot of work being done to encourage young people to dance.

I apologise, particularly to the advertisers affected, for the substandard reproduction of their copy in the Autumn Newsletter. The fault was mine, in failing to carry out further checks after having made some amendments to the original proof copy. Hopefully I have learnt a lesson!

Colin

NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter is the quarterly publication of the Morris Federation. The aim is to provide a platform for news, views and announcements relating to the world of traditional dance and associated activities. The Newsletter goes out to each member group and individual member of the Morris Federation. Additional copies can be ordered by group members at an additional cost per copy of £10 for one year's issues. To be a living publication the Newsletter must be read so PLEASE make sure that your copy gets circulated as widely as possible. The on-line version will be available shortly after the printed copies have been distributed.

MEMBERS' MANUAL

All members of the MF should have a copy of the Members' Manual. This contains a lot of material that members may need to refer to from time to time. If you have misplaced the free copy sent to you when you joined, a replacement (or additional copies) can be purchased from the MF Secretary at the cost of £6.50 (inc. p&p) each. Please make cheques payable to 'The Morris Federation'.

ADVERTISING

The Morris Federation does not necessarily endorse any product or service advertised in or with the Newsletter. Enclosures, other circulars, and items of advertising relevant to commercial products can be distributed with the Newsletter. A fee is charged to the advertiser for this service. Enquiries concerning any form of advertising through the MF should be addressed to the Newsletter Editor.

NEW ADVERTISING RATES (from Dec. 2011)

	Non-member commercial		MF Member business		Side or Individual event/recruit
	Colour	B&W	Colour	B&W	
Full page (portrait)	£75	£60	£45	£35	£25
Half page (landscape)	£45	£35	£25	£20	£15
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Eighth	n/a	£12	n/a	£ 8	£ 5

Limited space for colour adverts available. All adverts will appear on Web edition of Newsletter as well as paper copy. Prices are for artwork ready. Jpg or pdf format preferred for any illustrations. MS Word docs may require some reformatting. Cheques payable to 'The Morris Federation'. Discount for multiple insertions - please enquire. All copy & payment to the Newsletter Editor.

Front cover photograph: Maltby Phoenix at the Royal Festival Hall. (Photo courtesy of the EFDSS and Roswitha Cheshier). (NB photo has been edited from original)

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MORRIS FEDERATION SHOP

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. £6.10

Adderbury: Produced jointly by Tim Radford and The Morris Federation, this book contains 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. £6.25

North West Morris: This book contains notations, illustrated with figures and diagrams for ten of the best North West Morris dances, originally researched by Trefor Owen. £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 by Sue Swift. £6.10

Abram Circle: 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, by Tony Forster £5.50

BOOKLETS: A series of A5 sized 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. £1.20

Raglan Bantamcocks Morris: characteristics of the tradition, notation and some music £2

Twenty Years On, 1975-1996 £1.20

Women and the North West Morris Dance £1.20

Beginners and Basics: Roy Dommet'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

PROMOTIONAL GOODS:

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1 1/8"	£13.00	£23.50	£46.00
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Please state brass or nickel plated finish when ordering.

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

OTHER PUBLICATIONS:

6 Fools and a Dancer by Tony Barrand £13

Handbook of Morris Dancing by Lionel Bacon (the black book) £18

All prices are correct at time of printing, include p&p within the UK and apply to members only.
Order form on the Federation web site or from the treasurer.

COMMITTEE COMMUNICATIONS

President's Prologue

Barry Goodman

Thanks to everyone who attended the AGM at Otley in September – we had a good day's dancing with eighteen sides attending, representing a wide range of Morris styles, and we were superbly looked after by Buttercross Belles, who laid on some splendid dance-spots, a sumptuous tea and a well-supported ceilidh to round off the day. Their organisation of the day was second to none, as I am sure everyone who attended will agree.

The next major gathering we'll be involved with is the JMO Day of Dance, which will be hosted in Exeter on Saturday April 20th by Great Western Morris and the Morris Federation. We hope to have up to sixty sides from the three Morris organisations (The Morris Ring, Open Morris and The Morris Federation) dancing in the city, raising awareness in the general public of the variety, excellence and excitement of Morris, while enjoying a day of dancing with sides both familiar and new. More details are available in the "Coming Events" section of the Newsletter - please apply to me using the contact details shown there and I'll put you on the list". Please note, however, that there is a limit to the number of sides that can be accommodated from each of the organisations, so earlier applications are more likely to be certain of a place!

Looking towards next summer, and particularly to the Festival season, it's become apparent over the past four or five years that there seem to be fewer festivals offering opportunities for Morris sides to perform in a large public setting. Those festivals that do have some form of arena offer a stimulus for dancers to "up the game" and work on points of style and performance technique that are so essential when appearing on a big stage in front of a large crowd. This helps to

raise the overall standard of Morris as sides strive to impress festival organisers sufficiently to be offered a prestigious "arena" spot.

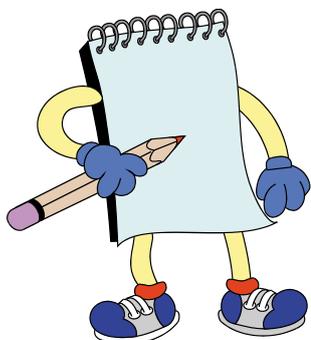
Some of the major performance areas have, however, been lost in recent years, especially the arenas at Sidmouth and Towersey, both of which were regarded for many years as the ultimate accolade of a team's proficiency, commitment to high standards and value as entertainers. Although there are festivals that recognise those high standards that certain teams are able to reach and maintain, and book their Morris programme with that quality in mind, the pinnacle of performance that was the big arena show before a big audience seems now to be missing. I think that is a shame, not only for the sides that would aspire to it, but to the audiences who are deprived of the spectacle of watching a variety of Morris sides who have worked hard to hone their skills and performance values for the occasion.

It's as well that other opportunities are starting to appear for audiences to watch top quality dance with its roots in the tradition, as has been demonstrated by Morris Offspring with their "Must Come Down" show, and the Demon Barbers' "The Lock In" (formerly "Time, Gentlemen, Please"). The latter provides a showcase for local sides to perform before the show and during the interval, and is itself a glorious blend of contemporary and traditional dance, opening the eyes of practitioners in both camps to the skill and complexity of the other. Here's hoping that others will follow where Offspring and the Barbers have led, and let more people see how entertaining traditional dance forms can be.

I'm about to start a season of winter dance and Mumming, as well as continuing the practice season with Redbornstoke and Rockhopper. I hope to meet up with other MF sides during the winter season, at wassails, winter festivals, Boxing Day, Plough Monday and all the other winter customs and dance-outs. It never really stops, does it?

Happy dancing,

Barry



Notation Officer

Jerry West

Notation Library to come on-line

The first steps have been taken to get the Federation's library of published dance notations on-line. The "library" comprises a filing cabinet full of papers and videos covering all styles of Morris and includes dances from both seminal teams and instructors. However, a lot of the notation was produced before the advent of the word-processor: indeed some dates back to the original 1970's workshops organized for the Women's Morris Federation. Nonetheless they are a valuable resource - or would be if only they were more widely available!

So, we have set up a website at <http://notation.morrisfed.org.uk> to hold scans of original material and print-quality copy of more modern works. At present (November 2012) it holds perhaps a few dozen documents, including a proportion of newly available Morris material from Roy Dommett's collection. As more material becomes available it will be added to the site. We do not yet have a proper plan to put the workshop videos on-line - I would welcome comments and advice from anyone with experience in digitising large video collections.

More importantly, however, the site includes a copy of the master index for the paper library - although we do know it's incomplete and are working to bring it up to date!

