

The Morris Federation



Newsletter

Autumn 2000

Important Information

TO ALL BAG(WOMEN), SECRETARIES AND SUCHLIKE

One of the common complaints we get from the average Morris dancer in the street is that they know nothing about the Federation and what it is doing. Some don't even know if their side belongs. This usually turns out to be because the person in 'their club who received the MF communication doesn't pass any of it on.

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE don't be guilty of this. There is no excuse now that we have included a **SUMMARY SHEET**. You can photocopy this and distribute it to all your members. This can save you the time and hassle of verbally telling everyone what is in the Newsletter. However it is not a substitute for handing the Newsletter around or making it available during practice. Remember **DON'T KEEP THE INFORMATION TO YOURSELF**.

MEMBERS' MANUAL

All members of the Federation should have a copy of the MF 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 3.50 (+ 50p p&p) each. Cheques payable to The Morris Federation, please.

ADVERTISING

The Morris Federation will distribute enclosures with the Newsletter or other circulars and items of advertising relevant to commercial products. A fee is charged to the advertiser for this service. However, this should not be taken to mean that The Morris Federation necessarily endorses the product.

Enquiries concerning any form of advertising through the Morris Federation should be addressed to the Newsletter Editor.

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PRESIDENT'S PROLOGUE

By the time that you read this Newsletter the dancing out programme will be almost completed and we shall be into a new practice season. The three Morris organisations have marked the year 2000 by dancing throughout the summer at the Millennium Dome. So far 13 Morris Federation sides have performed and by all accounts the performances have been very successful with the Dome management being extremely helpful. On the 27th of August I went at the kind invitation of Masons Apron and thoroughly enjoyed the day, not only the dancing but also the Dome itself. If you have not yet been it is well worth visiting. I think that all sides that have attended can thoroughly recommend a visit. Spread the word, the media might knock it but The Federation will not.

On the question of the media coverage, there has been the usual spate of 'knocking the Morris' and I think this all started from Fee's discussion with the Independent and their article, which was extremely constructive. Since then of course there has been a number of reports in the Observer, The Times and others, including local papers in Carlisle, some of which were quite derogatory. All this bad publicity prompted your committee to write to the Press Complaints Commission who eventually gave us a half-hearted apology.

Subsequent to all this, at our Joint Morris Organisations Meeting in August this issue was discussed and we agreed that although these derogatory comments might upset us we should turn them round to our advantage, by talking to the press about our positive attitude towards the Morris, inviting them to come and see for themselves, and in constructively helping them with their reports. Anglia Television made contact with me in late August, to find out about Morris

and to inquire about the Morris Federation sides in East Anglia. Be positive with them East Anglians. I think they are on our side.

Phil Wilson, the new Director of the EFDSS joined us at our joint meeting and I hope that we might build and develop this relationship further in the future. All three Morris organisations welcome the opportunity to open up a dialogue with the EFDSS.

Jethro Anderson and I represented the Morris Federation at the Step Back Project at the Royal Festival Hall in July and joined with the Open Morris and EFDSS to man a Morris/Folk information display. Step Back superb performance, which included Morris generated tremendous interest. It is these events, as well as our own where our image can be improved, and in your local events, where there is a large Morris input it can go a long way to improve our overall image. However it will require careful planning, practice and attention to details to make it a success - both with the dance and in the presentation of dance - which includes kit.

On the question of funding for events, Broken Ankles have been very successful in acquiring funds to put on workshops and to assist with projects similar to the Step Back project and we should take note. The Regional Arts Lottery programme will support dance including the Morris and grants can be arranged from a few thousand pounds up to £100,000 for a three-year project or programme. It is worth looking at and being bold enough to ask. There are ten Regional Arts Boards covering the whole of England and I see no reason why the Morris and the Morris Federation should not qualify for some of these funds. Don't hesi-

tate to contact me if you require further information.

