



Newsletter
Spring 2003

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No 'junk' mail or commercial advertising please. Please give at least a week's notice, and include a deadline date for transmission. Messages may be held for a while and combined with others in order to reduce the 'nuisance factor'.

To notify us of a change of contact details:
contacts@morrised.org.uk

This will be forwarded to the secretary and web editor. Please state whether you are willing for your address, phone number and/or email address to be published on the internet, and whether you wish to be included in the broadcast list. Let us know also if you have a web site or if its address has changed.

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Enclosures:

MF Shop Mail Order Form
Diary Fixtures Form
Wantage Reply Form
DCMS document

EDITORIAL

Thanks to all the contributors (again) to this newsletter. Keep those articles coming in!

This issue sees an article about the current state of the 'Two in a Bar' bill which is causing many sleepless nights for all concerned at the moment, plus an enclosure of the document by the DCMS. The state of the bill is changing all the time and the MF will keep you as updated as possible on how it will or will not affect us.

May Day is on the horizon and preparations for some great May Day events are underway.

The Jack in the Green takes pride of place on the front cover of this issue, and I'd welcome comments and additions to the

May Day article I've put together. You will also find a May Day Celebration Register. This is a list of regular Morris related May Day celebrations, and has been compiled from forms returned to Fee Lock. If your event is missing from the Register please send your details in.

On a serious note there will be 2 vacancies on the MF committee in January 2004. John (President) and Adrian (Archive Officer) will be standing down at the AGM in September. Look at the job descriptions and see if you, or someone you know, could have a go at one of these important roles.

You'll notice the shop is now on the back cover...this is for ease of photocopying so that it can be circulated amongst your team.

HOPE THE START OF THE DANCING SEASON IS A SUCCESSFUL AND SUNNY ONE!

Nicola

Printing

Next Issue

Front Cover Photograph

Outline Print Service Limited

Summer 2003 (copy date 1st May 2003)

Jack in the Green, Hastings, 2002 (John Bacon)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

To all Secretaries, Squires, Bag people, etc.

NEWSLETTER

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 side who receives the MF information (ie. YOU!) doesn't pass any of it on. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE don't be guilty of this. DON'T KEEP THE INFORMATION TO YOURSELF! Pass it round at practice, make a rota for who has the newsletter next....

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 £4.00 (inc.p&p) each. Please make cheques payable to 'The Morris Federation'.

ADVERTISING

The MF 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 MF should be addressed to the Newsletter Editor.

President's Prologue

PEL Update

In the last Newsletter, there was an article on the Public Entertainment Licence and we now know that this will be replaced with a Premises



Licence to cover the sale of liquor and public entertainment. The Government is saying that by only having one licence, it will simplify matters. However while this is accepted as being more streamlined it does mean that no one will be able to perform unless there is a Premises Licence in place - and that means Morris as well. The complete Bill comprises over 180 pages and the licensed activities are as follows:

- (a) a performance of a play
- (b) an exhibition of a film
- (c) an indoor sporting event
- (d) a boxing or wrestling entertainment
- (e) a performance of live music
- (f) any playing of recorded music
- (g) a performance of a dance

Dance covers all forms, from line dancing to ballet - and of course Morris. Schedule 1 of the Bill is entitled, Provision of Regulated Entertainment, and under Exemption section dance is not covered. The Morris Federation, and the Morris Ring attended the open seminar on the Bill organised by the National Campaign for the Arts on 20th February at which the new Bill was discussed and a report is included in this Newsletter. We are jointly working together in an effort to make it easier for ourselves to continue to perform our traditional dances and plays within the law if and when the new Bill is passed.

Remember that if you have not lobbied your MP on the Public Entertainment Licence issue - it is not too late to do so. As the law stands at present we can dance in any public place without a licence, but if the Bill is passed as it is written at present, all Morris performances will require a licence to dance, no matter where they are. That means that it is ok to dance in a public house car park provided the pub has a licence for entertainment covering dance i.e. Morris, but not in a public place. The responsibility for obtaining a licence for a public place will be the Morris team in question and the number that you can have is limited - and it will cost £20 for each licence.

As an addendum to this Newsletter we have included a copy of the latest explanation document from the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) and this provides some more explanation of the Bill.

Child Protection Policy

We have received a number of inquiries with regard to whether the Federation has a child protection policy - and this has become especially relevant with respect to the current emphasis that we read about in the daily newspapers. We are very conscious of the need for such a document and are currently looking into the possibility of developing and drawing up such a document. This will be available as soon as possible and will be based on similar documents such as that produced by Sport Projects and the English Folk Dance and Song Society.

However in the meantime it is important to recognise that any member team or individual working with children may need to go through the disclosure process. Please bear in mind that it is important that those of us working with children will need to ensure that they have a first aid provider available and that consent forms have been produced and signed by the parents of children.