Given the state of the library - the condition of the documents (e.g. some are "Gestetner" prints - if you're old enough to remember when purple ink was the way to produce multiple copies of anything) and our uncertainty over what we want to keep, individual items are currently being scanned in only when copies are requested. It is unfortunately a slower process than we would like, but mass commercial scanning is probably not feasible... unless of course you know differently? If your work is anything to do

with scanning, OCR or archiving documents and you would like to help your volunteer committee do a better job, please get in touch with Jerry West (notation@morrisfed.org.uk).

All members of the Morris Federation are welcome to request to see any of the notation in the library. Please note: this does not include any "side record sheets" or the private notations deposited by teams with the Federation for safekeeping or perhaps with an eye on posterity. Nonetheless, if any side wishes to have their current (or past) notation included in the library, we would gladly facilitate their publication.

To request anything from the library, please email Jerry.

Caveat: the notation site is very much under construction. Be careful if you "deep link" into the site (e.g. to bookmark individual documents) as URLs will change. As with many projects of this nature, we're learning as we go along and our understanding of what to present, and how, is evolving rather rapidly. At some point, however, we will commit to a "permalink" policy that guarantees web addresses for individual documents will never change.

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Secretary

Fee Lock

**Roy Dommett's instructional, Friday
19th – Sunday 21st October 2012
Broadclyst Victory Hall, Exeter**

Attending a Roy Dommett instructional is rather like having the last hundred and thirteen years of known Morris dancing injected into your brain with a precision instrument – an instrument of fearsome research and analysis powered by an astonishingly acute delivery system.

At seventy-nine, Roy Dommett CBE is aware of his failing health and frailty, saying that for the first time he feels the need to justify himself: dancing since 1955, working consistently for aerospace engineering companies and receiving the CBE although, as he said, John Major wanted “people of talent, so they looked around and found me”, but he is more proud of receiving the EFDSS Gold Badge*. He has been diabetic since 1980 and has received dialysis for seven years: he hopes to receive it for another three so that he and Marguerite can celebrate sixty years of marriage.

All of this meant that his can no longer dance and can only stand with the aid of a frame. This didn't stop him pedalling his wheelchair around with his feet, grabbing a stick and saying, “No, no, not like that! Like this ...” whenever necessary. And as his teaching speed hasn't slowed down, it seemed as though he did this quite frequently!

Paying tribute to a number of luminaries including Alan Browning, Mary Ireson, Frank Pursloe, Jim Brookes, Tony Barrand and Eric (Tubby) Reynolds, one of his many talks which interspersed the dancing focused on some of his conversations he had had with dancers who were dancing before the First World War, on the roles of the fool, the king and queen, the hobby horse, the last being a mickey-take of the aristocracy's jousting tournaments. It's easy to put the least able dancer in the fool's costume but most important not to – put the best, or the

most senior dancer who is just coming to the end of his/her dancing career and who knows everything, in the fool's outfit.

He made the distinction that we are not involved in a revival: that was the nineteen sixties and seventies. This is a re-invention for today's dancers and audience, arguing that recreation of the past is always impossible. Manuscripts, regardless of how detailed they may appear, can only be a snapshot of what one person saw on one day with one lot of dancers, and you can never really be sure that you know exactly what the scribe actually meant.

He took a number of traditions and went back to the original sources, saying of Bampton that if anyone knew any other versions, “would they please keep it to themselves.” Definitely a line to pinch for Morris practice, I think! Bampton Side Step to Alexander's Ragtime Band (an absolutely superb marriage) fits by the simple expedient of having two bars of stepping to face and then two bars of half capers to turn in the direction of travel. The point he was making is that Morris dancers have always used current and popular tunes to appeal to the audience of the day.

If you look at nearly every side performing Beaux of London City's shooting chorus, they will hold their sticks along their forearms and under their shoulders. Roy pointed out that the Sten gun, or Tommy gun, hadn't been invented in the nineteenth century and countrymen would have been familiar with shotguns which didn't have a recoil suppressor, so would have held the stick as though the stock were nestled in their shoulders, avoiding abdominal injury.

On the subject of local seasonal customs, he said he favours mumming plays to be along the lines of *The Last of the Summer Wine*: gentle, entertaining and slightly silly. Taking a different tack, he said that Morris, individual protests, and sports events all shared food and entertainment. Paul of Tarsus changed the Jewishness of Jesus the individual into a more formalised structure of worship of an ideal, and by the Middle Ages dancing had been pushed out of the church and became a demonstration of wealth, and Morris came out of street entertainment in this way. It made its first proper entrance in 1500 (1450

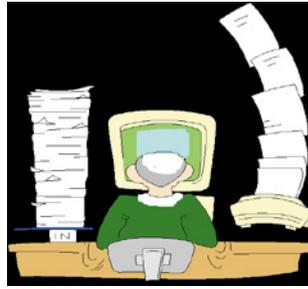
in mainland Europe) in Goldsmith's in London, possibly brought in by a foreign dignitary, possibly with Catharine of Aragon's court, who was known to have a blackamoor with her. Moving forwards, he said that most dancing (and customs) are a remembered relic of our grandparents, so mostly sixty to seventy years beforehand, and will be subject to all the vicissitudes of oral history remembered.

Other traditions included in the weekend were Adderbury (I found a new third chorus for Lads a Bunchum that I'm keen to try out); Badby – new to me; Brackley (slightly different from the way I learned it from Jackie Gayner when I started dancing with Headcorn Morris, so extra difficult not to slip back into bad habits). One of the most useful exercises was watching Wilson & Keppel (who ran through about eight Betties in their stage careers) performing the Sand Dance and then trying to recreate it. Much silliness and the prize of a bottle of wine to the winning team, who of course included the majority of Great Western! The object of the lesson was that when we see a dance performed we don't really observe sufficient to recreate it unless we actually are trained to focus on each aspect and reproduce an action larger than we think necessary – a skill learned by stage actors.

I wasn't able to stay for the Sunday session which was looking largely at the future, as Broadclyst to Hastings is quite a pull, but the next and last instructional Roy will give will be over the weekend of 20th April 2013 in or around Farnborough. He threatens to show the very first tour of the nascent Women's Morris Federation from 1975. He said that from those first out-of-town practices organised by the late Betty Reynolds, he is pleased to see that the standard of dancing, both men's and women's is much better now than it was then. Which is a good use of those thirty-eight years, in my view!

My thanks to Mike Boston, John Lewis, Dave & Charlotte Hubbard and Simon & Tami Spoerer of Great Western and Exeter for organising this and making me so welcome.

** Proposed by the Morris Federation in recognition of his lifetime's work*



Editor Colin Andrews

Video recordings of Roy Dommett's Instructional in Exeter.

Unfortunately I was unable to attend Roy's workshop even though it was only just down the road for me. However, I have had the opportunity to preview the video recordings of the workshops and talks. The recording, which also included full audio archive of those parts not captured on film, was undertaken by Mike Gluyas, at the request of the Morris Federation.

I never cease to be amazed at Roy's ability to hold an audience by talking in depth about almost any aspect of the Morris without the aid of notes. From the origins of Morris to its documented appearance in this country, from transformation of a performances in high society to a more rural setting and subsequent influences from the 18th century to present times, Roy always offers fresh insights and opinions. Not only on Morris, but a host of related traditions, including Mumming, come in for the Dommett study.

The Saturday workshops, as Fee, reports, focused on Adderbury and Brackley. The video recordings are not intended to be instructional material in themselves but rather as an insight into the way Roy works. Despite being largely restricted to a wheelchair, his energy and enthusiasm comes across as strongly as it did in some his workshops I attended in the late 60's. I was intrigued by a dance taught on the Sunday - the video misses the introduction but I think it was Badby - but definitely not the Badby I've ever seen before!