Finally before signing off there are some details of a funded workshop programme in this issue and some advance information of Morris workshops for next year, so please make a note of these, - finally another quote from Ditchling Morris little red book – ‘The Morris is there to entertain public - not to satisfy their egotistical desire to entertain themselves or to prance around in fancy dress’. – In other words every dance that we do in the public eye, is a performance requiring a concerted team effort, and if done well will entertain the public, satisfy the dancers and enhance the image of the Morris.

Happy practice season.

John Bacon

Editorial

A somewhat later edition than normal, though I expect that many of you like most of the committee have been away for a great deal of the summer at various events and holidays.

There will now only be a couple of weeks until the AGM, and we all look forward to seeing lots of member sides there for our millennium bash!

At first it appeared that everyone had been so busy that articles for this edition were scarce on the ground, however, lots of interesting pieces have appeared on the e-mail and by hand without, I hope, too much harassment and blackmail!

. It's always great to receive articles, but especially from those of you who have never contributed before.

So in this issue, many thanks go to Vandra Hemmings for two articles, one of which I have included under our now occasional series, Focus on Youth, and a Tale of Three May Festivals, featuring the incomparable Moll E Danglecrutch!

Janet Cragg has written about Ditchling Mummers, and Christine Bell has provided the second instalment of the story of Tanglefoot, and their visit to America which was featured last time. Julie McKenzie has written a summary of the eight days spent earlier this year by a number of brave souls dancing from London to Norwich, in honour of Will Kemp.

The John Gasson Solo Jig competition took place at Sidmouth as usual this year, results, and a short narrative will be of interest to many who were not able to attend, so thanks to John Bacon for that.

I have also included a story from Janet Dowling, which she gave me sometime ago, and has probably thought I'd forgotten, but this is the kind of story you could not forget!

In response to a communication received, Fee has put together an article giving advice to sides about road closures, our rights on the public highway etc.

And finally, some news about forthcoming MF Workshops, to whet your appetite.

Copy date for the winter issue will be 10th November, please send any contributions to me by e-mail, on disc in text format, or by good old pen and paper. Please remember to include logos, pictures or illustrations where possible.

Jude Barrett

EFDSS presents

Folk Bazaar – a Celebration of Folk

Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, Camden, London, NW1 7AY

Saturday 16th December 2000

1pm-6pm

Admission FREE

Always wanted to know what goes on at Cecil Sharp House but afraid to ask? Looking for some funky Xmas presents but hate Xmas shopping? Or simply fancy a fun family day out?

Come to our Folk Bazaar. Entry Free!

A huge collection of antiques and curiosities and that's just the organisers!

Includes:-

- **Carless Folk Boot Sale and Collectors' Fair (could be anything from folk records and books, to maypole ribbons and old clogs)**
- **Auction of donated folk goods and skills**
- **Presentations and displays by different folk dance, song, story and music clubs**
- **Children's area with storytelling, workshops, and children's entertainer**
- **Library, café and bar open all day**

(There are also a choice of dances on in the evening if you fancy making a night of it - call for info and ticket prices)

NOTE to prospective stallholders: if you've got it and no longer want it, here's your chance to find a man who does. Donate it to the charity auction or book a stall at the carless bootsale and sell it yourself. Likewise if you have a skill you would like to donate or an idea for a short workshop or presentation, would like to put up display boards to promote your society or event, please get in touch. If you have a story to tell about old events in Cecil Sharp House or photos you would like to lend us for the day, let us know as we hope to do an exhibition of photos, press-cuttings and memorabilia on The House through its history.

The English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS) is the country's premiere folk development organisation which has for over 100 years recorded, developed and promoted the folk traditions found within England. Cecil Sharp House is home to the EFDSS and the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library.

Venue: Cecil Sharp House

Address: 2 Regent's Park Road, London NW1 7AY

Date: Saturday 16th December 2000

Time: 1pm-6pm (there are a choice of dances on in the evening for which there is a charge).