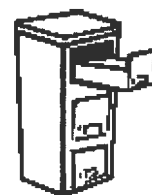
Newsletter

Finally I hope that every member of your team has the opportunity of reading the Newsletter - as there is always important information to read. So as I am still hearing from individual team members that they do not have sight of the Newsletter, this is a plea to the team secretaries to please take the Newsletter to practices and allow everyone the opportunity of reading it.

And really finally I do hope that you are having a satisfactory practice session and I look forward seeing many of you dancing out in the Spring and Summer.

John Bacon - President

Archive Activity



New acquisitions

CD: *Roll a Ferret for Jesus Black Pig Border Morris.*

A good working CD of tunes used by Black Pig Morris. It certainly is suitable for practising dancing to or examining interesting arrangements. I enjoyed having the chance to listen closely to *Old Bazaar in Cairo* and to ponder on how this essentially music hall tone has moved into the world of Border Morris. It is not all concert quality, but well serves the purpose of providing dance music.

Book: *The Folklore of Gloucestershire Roy Palmer, 1994, reprinted 2001.*

This has many fascinating references to Morris in Gloucestershire, both old and contemporary. One item that drew me to the book was gleaned from the Morris Dance Discussion List (a most useful source of diversely interesting nuggets) and relates to Cirencester church.

On the north wall of the nave at Cirencester above the clerestory windows were carvings (plastered over in a nineteenth century restoration) showing the participants in a Whitsun Ale. This church fund-raiser and general merry making was once a feature of Cotswold life. The sculptures show the 'lord' and 'lady' (chosen for the occasion), steward, sword-, purse- and mace bearer, page, jester, musicians and dancers. A C19th line drawing apparently exists and the search is on for it. Should be interesting to see it.

Enquiries

It is strange what requests come my way, usually via email. Last month, I had a request for details on Wilson, Kepple and Betty's *Sand Dance*. I was able to offer a film clip on video, although this came from my personal collection, but I have not provided a copy for the MF archives. A more general request came from someone wanting to know anything about Reginald John Elliott Tiddy, who was (I believe) killed during the battle of the Somme, but was connected with early collectors, like Cecil Sharp and George Butterworth. Tiddy authored an invaluable volume *The Mummers' Play*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1923. He once lived in Ascott-under-

Wychwood and the village hall is named after him. I understand that visiting Morris teams are still allowed to use it free, because of the association with Tiddy. Fascinating stuff, but sadly I find that there are too many pressures on my time.

Resignation

With great reluctance, I feel that I must resign as the Federation Archive Officer at the end of this year. It has been good fun and brought me into contact with all sorts of great people whom I should not have otherwise met. You have to find a home for the archives (several large cardboard boxes) and maintain and extend a filing system of it. I would write more, but my left arm is suffering from tiresome random pains, which makes the keyboard bad enough at work, but I need to rest it. I shall write more next time.



Adrian Williams

Cecil Sharp Centenary Event in Somerset – August 20-25th 2003

On August 22 1903 Cecil Sharp noted his first folk song, The Seeds of Love, from John England in Hambridge village in Somerset. Over the next couple of years Sharp, often assisted by his friend Charles Marson, the local vicar, collected 1,500 songs in the county, many of which were published in 5 volumes of 'Folk Songs from Somerset'. Further afield in England and in the USA, Sharp later collected another 3,000 songs. He was only one of several song collectors but he helped to regenerate The Folk Song Society and to revive these songs in new contexts – especially in schools.

In addition he collected and published morris dances, English sword dances and country dances. Indeed he founded the English Folk Dance Society in 1911. The fact that so many people, not just in Somerset but throughout the world, are still singing the songs and dancing the dances which he collected is an indication of just how important the first event turned out to be.

It is proposed to hold a centenary celebration near this site and involving the local community in a festival of song and dance. We propose a celebratory event in two parts:-

- An **international conference** for folklorists and folk song enthusiasts to be held at (venue to be confirmed: prob Taunton School) from Wed August 20 to Fri August 22 2003
- A **community festival** to be held in Hambridge village from Fri August 22 to Mon August 25, involving workshops, performances, concerts, exhibitions and a community play. Personnel confirmed at this stage are:- Waterson-Carthy, New Scorpion Band, Dr Faustus, John Kirkpatrick, Gina La Faux, Jigs for Gigs ceilidh band.

For further information about this significant event, please contact any of the following:-

- Folk South West, The Stables, Montacute House, Montacute, Somerset TA15 6XP tel: 01935 822911 Fax 01935 822024 e-mail folksw@folksw.org.uk
- David Sutcliffe (Committee Chairman), The Old Vicarage, Hambridge, Langport, Somerset TA10 0BG tel: 01460 281205 e-mail sutcliffedt@aol.com
- Sheelagh Leigh-Ewers (Publicity Officer) email Sheelagh@ukonline.co.uk
- Check out our website: www.cecilsharpcentenary.org.uk

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"Dear Ed..

Have just read the review of Grandson of Morris On in the Federation newsletter (Winter 2002). A couple of points I need to raise: I hope you don't mind me sharing them with you.