Coming over loud and clear is Roy's message that Morris is a living tradition, always adapting to changes in social conditions and attitudes and to contemporary popular music. Roy's final workshop next April (also to be recorded, we hope) will look to the future, taking into account recent innovations in dance styles and performance.



Paul White's Diary

Of starting, sticking and stepping - dark arts to be mastered

Contact Paul at pwhite420@btinternet.com and follow him on Twitter @morrisbells

There are some sides around that do a bit of this and a bit of that. Mix and match with some border, some Cotswold, some rapper etc. I like to see it. My view is that rather than watering down the message, it rather strengthens it; shows what variety there is to be found in the English tradition. And it looks fun, as dancers switch from one style to the other. It requires a deal of concentration, as we discovered at Towersey.

Towersey Morris Men were offering tuition in the graceful art of Cotswold, with the temptation of a grand public performance at the end of it all. So off we tripped, ready and willing to give it a go. And aren't I glad we did. Bill and Phil were my tutors and what a task lay before them. Right foot start when left foot start is my natural way; Highly complicated (for me) stepping, requiring plenty planning 'aforethought; And sticking so devious it's a wonder I have any fingers left. As for my fellow dancers, I am surprised they survived intact after my efforts at demolition.

Put all these three aspects together, when all you want to concentrate on is the dance itself; put several novices in the side and into the mix add the fact that there are six groups of six, each with individual musicians and each starting randomly and you have guaranteed confusion and a general air of bewilderment.

For my part, my left leg was in a world of its own and insisted on starting the stepping. Not only did that put the rest of my body out of sync with the other dancers but it created a brand new element of the dance. This occurred as my right leg realised IT should be taking the lead and so attempted to overtake the left and get things back into their rightful order. But it didn't work quite as planned and what ensued – rather than a smooth transition from left to right – was a series of tiny, rapid steps performed at high

speed and never quite in time with the music. And just as I got things together, we stopped, did some innovative sticking then started again with my left leg back in charge.

But the determination of Bill and Phil won the day and the performance duly happened outside the Three Horseshoes pub in the village. A good crowd watched as we gathered. We had been encouraged to dress up for the occasion and as it happened, Sally and I had a set of tatters each in the motorhome. Herself looked rather fine in her new festival trousers, new shirt and Morris hat. Whilst I, in shorts, boots and tatters did not cut quite the same dash. Well, we were glad we put in the effort. And thanks to the men of Towersey for their patience – and for the pint of beer which rewarded our efforts.

Towersey was a great success. Nic Jones, the Albion Band, the Ian McMillan Orchestra were amongst the highlights in terms of words and music. For me anyway. The Morris sides (some booked, some busking) included Seven Champions who were working hard and being inspirational. It's always good to see The Outside Capering Crew. I'd like to see Armaleggon again but we missed Pig Dyke Molly so they are on the list.

All that good stuff but beer was so expensive, people were going by bus (with DJ Ken Bruce at the wheel) to Thame to fill their haversacks with tins and bottles. Pub prices were reasonable so why not the festival bars? And the token system – bonkers!

Whatever, we expect to be back next year if only to make good use of our new purchase, which we determined to acquire having seen so many in such fine array at the festival – solar-powered fairy lights.* What a treat! We've got them in the garden as I write, on flash setting, annoying the neighbours as they try to sleep!



(Top) Paul White with Karen Sheppard of Armaleggon

(Left) Dance display by Rockhopper

COMING EVENTS

THE MORRIS RING MUSICIANS' WEEKEND

25 – 27 January 2013, Kirby-in-Ashfield, hosted by the Ripley Morris Men. Open to members of the Ring, the Federation and Open Morris. Squires & foremen also encouraged to attend. Workshops, sessions, live Morris, indoor camping suitable for both sexes & Ripley's Ale/Feast. Full cost including meals & feast £45. Contact Malcom Frier, horace1981-notes@yahoo.co.uk.

DETR RETURNS TO BURTON ON TRENT

This great movable feast, the Dancing England Rapper Tournament (DETR) has settled upon Burton upon Trent for the 2013 event. The event is being organised by Ryknild Rabble and the date for the weekend is the 8th to 10th March 2013, with the competition taking place on the Saturday. The last time DETR was in Burton was 1996 and a good time was had by all, from what I can remember. Since then, so many things have changed, that DETR 2013 will not be a re-run of the 1996 event, but plans are in place for another great weekend.

For those of you that are not familiar with DETR, it is a rapper dance competition, with the judging taking place in the natural environment for rapper – in the pub. During Saturday, the teams will perform in five of Burton's finest hostelrys, all a short distance from each other and the combined scores

will be used to find the winners in each category. Included in this tour there will also be a dance spot at the Town Hall. Here, in a larger display space, will be the 'Spotlight' competition, where a rapper dance will be judged on the one performance only. Included in this tour there will also be a dance spot at the Town Hall. Here, in a larger display space, will be the

'Spotlight' competition, where a rapper dance will be judged on the one performance only.

During the day on Saturday, the Town Hall is also the venue for the Junior and Youth competitions, known as DETR and the Traditional competition for teams performing a rapper dance based upon one of the collected dances. On Saturday evening all the teams will gather in the Town Hall and each perform their dance in the 'Showcase' spot and then there will be the announcement of the results and awarding of the trophies.

For information on entering a team or coming along to spectate please visit the web site where all the information is available: <http://www.DETR2013.org> Booking for DETR 2013 is now open.

JMO DAY OF DANCE 2013

Saturday 20th April. Based in Exeter, and organised by Great Western Morris Men on behalf of the Morris Federation. Please apply to Barry Goodman (pres@morrisfed.org.uk) with the following details: Team name; Contact name; Contact email; Approximate number attending (ball-park figure is all we need); Dance style (e.g. Cotswold, North-West, Rapper, Border, Molly, Appalachian, Longsword); Will your side be staying in Exeter for the evening and/or wishing to dance on Sunday?; Any additional notes (e.g. children's side, sharing musician with...). Space is limited, so the earlier you apply the better. All applications by the end of February. please.

Trefor Owen

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

Changes to the Licensing Act

The Live Music Act came into force on the 1st October 2012 and has made a number of changes to the Licensing Act 2003. These changes are summarised below:

Live music in licensed venues

Live music is no longer considered to be regulated entertainment in venues licensed for the sale of alcohol for consumption on the premises in the following situations:

- when it is unamplified and takes place between 8 am and 11 pm; and
- when it is amplified and takes place in the presence of an audience of 200 persons or less and is provided between 8 am and 11 pm.

The premises must be open for the sale of alcohol during the time that the live music is provided for the exemption(s) to take effect.

Any condition attached to the Premises Licence relating to live music will cease to have effect in respect of the live music when offered between 8 am and 11 pm, unless such conditions have been reinstated by the Licensing Authority as part of a Review Hearing.

Live music in venues which are not licensed

Unamplified, live music has been deregulated between 8 am and 11 pm in all non-licensed venues. However, unamplified, live music after

11 pm and amplified live music in non-licensed venues will still require formal authorisation from the Licensing Authority by way of a Premises Licence, Club Premises Certificate or Temporary Event Notice.

Provision of facilities for making music and dancing

The provision of facilities for making music, the provision of facilities for dancing and the provision of facilities for anything similar to either music or dancing are no longer licensable activities under the Licensing Act 2003.

Morris dancing and other similar forms of dance

Morris dancing and any other similar forms of dance, such as maypole dancing, are exempt under the Licensing Act 2003, however, historically only unamplified, live music that accompanied the dance was exempt. The exemption has now been extended to include amplified, live music and recorded music when used to accompany Morris dancing or anything similar.

Further details

Further details can also be found on the websites for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and The Live Music Act 2012.