Nearest tube: Camden Town (Northern Line)

Details/Ideas/requests for stalls/offers of displays/donations etc to Tara 0207 485 2206 xt12

Location: Maps and other information on our website www.efdss.org

Focus on Youth *Catching 'em Young*

I work as a children's Librarian in a North London Borough, and having been a Morris Dancer since 1979 I was keen to promote Morris dancing and British Folk customs to children. My chance came when the borough I work for held a two week festival celebrating the diverse customs of the local population.

During the festival I held a series of workshops outlining the history of Morris dancing up to the present. This was followed by a practice; exercise on how to dance North West Morris. The classes of children who attended were all year 6 (10-11 years old). They had a great time learning the dance as did the library staff, who were persuaded to join in the fun. After the event I was pleased to receive letters from each child thanking me and saying what they had enjoyed most about the workshops.



Most enjoyed the dancing, except one whose best bit was 'the orange drink and biscuits', ah well! You can't win them all.

Fired up with the success of the Morris workshops I decided to attempt a series of Green Man and Guising workshops during the festival held the following year. I gave a talk about the Green Man illustrated with various pictures and artefacts. The children then made a Green Man mask. I also explained about Guising, and the children dressed up in a variety of clothing, and wearing their masks, danced through the library to the bear dance music. They caused quite a disturbance, which of course is part of the essence of Guising!

I think it is so important to interest children in the Morris and to educate them about British customs. Many of my local schools expressed interest in taking part and were very keen.

So, if anyone wants to do something similar and you have time on your hands, it may be worth contacting your local school. Provided of course they can fit it in between the demands of the National Curriculum and the Literacy hour!

**Vandra Hemmings
Just William Morris**



DITCHLING MORRIS and THEIR MUMMERS



The tradition of mumming in the Sussex village of Ditchling cannot be said to reach back into the hazy mists of time, nor to have been passed down the generations. The players are not Ditchling born and bred, nor do they ply local rural trades of blacksmith and thatcher but number among their company surveyor and accountant, computer programmer and consulting engineer - and grave-digger. Yet Ditchling Mummers have an unshakeable foothold in village tradition at the turn of the present century and may be firm enough to continue into the next!

Ditchling Mummers came into being just a year after the village Morris side was founded in 1985 under the foremanship of John Bacon, now President of the Morris Federation. The Mummers first performed in the village on Boxing Day 1986 and have drawn growing audiences ever since - around 300 were counted in 1999. It has become a local custom to gather at The Bull on Boxing Day to meet friends and family and watch the Mummers and Morris dancers.

In 1986 the play chosen for the Mummers' debut was from Fittleworth, a village in West Sussex, the script

being found in Tony Wales' "Sussex Garland". The plays performed are always from Sussex villages, the majority from West Sussex and the Hampshire borders where mummers were known as Tipteers. Plays performed have included the Rottingdean play collected from the Copper family and described by Angela Thirkell, the granddaughter of Edward Burne-Jones, in her book "The Three Cottages"; the Horsham play was collected by Lucy Broadwood and the Compton play appears, in "This Wonderful Weald" by Arthur Beckett, a founding member of the Society of Sussex Downsmen. Scripts have also been found in the Sussex Archaeological Collections and Notes and Queries; a complete set of Sussex plays, collated for Ditchling Mummers by former player Denis Outred has been deposited in the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library at Cecil Sharp House.

These plays are all in the hero combat tradition with Saint/King George as the hero and Turkish Knight the villain. Ditchling Mummers are also regular performers at the biennial village fair in June performing plays from outside the county, for example the Robin Hood play from Shipton-

under-Wychwood, the Antrobus Play, the Lancashire Pace-Egging play and the Plumtree Wooing play from Plumtree in Nottinghamshire. Performances have been given farther afield, notably on the seafront during Sidmouth Festival and in Guernsey as guests of Bells and Broomsticks.