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Where dinosaurs were not allowed ...

The 4th and final years showcase of the “Dinosaurs Not Allowed”! project took place on Saturday September 8th in Weymouth. It was a brilliantly sunny day befitting brilliant performances from the 16 youth traditional dance teams from across the South West of England, the age range being from 6-26 years of age. The project was the brain-child of Kim Woodward, leader of Ashley’s Rise Morris who was assisted by John Clifford (Publicity Officer of Open Morris) and Great Capers Tutors. The 4 year mainly Arts Council funded project offered a revival in youth traditional dance in the region with a view to establishing youth sides of the future.

At 10 am the “Moonscape pavement” at the end of the esplanade was transformed into a kaleidoscope of colour as the teams gathered for the opening of the showcase and viewing of the previous years pictures before being despatched to dance spots throughout the town. Only two teams shared a spot and were “rotated” to give everyone a chance to dance with and get to know their peers from Cornwall to the Isle of Wight and many places in between. A broad spectrum of dance styles was represented including Border, Cotswold hanky & stick dances, North West, Playford, Appalachian, Irish and Social dance. Most sides belonged to Open Morris but it was good to see two Morris Fed. Border sides, “Bordering Morris” from Somerset & Dorset and Wreckers Yowynk from Cornwall taking part in the final showcase. Interested crowds gathered wherever there was dancing, the children smiling with obvious enjoyment in sharing the “buzz” and camaraderie of performing together. We overheard a child from Ivy Lane school, Chippenham say “I didn’t realise that other schools did our kind of dancing!” The day culminated in a massed dance on the seafront to the Mayoress, town dignitaries and a large enthusiastic crowd, the children cheering each team on.

Having followed the teams all day it was obvious how much enjoyment the mixed age group teams had derived from the “Dinosaurs Not Allowed!” project and also the realisation that they were playing a part in a long tradition. Talking to Kim afterwards we discovered that only a few of the teams taking part in the final showcase were able to commit to the entire four years of the project which made the standard of performance even more impressive. Funding for some kind of

continuation is problematic and they are looking at various options outside schools like “youth club” sides or a dance festival similar to that currently run by SEFAN in Sussex. 2013 will be the festival’s 5th year, having been centred purely in a cluster of nine primary schools in the Plumpton area. For the first time the age range is to be extended to include a year group from Chailey Comprehensive School who will be working with the primary schools on a “Green Men” project.

In our experience there seems to be plenty of enthusiasm for traditional dance on the part of the children. What appears to be needed are “ways and means” in terms of facilitation on a local scale to provide a focus, instruction, live music and a practice venue. How this may be achieved could possibly be a “Joint Morris” initiative!

John and Ann Bacon

but welcomed elsewhere

Winkleigh Morris (most of us of mature years!) spent the first week in October visiting 9 schools in North Cornwall and one in North Devon. At each we gave a short display then got the children, aged from 6 to 11, involved in dancing. In the mainstream primary schools the workshop numbers varied from about 20 to 140 (the latter where time restraints necessitated combination of two groups). We were always received enthusiastically, but the most memorable venues for us were two special schools. At one, for severely handicapped children, it was quite an emotional experience to witness the spirit in which the children participated in whatever way possible for them. At another, for emotionally disturbed adolescents, the numbers were few but their sense of achievement unsurpassed.

The workshops were arranged through a local charity, Sound Waves South West, with funding from the D’Oyley Carte Company.

Comment from a Winkleigh dancer - absolutely great but I never want to hear ‘Shepherds Hey’ again for a long time!

Colin Andrews



Wyke Smugglers,
Weymouth



Green Shoots, Glos



Wreckers Yowynck, Cornwall



Morris Mynahs, I.O.W.

Not a dinosaur in sight - young dancers at Weymouth



Rag Morris, Bristol

And not quite fossilised - Winkleigh Morris with (A) children of Otterham Primary School (photo : copyright David Flower), and (B) Kilkhampton Primary School, North Cornwall

Chepstow Wassail & Mari Lwyd

Sat January 19th 2013 Lower Chepstow & Drill Hall

3pm until 11pm Ceilidh at the Drill Hall 8pm until 11pm

For The Meeting On The Border, Be At The Bridge By 6pm - Museum Mari Lwyd is at 7.15pm



Morris Dancing - Mumming Plays
Weird Creatures - Crazy Capers
Music - Mari Lwyd - Wassail
The Meeting At The Border
The Green Man - Poor Awd Oss



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Otley's Ring of Belles



Buttercross Belles

Setting up Otley's Courthouse,
Anticipation high,
Thankful that the floods have gone,
And everywhere's now dry.

We welcomed many dancers,
From the country far and wide,
Beautiful, colourful, costumes
Adorned members of every side.



Jean & Ian



Belfagan



Rainbow

During the refreshments,
Our Squire the teams did greet,
Then groups got back together,
For their local Belle to meet.

Off to nearby dance spots,
Around our market town,
The Maypole and pub courtyards,
Where kit could be put down.



Winkleigh

With the amazing spectacle,
Crowds gathered round in awe,
Clapping and highly praising,
Then following groups for more.

The dancing was fantastic,
The footwork great to see,
The music lively and traditional
On that we'd all agree.



Leeds MM

We returned back to The Courthouse,
For tea and dance and cake,
A delight to watch each other,
Many photographs to take.

The AGM got started,
Held in The Courthouse Hall,
To discuss Morris Federation matters,
For the benefit of all.



Ripley Green Garters

Later in the evening,
The Ceilidh band did play,
We all enjoyed the dancing,
A nice way to end the day.

It was our 20th birthday,
The Mayor came to cut the cake,
And to thank you all for visiting.
A special day, you helped to make.



Wakefield



Pateley

Thanks to Buttercross Belles for organising the Day of Dance & Federation AGM

The Olympic Legacy

The main Olympics had ended by the time the Autumn Newsletter went to press but the Paralympics were still to come, providing opportunity for more sides to perform at the Olympic venues. Among them were Black Horse and Standard (below) and Marlings (right)



Blackhorse and Standard Women's Morris from Walthamstow must be one of the nearest sides to the Olympic Park in Stratford, with two members living nearer the Park than to Morris practice!

Sunday 2nd September - 12 members proudly wearing the ID lanyards arrived at the Olympic Park to be greeted by Lewis our designated Games Maker. We were escorted to our first dance spot by the Riverside Stadium to entertain the queues of spectators waiting for the 5 a side football match. Then a short walk to Britannia Row, where a large crowd soon gathered to watch and take photographs. After lunch, Lewis took us over the river where hundreds of people were sitting on the grass watching the cycling from the Velodrome on Park Live screen. We then performed outside the building where visitors could be photographed with the Paralympic Torch and we got a chance to see it too. To be dancing with the Athletics Stadium in the background was so exciting and performing in front of so many people of many nationalities great fun. Lots of visitors talked to us to find out about Morris dancing and it was so good that we could share with tourists a tradition of our country.

So many people have been involved with making the Olympics and Paralympics a success and we are proud that Blackhorse and Standard Women's Morris have been part of it. It was a day that we will remember for a very long time.



Marlings Morris (Godstone, Surrey) were selected to perform our North West Clog in the Olympic Park on Sunday 2nd September.

Ahead of the day a prodigious swathe of paperwork was required and on the day itself a good deal of extra time was spent complying with red tape, including a trip to an Accreditation Centre, miles away from the main venue. Nevertheless everyone was buoyant on arrival at the Performers Reception area and couldn't wait to get started. We were assigned a 'helper' and taken to our first dance area stopping en route to have photo's taken with the arena in the background. All our dances we were received with a great deal of enthusiasm. We thoroughly enjoyed performing in front of hundreds of appreciative spectators and the special atmosphere created by the games made the event wholly worthwhile & memorable. We always try to involve some of the crowd in one of our dances and this went down a storm.

The audience was multi-cultural and it's amazing to think that photos taken of us will be shown around the globe, promoting our English heritage. We also danced in the giant staff marquee on a extremely bouncy wooden floor while the volunteers were eating their lunch. At the end of the long day we all left feeling thoroughly tired but knowing it was a day we will never forget.

Steph & Terry King



Great Bustards (left) were one of many sides performing during the passage of the torch around the U.K.

Kim of Yorkley

Interview by Colin Andrews.

Kim Berry is person I've always associated with Morris dancing in South Wales. I met up with him on his way home from a holiday on Cornwall.

How long have you been dancing?

32 years, since 1980

How did you become interested in Morris?

I was at Leeds University in the late 70's . It was very strong on folk traditions, though not Morris as such, more sword. I became interested but waited to see where I ended up working after graduation.

I moved to South Wales, and joined Isca Morris Men, who had only been going four years. They were an offshoot of Cardiff Morris Men, who formed around 1969 or 1970.

Probably 1969 - I know they started soon after I left Cardiff University in 1968.

I danced with Isca for twenty years.

Have you tried any other form of traditional dance?

I've had a go a rapper, but never seemed to get my feet in the right place. I've also danced north-west at workshops and had a go at Border. I still prefer dancing Cotswold.

You are a founder member of Full Moon Morris. How did they start?

Three Isca men, including myself, were travelling with our wives who danced with Shoostriing Appalachian on a visit to the West coast of Ireland in 1997. Rather than sitting around watching them dance we thought we'd try to do something ourselves. The six of us worked on three dances that we performed throughout the weekend. We also found someone there prepared to play for us, and also attracted the interest of some



other members of the party. So, in the month following our return, just after Easter, we became an established side.

How did the name Full Moon come about?

Contrary to popular belief in some quarters, it was not because of an inclination to drop our trousers, although I'm not denying there were some incidents of 'mooning' both from the men and the ladies in the early days.

We take our name from a small hamlet in the Welsh valleys near Risca, where we still practice. On the A467 one of the roundabouts is known as Full Moon Roundabout.

Do Full Moon dance anything other than Cotswold?

Our repertoire is pretty well traditional Cotswold dances, including a few recent additions to established traditions, such as Bean Setting, Badby. We haven't made up dances ourselves, as I believe there is plenty of variety on the collected dances, and with some minor modifications we've developed our own style. I've been Foreman ever since the side was formed.

Because our members are drawn from quite a large area, from Bristol and the Forest of Dean to Swansea in the west, we don't practice weekly, but get together once a month for a full day. It enables us to really concentrate on detail.

For the same reason, we don't dance out much in our own area, certainly not on a regular weekly basis, but there are local events that we like doing, such as dancing in Hay on Wye. Most of our dancing is at festivals and weekends of dance with other sides. We have run a few weekends of our own in the Brecon Beacons.

I've also danced with Forest of Dean Morris Men for ten years and served as their foreman for four years. They practice in a pub very close to where I live.

With your involvement with Isca Morris Men and more recently with the Forest of Dean Morris

Men, did you experience any conflict in setting up a mixed Cotswold side?

There was some opposition from some Isca men in the early days, but I tried to keep our repertoire different to that danced by men's sides in the area. Two or three years after we started we had some 25 members – more than many of the others, who have sometimes struggled to maintain a viable side. We have attracted people from other sides - Isca, Cardiff Ladies, Clocs Canton, Sweyn's Ey for example - who wanted to also try something a little different.

Do you recall a particular high spot in your Morris career?

My greatest satisfaction has come from starting Full Moon from scratch and seeing how it has developed. I enjoy teaching the dances and seeing the results when the team dance well.

And any low spot?

I became quite disillusioned when sometimes as Foreman of Isca Morris Men, I'd travel some 30 miles for a poorly attended practice evening with dancers who no longer seemed to have their heart in it.

And what would you say was the strangest Morris experience you've ever had?

Undoubtedly the time, some 20 years ago, when we were asked to participate in a television production – BBC or HTV, I'm not sure which – at Penhow Castle, which was privately owned by some film or TV producer. They were making some Christmas show in the middle of July, so there we were in the dark at 2 am, with artificial snow, trying to accommodate whatever strange ideas of Morris were in the producer's mind. We'd brought our own musician, who was redundant, since they had their own recorded music to which we were expected to dance at twice our normal speed. We had our twelve seconds of fame on TV but I'd strongly recommend any side faced with this kind of request to find out clearly in advance what it actually required.

BAGPERSONS AND SECRETARIES If there is any change in contact person, address, telephone or email please let us know as soon as possible

What advice would you give to any new side?

Work on the dance, not the costume. Concentrate on detail, step by step.

When we have new dancers come along to Full Moon, I try to concentrate on 3 or 4 dances for them to learn properly in their first season. I encourage each person to think of one of these dances as 'their dance'.

Is there anything about the Morris that you would like to do away with?

Narrow minded views which still exist about the way Morris should be done. Some people still insist that it should be performed as it was collected and written down over a hundred years ago. They ignore the nature of Morris as a living tradition, and a misguided opinion that views Morris as a six person dance performed by men, which is no more than a snapshot of things as they might have been at a particular instant of history.

Fortunately these views tend to be much in the minority nowadays, and somewhat of a generation thing. They are less common amongst younger dancers.

What do you find most inspiring about Morris?

I get much enjoyment from the social aspect of meeting up with other Morris dancers at weekends of dance or small festivals. It's a great social network, and there's always more to learn about the dances.

Apart from Morris, what other interests do you have?

Since I gave up working full time as a chartered accountant some 12 years ago, I have started a small stained glass business. Most recently I've started a degree course in Astronomy.

CHILDREN IN NEED

At the time of writing the result of the JMO initiative to raise a huge sum of money for Children in Need is not known. Some sides already dance regularly for this charity. Exmoor Border collected £253 in a couple of hours, dancing in Barnstaple.

M.P. Stands for Maltby Phoenix

John Healey, MP for Wentworth and Dearne in South Yorkshire, is a new rapper sword dance star.

At this year's 40th Wath Festival, Mr Healey rolled his trousers up, pulled on a pair of Maltby Phoenix Sword socks and joined them for a spirited sword dance to the delight of the audience. *(Photo: right)*

Nearing the end of wonderful Morris dance displays in Montgomery Square, Mr Healey took part in the dance that won Maltby Phoenix Sword the Open Class at DERT 2012.

Maltby Phoenix's Squire, Paul Davenport, said, "John was an amazingly good sport to agree to take part. He was extremely impressed by all our group has achieved over the past few years and anxious not to let us down. As it happened, his fears were totally unfounded as the audience's overwhelming reaction showed."

John said, "You have a great group with real enthusiasm and energy, and do a great job in promoting as well as performing sword dancing."

Squire Paul Davenport continues, "We would like to take this opportunity to thank him. He is a real gentleman."

It is believed that John may be the first ever member of parliament to indulge in rapper sword dancing - unless anyone knows otherwise of course.

Now, how about other MP's around the country having a go?

Maltby Phoenix Sword Dancers also performed at the prestigious Royal Festival Hall on the South Bank in London.

Youth Dance England, the national organisation that champions excellence in dance for and with young people, organised a weekend-long dance festival in July called U Dance.

Maltby Phoenix's Squire, Paul Davenport says "For a Yorkshire team to be asked to partake in



any London based event in an Olympic year was always going to be a bit special but then Maltby Phoenix Sword are no strangers to the limelight."