Costumes varied in the early years with the Noble Captain dressed in army greatcoat and pith helmet and Prince of Peace sporting a bishop's mitre! Soon the diversity of the dressing up box was abandoned and the Mummers kitted themselves out in colourful rag jackets assuming the customary guise of strips of material or even newspaper stuck or sewn to smock or jacket. Props and special effects have become more sophisticated, the latest home-made device being a papier-mache canon fired with great authenticity and clouds of smoke on the line "let loud your canons roar". Then there are the accepted practices of reviving the combatants with a swig of undiluted navy rum and kiss from an unsuspecting member of the audience, while children wait for the anticipated handfuls of sweets delivered by Father Christmas.

The Boxing day play is introduced by a band drawn from morris musicians who lead the Mummers on singing the traditional gallery carol "Rejoice and be Merry". It is an impressive and looked-forward to moment every year. The village mummers are preserving a unique piece of English folk culture which gives pleasure to many while raising considerable amounts of money for charity every year
(The full text of last years play (Boxing Day 1999) can be found at www.apub.demon.co.uk/mummers)

Janet Cragg
Ditchling Morris



A Tale of Three May Festivals (or the plight of Moll E Danglecrutch)

The year 2000 for me was significant in that I managed to attend three May festivals in one weekend. So what! I hear you cry, but let me tell you it was no mean feat for this couch potato.

Friday 28th April saw us hot footing it down to Hastings to join in with their May festivities and dance with our London side Just William. During that evening the weather seemed against us as it was raining the proverbial 'cats and dogs', plunging me into deepest gloom as Saturday was my last chance to dance with 'William' for the season because the following week I was going into hospital for an operation.

On Saturday however, the sun was shining on Winkle Island and the rest of Hastings. Just William managed an amazing amount of dancing (more than two!). The day was concluded by the traditional Side meal at the Hastings Arms, where much alcohol was imbibed and a riotous time was had by all.

On Sunday Andy and I left our cosy B&B to drive through the pouring rain to Rochester to enable Andy to take on his alter ego Moll E Danglecrutch and dance as the Molly with his Kentish side Dead Horse Morris.

Rochester at 11.00am was cold, wet and virtually deserted when we arrived, but things soon hotted up when Dead Horse danced outside the castle where they were pitted against their rivals the Seven Champions. Poor Moll was just doing a repair job to her makeup and adjusting her bloomers when she was kidnapped by the dastardly Seven Champions.....

And had the indignity of being roped to a terrified man from the audience. She was then subjected to having a Seven Champion and their Molly dance between her legs – the poor soul hadn't been the same since!

Once the ransom had been paid and Moll E was released Dead Horse continued to dance through those slightly crowded streets of Rochester before finishing up in a local pub where they lubricated their muscles in good old Shepherd Neame to prepare themselves for the 'Sun Up' in Whitstable Harbour on the May Morn.

4 am on May Day the alarm clock trilled, and out of bed we leapt, bright eyed and bushy tailed ready to see in the May and the dawning of the day Tra La! As I hadn't stopped moaning about not being able to dance at dawn with Just William in Hastings, Dead Horse kindly took pity on me and agreed that I could play my tambourine and pretend to be a musician. So it was on with my top hat and tails and off to the harbour with Moll E.

The dawning of the day seemed a long way off as Dead Horse struggled against the wind and rain to dance in the May on the harbour quay.

Although this year their performance did have the benefit of an audience of at least eight people. Such a change from the usual audience of the mystery man on a bike and his dog who boosts their collective egos by religiously watching their dawn performance every year.

After freezing their bits on the harbour, it was off to the top of Tankerton Slopes for a quick dance before some sensible soul said 'S** this for a game of soldiers' and it was back to Chris and Jan's for a very welcome fry up. The side then wiled away the next few hours watching Pokemon on TV, (sad or what) until it was time to join in the procession and dancing through Whitstable, organised by Oyster Morris.

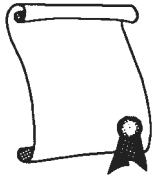
The festival was excellent – the sun took pity on us and shone for the rest of the day, Jack in the Green led the procession and dancing flanked by the Lord and lady and all was right in the Morris world.