U-Dance is a national celebration of young people performing all types of dance, but on Sunday 15th July the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS) were charged by Youth Dance England with showing off the very best young traditional dancers in the UK. Maltby Sword was singled out by this national organisation for the task of representing the north and north eastern sword dance traditions.

Squire Davenport continues, "Of course this was a great responsibility but ... from the moment that 'Betty' Megan Edgar, sang the calling-on song the audience was entranced. Our team performed with customary vigour and rigour and won the hearts of the audience in London's South Bank complex. It was a wonderful experience for our young dancers, set the standard for our older team and ensured that the name of Maltby is on the tip of the tongue when anyone speaks of the English Sword dance."

Rachel Elliott, Education Director for EFDSS, sums it up, "I received excellent verbal feedback from the Director and Performance Manager of Youth Dance England, as well as staff from the Southbank Centre. Maltby Phoenix Sword made a particularly striking impression – you certainly 'wowed' them!"

Find out more about Maltby Phoenix Sword at www.maltbysword.co.uk

Anniversaries Old & New

Silkstone Greens were 5 years old on the 20th of September 2012.

It seemed so long since the 2 founders came up with the idea after living too far away from their regular North West Team and needing somewhere to dance near Barnsley. So Silkstone Greens were born.

Then, 5 years later, after plenty of dancing and laughs, they held their own weekend of dancing, laughs and Yorkshireness in Silkstone, near Barnsley. They were joined over the weekend by their friends Persephone, White Rose Morris Men, Rose and Castle Morris and Barnsley Longsword.

Friday night started literally with a bang (and it wasn't down to the pie and peas), as, whilst toasting marshmallows around the campfire, they were witness to the famous meteor over Yorkshire which couldn't have been timed better.

Saturday daytime saw a bus tour taking in Barnsley, Thurgoland, Wortley and Elsecar Heritage Centre to team up with Madfest all in the lovely late Summer sun amongst the rolling Yorkshire countryside. After dancing, back for a traditional tea of fish and chips from the local chippy – with the obligatory mushy peas of course. Then singing, playing and socialising into the early hours. This also included the mystery bottle raffle (star prize of a high heeled glass slipper filled with liqueur) and the 'guess what's in the bottle' game with some blind tasting and fame at last for 'Clare's Dad's 1981 Rhubarb Wine' which was incorrectly identified as 'liquorice furniture polish'.

With more dancing at a pub the next day to say farewell, our friends took home their souvenir mushy peas (Rose and Castle were particularly grateful for this delicacy).

'Twas a great end to a fabulous weekend and here's to the next 5 years!

Thank you.

Sally Atkinson
Secretary Silkstone Greens



Silkstone Greens. (Photo: Julie Fotheringham)

Three Spires Morris at Thirty

It was so nice of them to hold the Olympics in celebration of Three Spires Morris Thirtieth Anniversary and even the Queen and her family did their bit for us reaching parts of the country we could not! Thank you Ma'am.

It has been a busy if not very profitable year for us. The continuing recession has squeezed the pockets of our most reliable bookings. A shame as I don't know who else could offer the noise and spectacle of a North West Morris side and ten piece band for £100. Yes, we keep dancing and playing for the fun of it and from what we see around Lichfield we bring a smile to many faces.

Although there are only a couple of dancers left from the debut days of Three Spires Morris in 1982, namely Maggie Easton and Janis Keen (ok Janis does melodeon now) we still managed a very good turn out on the 21st June at the King's Head in Lichfield for our 30th Anniversary Party.

Despite the 'summer' weather many local sides and retired dancers turned up to help



us celebrate at this popular Lichfield hostelry with its fine ales, plentiful chips, sarnies and legendary hospitality. Glorishears, Pennyroyal, Green Man, Stafford Morris Men, Beggar's Oak, Lichfield Morris Men, Ripley Morris Men and Ryknild Rabble delighted us all by dancing and playing turn and turn about till it got too dark and the cry of 'Chips are coming' was heard.

The other highlight of our year was appearing at Shrewsbury Folk Festival. It is always very stimulating to dance with lots of other Morris sides even if there was a decided colour code of red and black amongst sides at Shrewsbury. It was really bouncy up there on the boards of the village stage buoyed up by the music of our fantastic band through Clitheroe as well as Miner Island and For Angela, dreamed up for us by Ilsa Porter which have become firm favourites with us.

So there is plenty of life left in Three Spires Morris and now that 60 is the new 50 you never know we may be here to celebrate our 40th in 2022! Hip hip hurrah!

Chris Nield



Wytchwood - just two years old !

In deepest, darkest Worcestershire, October 2010, a new side was formed - Wytchwood Morris. We dance a mix of Border, Cotswold and Molly and are easily recognisable by our theatrical kit and a style that incorporates folklore, mythology and local legend. We are the Wytches. Our name is taken from Wytchbury Hill, a local Iron Age fort that is shrouded by a murder mystery and spiritual meaning.

The kit is based on the border style with a twist. We have black faces with sparkly stripes down one cheek. We decorate our top hats with

woodland objects such as feathers, berries, pine cones, small animals and silk scarves from M&S. Our tatter coats are an array of autumnal colours which sway beautifully to enhance the movement in our dances. Each member of the team wears a waistcoat with an embroidered circular design that holds significance to them. These include music notes, mythological animals and spiritual symbols. Unfortunately they wouldn't let me use the Black Sheep brewery logo, so I had to settle for a moon and stars instead. Each Wytch has their own identity which is clear from the way they dance, play and decorate their kit.

As the majority of the side are experienced



dancers, we are able to be creative and ambitious with the dances we write ourselves and those we learn from others. One of my favourites is 'John Barleycorn', a dance for four written by one of our own and based on the well-known folk song about making beer. It starts with our drummer raucously singing the first verse whilst clutching a pint of amber coloured liquid, then the music kicks in with a twisting and turning dance chorus. Another dance, the appropriately named Bermuda Triangle, lasts 1 minute 25 and involves a series of heys and figures that are a complete mystery to me even now. In The Sorting Hat, written by Gog Magog, you can see the staircases of Hogwarts Castle moving and weaving. The Manning Tree, written by myself, pays its respects to those men and women who were wrongly murdered during the Matthew Hopkins witch hunts, simply for being a little bit different. In amongst the more unusual dances you find our own take on traditional dances such as Upton Hanky and Brimfield. Chief whips Fiona and Stuart keep us all in check to ensure we're on time, in line and on best behaviour!

Over the past couple of years we have had many adventures up and down the country. We've danced with Hobbits and dragons in Birmingham,

danced in the dawn at Stonehenge, done the Sports Relief Mile (in full kit), avoided perilous floods in Upton-'Under'-Severn, been taken hostage by a molly team in Beverley, eaten cake at the top of Steep Hill in Lincoln and battled with leaky tents and M6 traffic jams. We all enjoy seeing new places and meeting new teams. It's one of the main reasons I've been dancing all these years.

Of course, no side is complete without a strong band, and our band takes no prisoners. Clive, Ian, Dave and Steve all work hard to create a unique and dynamic sound. They play a range of tunes from England, Scotland, Isle of Mann and South America. Some are wild and uplifting, others are just plain creepy. They have an eclectic set of instruments including lead guitar, fiddle, boxes, blues harmonica, bass triangle (a big triangle), djembe and a selection of other drums. They are very experimental and mix sounds in each tune to make each one sound different. Our resident drummer and cider enthusiast, Steve, currently writes an on-line blog about the side, the music and dances, where we've been and what we've drunk. You can find it at wytchwooddrummer.blogspot.co.uk.

Lizzie Jones.