Vandra Hemmings
Just William
(and sometime Dead Horse musician)





Noticeboard



CONGRATULATIONS

Liza Austin (since remarriage Liza Austin-Strange) for her MBE (Director, Fosbrooks Traditional Dance and Music Centre, for services to the community in Stockport, Cheshire).

Derek Schofield
Newsgroups. uk.music.folk

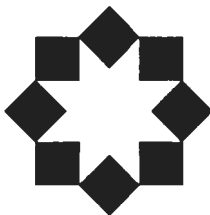
In case you've not come across Liza or Fosbrooks before, a bit of background. Fosbrooks are a children's team based in Stockport.

They've been going for at least 15 years as they were at the Fed's 10th birthday in Bradford. Liza has worked incredibly hard over the years with the kids and they have consistently produced a very high standard.

The group is no longer in the Fed, I suspect because the Morris content of what they do has declined, but I think it would be appropriate for a congratulatory message to be put in the Newsletter.

PS - most people round here (who only saw Fosbrooks at Bradford) remember her as 'the woman who was walking backwards, shouting instructions to the kids AND playing the accordion all at the same time'!

Steve Cunio



Farewell, (for now) from Long Itchington

Long Itchington Morris have sort of ceased to exist due to lack of numbers and resources (we can no longer afford the practice hall unless everyone turns up). We are performing at Warwick FF and a warm up gig with Kirtlington this year, and may yet make Warwick an annual reunion, so we are kind of undead at the moment.

Thanks to all at the MF for their help and support in the past, if we resurrect ourselves we will rejoin. I will see if we have any interesting stuff for the archive (like our Bedlam dances for instance),

David Gunby



OLD PALACE CLOG 15th Anniversary

For our 15th anniversary Old Palace Clog our holding their weekend of dance on 15th-17th September.

The itinerary for Saturday will take us to Greenwich (Cutty Sark Gardens, and Woolfes Statue) and after lunch we will be dancing at the Millennium Dome!

Our guest sides include Dacre, Redbornestoke, Glory of the West, great Western and Hampshire Garlands.

ROAD BLOCKS, CLOSURES, TRAFFIC & THE POLICE

Ripley Green Garters in Derbyshire encountered an unpleasant situation earlier in the summer when they were dancing in the road outside a pub one evening: a jeep-type car was aggressively driven through the middle of the set and nearly injured some of the dancers, despite there being people posted at both ends of the dancing area. The landlord of the pub was unsympathetic, saying that the dancers should have moved.

I spoke about this with Barry Markham, the Divisional Emergency Planning Officer from Sussex Police, who knows everything about roadblocks, road closures, celebrations and processions. He's an invaluable resource down here in Hastings in organising the two processions I'm involved in, which require different types of closures, one brief and informal, the other formal for a number of hours.

Despite extensive research, he can't come up with any legislation specifically to deal with this particular problem other than the obvious ones open to us all, such as reporting people for dangerous driving, etc. His suggestions are, in no particular order:

- Full road closures, which offer the greatest protection, are costly at around £700 per road (you have to pay the salaries of those involved in planning and (wo)manning the diversions, so this is only to be used when the benefits outweigh the cost
- Informal road closures, whilst having no legal basis, are by far the best way, but require sensible forethought: most Morris sides will post someone fore and aft of the dancing area, but

Sgt Markham suggest buying a Nobo board or similar, one that you can re-use, to mark in big cheerful letters that Morris dancers are temporarily blocking the road ahead. They're actually quite cheap to buy, given that they will be an almost endless resource. You see them on the sides of roads, often asking for witnesses to road accidents. Perhaps a practical member of your team can mount some hinges on the backs to triangularise them for ease of display. This method is the one used throughout the year at Bate-mans in Sussex: they post marshals employed by the house to direct the traffic in one way and out the other, actually going against the flow of traffic. They use Nobo boards headed "Advisory one-way system: No entry". This works perfectly.

We have a very good relationship with our local police and I'd advise anyone to contact their local station for advice if they're having difficulty. If anyone has anything further to add to this, please e-mail me at Feelock@hotmail.com.

Thanks to Chas Arnold for raising this and to Sgt Markham of Hastings Police for his advice.

Good dancing.

Fee x
MF Secretary



SIDMOUTH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

SUNDAY 6 AUGUST 2000

The John Gasson Solo Jig Competition

The John Gasson solo jig competition was established in memory of John Gasson who was tragically killed on his way to Sidmouth in 1987. John Gasson was a fine jig dancer and was always eager to improve the quality of jig dancing in this country. The competition was set up the following year in his memory and has been held annually during the Sidmouth Festival Week in August. It is sponsored by Seven Champions and Chris and Tracey Rose. The standard has increased year by year and this year was no exception. The number of entries varies and there were 8 this year.

This year's competitors were as follows;

Sue Hamer-Moss (Dancer) and John Golightly (Accordion)

Ben Higgs (Dancer) and Barry Goodman (Melodeon)

Jan Tarry (Dancer) and Dee DeWitt (Cello)

Dave Brassington (Dancer) and Trevor Cook (Electric guitar) - Led and Weight

Fee Lock (Dancer) of Mad Jacks Morris and Diane Moody (Violin)

Hattie Vail (Dancer) and John Bacon (Accordion) of Ditchling Morris

Sue Graham (Dancer) and Mark Rogers (Melodeon)

Darell Hurtt (Dancer) of Hammersmith Morris and Gary O'Mahoney (Melodeon)

The judges were Keith Leach, Jerry West, Jan Grayson and Jameson Wooders and there were three categories covering the Best New Entrant, Audience Appeal Cup and The Jig Cup

And the winners were;

JIG CUP; 1 - Hattie Vail and John Bacon
2 - Sue Graham and Mark Rogers
3 - Jan Tarry and Dee eWitt

BEST NEW ENTRANT;
Sue Hamer-Moss and John Golightly

AUDIENCE APPEAL:
Dave Brassington and Trevor Cook

John Bacon



Hattie Vail of Ditchling Morris

Pikeville here we come (Part 2)

Tanglefoot in America

Pikeville - a small town, close to the Country Music Highway.

Pikeville's Hillbilly Days festival. A small town, close to the Country Music Highway, full of men wearing strange outfits, driving 'Jed Clampett-type' cars, drinking home-made moonshine.

Two words sum up this festival, amazing and fun. Amazing because none of us had experienced anything like it before and fun because the people who came, or were involved in the festival, made it fun.

These were some of the nicest, most appreciative, people we've had the chance to meet. They couldn't do enough for us. We had free meals, free transport, even the weather was good!

The festival is held to raise money for the Shriner's children's hospitals all over America and Canada. Shriners, in case you're wondering, are similar to our Freemasons. There was lots of dancing, lots of Bluegrass music, lots of stalls selling everything from furry feathers to fast food and just lots to watch or take part in.

Strangely enough, when we said we were Appalachian dancers, people asked what that was! They have their own style of Appalachian dancing in Kentucky, which we watched with great interest. Needless to say we have picked up a few new steps to add to our growing repertoire. Not to mention the new shoes sporting 'jingle taps'.

The performance we had practised for weeks on end, fortunately, was well received. All those Sunday's in Richard's garage were finally worth it. Not forgetting Gwen who made the tea and coffee. We enjoyed ourselves enormously. We made some

good friends. And we have some good memories of a very successful trip.

Christine Bell
Tanglefoot Ap-
palachian
6 July 2000



The Woman with the Silver Bracelets

I have been dancing Morris since 1974, but now as I hang up my bells and take on new interests like storytelling, I have been looking back over the number of people that I have met whilst out dancing. But of all the people that I have met none have made as great an impact on me as when I met the woman with the silver bracelets.