For more information on the side and contact details, please visit our website at www.wytchwoodmorris.co.uk. Photographs by Angie and Dougie Latham

CARDIFF LADIES ANNIVERSARY MEAL

15th February 2013

Cardiff Ladies will be celebrating their 40th year with a get-together for current and past members of the side and their partners. Any ex-members who are interested in attending and haven't already been contacted, please get in touch: Anne Silver Tel: 02920 844337

25 CRACKING YEARS

In 2013 the **Flagcrackers of Craven** will celebrate 25 years of Morris fun and frolics with a grand Reunion Party with Dancing. All present and past members will be welcome to attend. There have been well over a hundred people who joined the side for a while; we'd like to contact as many as possible to invite them to the party, which will be on Saturday 12 October 2013 in Gargrave. If any ex-members are reading this and would like to know more, please email party@flagcrackers.co.uk

Snippets

SHOWING A LEG AT A BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

The Moniaive Michaelmas Bluegrass Festival, in rural Dumfriesshire, introduced dancing to the festival for the first time in Oct 2012. **Legs Levens Appalachian Dancers** performed two sets in the grounds of St. Ninian's Kirk to a delighted audience. This added a new dimension to the festival, which hitherto had been pure bluegrass music. Legs Levens have been booked again for the 2013 festival. For a video clip of the performance, visit www.moniaivebluegrass.co.uk.

WIDDERS WEEKEND

Widders announce that it will not be possible to hold their weekend of music and dance in 2013. They are still unable to gain access to the camping field and have as yet been unable to find a suitable alternative, though the problem is expected to be sorted in time for the 2014 dance weekend. They will however be holding a day of dance (no camping) on Saturday 13th July in Chepstow. Anyone wishing to attend as individuals or dance sides, please contact Mickwidder 07870 611 979 e mail mickwidder@aol.com

NAKED CHARITY CALENDAR

Gong Scourers 2013 Naked Charity Calendar has had lots of press interest and acknowledgement. They have already been invited to the BBC3 'Russell Howard Show' as a result of it and so far have already raised nearly £1000 for The Alzheimer's Society. They still have plenty to Sell!

SAD NEWS

Ivor Allsop the Longsword guru, passed away on Friday, 2nd November at 10.20 in Barnsley General Hospital, following a bout of pneumonia.

COMPLAINT GENERATES PUBLICITY

A spurious complaint from a member of the public about 'objectionable' display and noise from **Wild Hunt** during their evening dancing in Warlingham has generated a considerable amount of favourable media publicity for the side. They did politely comply with the police request to curtail their display 'in the public interest'.

Bestival Morris

Morris Dancing at Camp Bestival! 28th -31st July 2012. Steve Baker reports.

It all started last November when I was talking to Rob Da Bank the Radio One DJ and Curator of The Bestival and Camp Bestival two of the best small festivals around. Camp Bestival is a Family Festival centred around Lulworth Castle in Dorset. Rob asked me if I would arrange some Morris Dancers for Camp Bestival. He wanted local sides. I am Squire of Mr Bakers Dozen, an Open Morris Side from the Isle of Wight. So I did a trawl of the three Morris web sites and sent out lots of emails to Morris Sides around Dorset. Four sides replied, Festus Derriman, Hobos Morris (Federation), Anonymous Morris (Open) Side and Wyvern Jubilee Morris (Ring).

Some of the sides were camping and others were day visitors. We had a squires' meeting at 10 am on the Saturday so we could work out where each side was going to dance and with whom. We had two Border Morris sides (Hobos and Anonymous) and two Cotswold sides (Festus and Wyvern) so we mixed the sides with Cotswold and Border dancing together. I had already reconnoitred the site for dance spots not too near any sound stages, though the surface had to be grass.

During the Saturday Morning the sides danced at the agreed spots and times and this went down very well with all the crowds. When the sides were not dancing people kept coming up to them asking if they were really Morris Dancers and where and when were they would be dancing next as they wanted to come and watch. At lunch time on the Saturday we rearranged the dance spots for the afternoon to be where the crowds were and with not too much background noise. Some of the sides had audience participation dances and the festival goers and their children loved to join in at every opportunity and loved it. To finish on the Saturday we all agreed do a massed display. This was at the bottom field by a large Carousel.



This was a fabulous back drop to the Morris. Each side did 2 dances then we finished with a massed band of all the musicians playing a common tune that they all knew "The Rattling Bog" and I led a joint Circassian circle which all the sides and public joined in with.

Sunday went much the same with a lot of enthusiasm from the public and lots joining in at every opportunity. In fact over the weekend on separate occasions three people asked where and how they could join a Morris Side and become a Morris Dancer. They were all directed to the Joint Morris Web site where they could find a Local team which suited them. So three Morris Sides are soon to be approached, one hopes, by potential new members.

It was agreed by all dancers that we had to finish by 3.30 pm on the Sunday as we all wanted to go and watch Rolf Harris on the Main Stage.

At the end of Sunday we all got together again for a grand finale by the Carousel and also to have a picture of all the dancers together. All the sides had a great time and some of them had never been to a Festival before were surprised how much they enjoyed it and all said we want to come back next year!! On the Monday Morning I bumped in Rob Da Bank the Curator of Camp Bestival and he was very pleased with the displays and how the Morris had added to the atmosphere of the event!

Here are some of the quotes from the sides :-
"Feedback from the public was very uplifting"
"It was a pleasure to team up with other Morris Sides"
"A cracking weekend which really got the Morris over to thousands (literally) of new people who will now know what fun it is"
"At least 3 London Sides should be expecting new members if those in the audience who were inspired follow through their intentions."

(Left)
Festus Derriman

(Right)
Hobos



Twining Connections

A weekend away with Ellington Morris in Kortrijk, Belgium.

It started with internet dating. We contacted our local Town Twining chairperson for Maidenhead who emailed an introduction to the Mayor of Kortrijk's assistant. Several weeks after exchanging emails and information about our dancers and musicians with the opportunities in her home town, we arranged to meet in the summer.

One hour twenty minutes after leaving St Pancras, those who chose the Eurostar option were in Lille station transferring onto a local train for the short journey to Kortrijk, one of five towns twinned with our home base. The road travellers, bringing sticks and musical instruments, soon caught up, checked in, dropped bags in hotel rooms and headed out to the Grote Markt, Kortrijk's main square, scattered with tables and chairs outside brasseries, restaurants and bars, to eat, drink and be merry.

The advanced party were summoned to meet the Mayor on Friday afternoon with one or two of the deputy Mayors and Aldermen. We were obviously ranked as desirable tourists, and a second invitation was issued for the following day, their National Feast Day and a public holiday, to join the dignitaries for mass in the church of Our Lady, a procession, a couple of demo dances, and a reception in the Town Hall. We were off to a good start! People were keen to make our visit a memorable one, and an invitation to show us a road in Kortrijk called 'Maidenhead Road' plus a tour of the university were hard to resist, but there just wasn't time to do everything.

The natives we encountered were friendly and wanted to know where we had come from, and when 'town twinning' met with some blank faces, light dawned on an inspired resident who translated it as 'sister town'. Our weekend away fortunately coincided with the brief summer in northern Europe and we danced in sunshine

most of the time, which meant lapses in bars for refreshments or savouring ice creams as we roamed the streets in search of an audience. We danced in the new and successful K Shopping Centre, the up-and-coming area by the River Leie, Buda Beach, but the relaxed scene at the Grote Markt offered the best opportunity to show off our excellent Cotswold skills with Adderbury, Bampton and our own Ellington tradition.

We finished with a rapper swords routine which never fails to fascinate the crowds.



On Sunday morning, courtesy of the Mayor, an excellent guide from the Tourist Office showed us the main attractions. We enjoyed her sense of humour, a sprinkling of politics, and the potted history of the town as well as the comments she said she shouldn't make, but immediately did! We alternated beer revivals with more dancing, then towards the end of the afternoon we admitted defeat and to the accompaniment of what seemed like all the bells in Kortrijk chiming in succession, we flaked out.

The heading on the official Kortrijk brochure reads 'Surprising Kortrijk' and I think Ellington Morris would agree that's a fair title. The town emerged with a legend or two, sports a mix of ancient and modern buildings, but is undergoing a substantial makeover with stylish bridges spanning the river, new City Hall and Court of Justice, new streets and housing projects, a skatebowl, and a district to attract designers. The town lends itself for festivals and dancing. The food and drink throughout our stay over the 20-23 July weekend was delicious and the beers various - so plenty of opportunity to sample several to see which brew tasted best! And no-one with a portion of Belgian chips, and mayonnaise dip, will ever forget them - they're the greatest.

Ideas for articles for inclusion in the Newsletter are always welcome. Send me an email or give me a ring if you wish to discuss a suggestion. Meanwhile, keep sending the photographs, club reports of anniversaries, memorable trips etc.

Colin

Bedfordshire to Beziers – a twinning success story!

At the end of June this year, two of Bedfordshire's Morris groups, the ladies of Bedfordshire Lace and Redbornstoke Morris men, were invited to perform in Amptill's twin town, Nissan Lez Enserune, in the south-west of France close to Beziers. Bedfordshire Lace dance Ilmington, Adderbury and Lichfield traditions, whilst Redbornstoke dance their own unique Amptill and Scouthall traditions.

Twelve dancers, three musicians and various spouses made their way to Nissan for a long weekend of dancing. The majority of the group stayed in a wonderful B and B ideally located in the centre of Nissan, where they enjoyed excellent hospitality. This old building with its large rooms and high ceilings was located just down from the main square, where the groups enjoyed the local beer sitting outside one of the bars enjoying the Mediterranean warmth, even late into the night.

The first day of dancing included a late morning performance in the centre of Nissan outside the Town Hall, followed by a civic reception in the tourist office where the dancers imbibed very welcome drinks and nibbles. The dancing was very well received and locals seemed fascinated by the 'mad English' who were dancing in the middle of the day in the intense heat. After this the groups had lunch at the Community Hall again including local wine and beer. The sides provided the interval entertainment here in the evening at one of the regular local dances, where an excellent local band played traditional French folk tunes, to which we danced traditional and modern French folk dances.

The following day the dancers took the opportunity to do a heritage walking tour around this historic town, and after lunch, the hosts organised another trip to the famous Canal du Midi and the Oppidum d'Enserune, a pre-Christian hill site overlooking a unique medieval land drainage scheme. Later that afternoon the groups performed at a

local festival in Columbiers, a small town a few kilometres from Nissan. After watching the local folk dancing group perform local dances, the Morris sides again performed their dances for the festival goers, and again enjoyed a meal and local wine.



The last day of dancing was in the beauty spot of Roquebrun, a small town situated in the hills, a 40 minute drive away from Nissan. The dancers performed for the pupils at the junior school and taught the children one of the Morris dances which the children really enjoyed. Later they stopped the traffic as they danced by the only bridge across the river, which many took the opportunity to swim in later on to cool down.

The teams thought that Nissan was an ideal place to visit, being not only an attractive small historic town surrounded by vineyards, but within reach of the Mediterranean to the South, and some wonderful mountain scenery to the north. Then there is the warm Mediterranean climate, the wonderful local wines and the cool French lager..... Twinning is an ideal way of being able to visit another country, meet the locals and sample its own customs, food and drink, and be able to showcase our own Morris dancing traditions. We were extremely well looked after by the members of the twinning committee and the local dance group members, and we all had a wonderful time.

ITEMS FOR NEWSLETTER

All contributions gratefully received - most are usually published ! Text in .doc format preferred, though I can access .docx and open office formats.

Photographs and illustrations should be in high resolution .jpg or pdf, though .gif and .tiff files can also be accepted. Any illustration embedded in text should also be sent as separate attachments. Please ensure that you have permission for photographs to be published, and credit to photographers will be given if provided.

Colin

Drawing a lot of interest

A letter from Feargal Shiels

I'm about to embark on a project in which I intend to draw a member or two of every Morris team in the country. I'm a Morris-man myself (Black Prince Morris, Cornwall) and a student on the BA (Hons) drawing course at University College Falmouth. I'd really be grateful if you could mention this project in the newsletter. I do intend to contact every side eventually but, in the meantime, any who wish can contact me at largefishsale@googlemail.com or largefishsale@icloud.com with details of their team's attire (including colours, embellishments, foibles) and a brief biog. of their team. I will be concentrating on the garb rather than any physical likenesses so no cause for alarm! Initially, I'll be drawing county by county with a view to regional compilation culminating in a ginormous Domesday style record of Morris in all its guises in this era. I know it'll take years but think it should make for an interesting and unique body of work some day.

Rapper DVD review

**RAPPER: HISTORY OF THE MINERS' SWORD
DANCE OF NORTH-EAST ENGLAND.**
Chris Metherell & Rhett Krause
EFDSS/Garland Films DVD & DVD-ROM

Together with Phil Heaton's book of similar name & cover (reviewed in Autumn Newsletter), we now have almost everything one could wish to know about the rapper sword dance.

The first disc contains some marvellous archive films (b&w & silent) of several traditional teams from the North-East, including High Spen, Earsdon and Newbiggin, together with modern footage of some of today's best rapper sides. Some of the recordings were made at DERT weekends. Awesome stuff! The second disc, only for computer use, contains enough material to keep one busy for weeks. The full history of every North-East rapper team, with copies of manuscript, photographs etc. is available, and over 200 modern teams have also been traced. The disc can also help with teaching figures. The authors recognise that rapper is very difficult to describe in print, but the notation of many traditional figures is given, often with an accompanying video clip that allows one to

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Corner Cottage Crafts

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actually see how the figure is performed.

All in all, this twin DVD set is an amazing bargain at £15. (As is Phil's book is £12,99) See www.efdss.org and www.garlandfilms.co.uk to buy.

Colin Andrews

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Maker of bellpads and drums



HOLD THE DATE!

September 28th 2013

Morris Federation Day of Dance and AGM

Hosted this year by Shrewsbury Morris

Walking Tours of Shrewsbury

AGM

Evening Ceilidh

Further information available in the Spring, hope to see you there.

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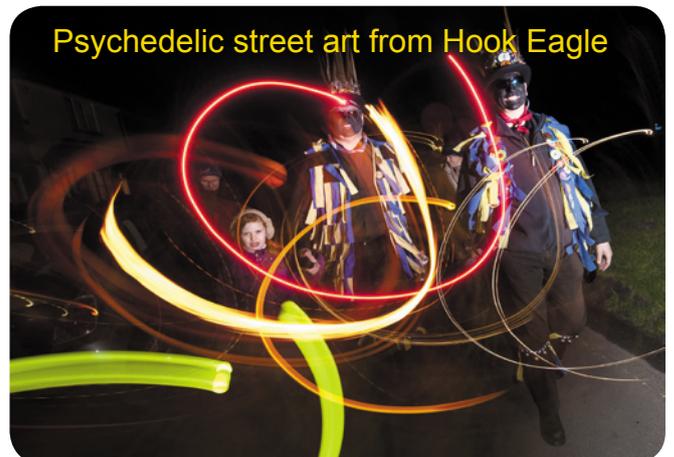
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Morris is not always quite what it seems to be !



(Above left) Start of cross-channel processional for Winkleigh ladies?

(Above right) Gong Scourers calendar. If we all got our kit off, how would we tell teams apart?



(Left) Wyitchwood Morris.

Imagine seeing this on waking up from a hangover - enough to turn you teetotal !