It was back in 1979 or 80. It was a hot Saturday in July. My team, New Esperance Morris, had been invited to dance at a multicultural fair in St Martins in the Fields, next to Trafalgar Square. It was the usual sort of thing, sarees, steelbands and samosas- we were to represent the English contingent.

We started dancing at about two o'clock. It was a desperately hot summer's day. The first dance went well, but as we finished and came off we could hear the sounds of drums beating in the distance.

The second dance was alright, but the noise of the drums was getting louder and louder. A constant beat, a jarring beat. As we came off from the second dance, we could hear the word spreading around the fair. It was the National Front, they were marching to Trafalgar Square for a demonstration, and would be passing by the courtyard we were standing in.

The drumming was now so loud, that we were debating whether we should wait until the drums had gone by, but then we became aware of a woman standing by us- totally nondescript, except for an armful of silver bracelets which she played with, one by one. "Keep Dancing" she said, "Please, you must keep dancing."

We went on to dance again, finding it difficult to hear the rhythm of our music against the constant beat, the jarring beat of the drums. As we finished our third dance, at the end of the courtyard, you could see the union jacks held high by the national front as they passed by. Row upon row upon row. It seemed like they would never end, and that constant beat, that jarring beat seemed to fill every where. A cold shiver went through the courtyard. In front of us was our musician, and next to her stood the woman, playing with her silver bracelets on her arm.

In stead of calling us off, our squire called out, "Dance On- Gentlemen Soldier!"

It didn't matter that we couldn't hear our musician, we clashed high, we clashed low, we clashed hard, we clashed strong, We were not going to be dominated, we were not going to be overwhelmed.

By the time we were finished the drums and the flags had passed by, and were in the distance. It felt



like everyone at that fair was now surrounding us, and the applause we got when we marched off was like nothing we have ever received then or since. We were exhausted, hot and sweaty. The woman with the silver bracelets came up to us and said "Thank you, thank you for dancing. You must always keep dancing, and you must never let them win."

I was tired, I was hot, I could hardly speak a word, but I caught her eye and nodded. Something passed between us, and then she turned away. As she went the silver bracelets on her arm fell apart, to show the numbers tattooed there.

I kept on dancing, and now I'll keep on telling

And I'll never let them win.

Janet Dowling (Storyteller)

PS There is an addition to this story. I first told it at the Sidmouth story telling competition four years ago. I didn't win, but a lot of people said how the story had touched them, and that I must keep telling it. Four weeks later, at the London Day of Dance, New Esperance were on tour with Stoney Stafford Morris when one of them came up and asked who had told the story at Sidmouth. I was pointed out to him, and he introduced himself. He had been at the competition, and was amazed to have heard the story, because he had been on the march himself. I was somewhat taken aback, when he hastened to assure me he had been one of the policemen patrolling the march, and not actually on the march. But he remembered the drums, how they had dominated everything. And he said I should keep telling the story too!

Dates for your diary:



Morris Federation Workshops 2000 and 2001

1 - Traditional Dance Millenium project

Broken Ankles have been granted some Millenium funds to run workshops on traditional dance forms between now and end of December 2000. The workshops are as follows;

1 – An English Clog workshop hosted by Kettlerbridge Clogs in Maidstone taught by Gary O'Mahoney of Dance AV. Contact Broken Ankles on 01273-541453 or brokenankles@btinternet.com for details.

2 – A Cape Breton workshop hosted by Chequered Flag in Portsmouth taught by Frank McConnell on 2 December 2000. Contact as in item 1.

3 – A Morris workshop on 10 December, hosted by Ditchling Morris in Hassocks (9miles north of Brighton) and run by AJ Allen of Broken Ankles, the theme will be 'Morris as a Dance Form'. Contact Morris Federation Events Officer or Federation President.

4 – An English Clog workshop hosted by Broken Ankles and taught by Jane Pollitt on 11 November 2000 in Brighton. Contact as in item 1.

2 Yorkshire Morris

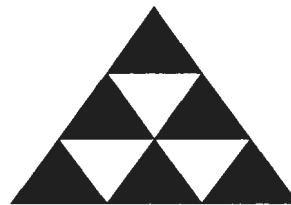
1 – It is hoped that a Yorkshire Morris workshop will be run in the North in the New Year. Yorkshire Morris is very different to Cotswold and some of the dances have not been performed for at least 80 years. Further details will appear in the Winter Newsletter

3 - Team Managers

A Team Managers and Foreman's workshop is planned to be held in the Midlands in March 2001 – further details will follow in the Winter Newsletter. This will be run by Sally Waring and Sue Swift. It will be a good opportunity for Squires and Foreman to learn about the techniques of running a Morris team and setting up a programme of dance instruction for the team. Also covered will be teaching technique, the management of the team, how to over come internal politics, fund raising etc etc. the workshop will be participatory – and there will be some dancing as well as chat.

4 – Jig workshop

We hope to organise a jig workshop in Berkshire next April 2001. This will be for single, doubles and multiple jigs and will be run by your President, John Bacon. Emphasis will be placed on the style of jig, how to make it more interesting to watch, and the relationship between the musician and dancer. A number of traditions will be covered during the day.



The Year 2000 Morris Eight Days Wonder

Will Kemp danced from London to Norwich 400 years ago in a protest against William Shakespear. Kemp was a clown, dancer and self publicist. He wrote and published a pamphlet called the Nine Daies Wonder to celebrate his achievement, Six dancers and two musicians commemorated the event by dancing over the same route from 1th April to 22nd April this year. Julia McKenzie of Golden Star Morris provided the following summary of the most gruelling dance-out that most of us would care to imagine. I can vouch for the state of their feet at the end of this amazing feat when they reached Norwich.

Adrian Williams, Archive Officer

Firstly I should like to state that the six merry Morris dancers who undertook this great challenge and honour of preserving Will Kemp's memory DID dance the entire 132 miles from London to Norwich. The two musicians DID play and walk the entire route. Disbelieve all those gossips that say otherwise.

I join them in their hearty thanks for the splendid support and encouragement of the marshals drivers, caterers and superb Morris sides throughout the country who saw fair play and joined in the fun.

On the first day we meet the illusive Yately Highway Horse who keeps popping up in the most unexpected places. We mingle with Muslims marching and lamenting and also pay our respects to a wedding party.

Day two and dance into the country away from the London Marathon. Into oakland Park for an ice cream and a dance around the tulip beds. At Chelmsford we dance with a fair maid. John Tarling (Rumford Morris) reads from Will Kemp's diary

A passer by is so absorbed in watching, he falls over a tub of flowers! At the Angel, Bromesfield, the sign says 'No working clothes or boots', so we take our boots off and steam.

Day three we arrive in Braintree, at the Swan Inn we meet Sally Stevens who is a direct descendant of Will Kemp.

On the fourth day we ae met in Long Melford by buxom wenches in Tudor garb. They dance with John Tarling (Rumford Morris). A visit to Nethergate Brewery follows, with as much liquid refreshment as we can partake of.....then dragged away for an impromptu dance at Colts Hall. Will Kemp stayed here on his journey.

On days five and six Steve Conneely (Kemp's Men) shows himself to be an accomplished skiffle tea chest player, and looks very fetching dressed in a Molly floral frock and headscarf as we dance into Norfolk and Good.

The Norwich Whifflers in their flamboyant costume greet us and escort us into Norwich. Here the atmosphere is wonderful. The noise, music, colour and excitement surrounds us. Have you any idea how high the church wall is that Kemp jumped over? Not for the faint hearted Morris person.

Would we do it all again?- no of course not- next year we're dancing over the Alps.

Julia McKenzie
Golden Star Morris

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Contributions to the Newsletter are always

Guide for Contributors

welcome. To help these are some guidelines to make your contribution easier to produce and the Editors life easier.

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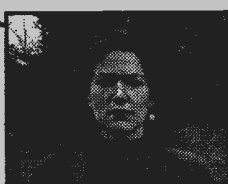
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