1).It states that this was the brainchild of Mark Rogers. Without taking away anything from Mark, who did put a lot of time and energy, thanks Mark, this is inaccurate, the initial idea for the show was discussed by myself and Ashley in Edinburgh during the previous summer. However Mark's contribution was a case of "without whom".

2). At no point did anyone called Roger Colbert perform in this show as a band member. Who is Roger Colbert? Also Jon Moore was not present at Sidmouth.

3)."The Care Bears", while this may seem an endearing remark, it also comes across as rather patronising, when coupled with "the younger danced well for his age". Forgive me if I am being a little oversensitive.

4). Also the last paragraph says " Who knows, the line-up maybe some of the CD Band (eg. Simon Nicol or Chris Leslie) or the dancers from Adderbury". Simon Nicol does not appear on the CD. And the lineup at Sidmouth only had one person (Ken Nicol) who was not on the album.

I feel that this review should have been checked for its accuracy before being published. Apart from that, I must congratulate Stroud Ladies, Witchmen and The Crew for their fantastic contributions to the show.

Simon Care"

"Dear Simon

First, I am glad the someone read the item, as I am never sure if anything gets read. I apologise for factual inaccuracies. It was my understanding that it was Mark's brainchild, your words set the record straight. I asked a number of people the names of the band who I did not recognise & cross-checked with the CD, evidently not well enough. Late nights, short deadlines, too little time & very small print on the CD. The "Care Bears" term came of the MDDL & seemed fitting. People normally improve in any activity (physical or mental) as they age and develop, then reach a peak and lastly decline. The age (and length) of the peak varies with activity and there will be a substantial range of abilities at any age. I am sure that both the Care boys are yet to reach their dancing peaks, and, on current form, they will be very high indeed. I know that I have passed my peak, probably in more ways than one.

Adrian Williams"

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

COMMITTEE NEWS

Events...

As the newly in place Events Officer I am trying to find interesting ideas for workshops and teams who are willing to be involved. Plans are underway for a:



Fieldtown workshop, November 1st -2nd (please note the date in your diary!) with **Bert Cleaver** who is an acknowledged expert.

Another workshop just being formulated will hopefully take place late November/early December - **Playing for Dancing**.

In the Spring I hope to organise another Rapper workshop due to popular demand and anything else that is requested!

Please let me know your views, this is your Federation and needs input from all! I would particularly like to hear from anyone who has an idea for a workshop or feels that their particular tradition has been neglected. Looking forward to hearing from you all!

Jean Smith, Events Officer

Newsletter

You are invited to write articles, reviews, etc. of events that you and your team have been involved with over the last couple of months. If you have a great photo that would be 'front cover' material then please send me that too!

The newsletter is nothing without your contributions....so let me know all your news!



Contributions can be emailed to newsletter@morrisfed.org, uk, or posted to my address on the Contacts page.

Nicola Rushton, Newsletter Editor

Vacancies on the Committee

You will recall that our President, John Bacon advised us at the last AGM that he would like to stand down at the next AGM, after serving

four years. So now is your chance to put your name forward - for this very prestigious position. Adrian Williams has also handed in his resignation as Archive Officer. We have provided below a summary of the work and activities that the President and Archive Officer undertakes so that you may decide whether you have the time and energy for either post.

Job Description (MF President)

Summary

The President has overall responsibility for the administration of The Morris Federation and to ensure that the Constitution is upheld.

In addition, the President ensures that the other Committee members work together to meet the policies of The Morris Federation.

Brief Details

1. The President is required to chair all committee meetings that are held during the year. The meetings take place every three months and the dates are set at the October meeting.
2. The President is required to build up good relations with the other Morris and Folk Dance organisations in the UK (e.g. the EFDSS) and overseas.
3. He/she attends the Joint Morris Organisation Meeting when it occurs, that is usually during March or April and to discuss and agree with The Morris Federation Committee during the January meeting, or, when appropriate, items for the agenda and report back to the Committee on the main points of the meeting. When it is The Morris Federation's responsibility to host the meeting, arrange a venue and draw up an agenda.
4. Attend the Annual General Meetings of the other Morris organisations when invited to do so and/or arrange for at least one other Committee member to attend and report back on the main points of the meeting.
5. Chair the Morris Federation AGM, which is normally held on the last weekend of September, and liaise with the Events Officer, with regard to whether the host team has undertaken the necessary management of the weekend. Be responsible for the collation of the AGM photographs and their archiving.

6. Liaise with the other Committee Members; on events, workshops, archiving, dance notation and publications, newsletter and distribution of forms; general correspondence; AGM notices; and minutes of meetings.
7. Take responsibility for public relations and general publicity; liaise with funding bodies and Government Departments where necessary on issues that affect the Morris Federation.

Job Description (MF Archive Officer) Summary

The job of the *Archive Officer* is mainly to look after the history of Morris. This takes a number of forms.

Brief Details

1. Maintain the existing archive of the Morris Federation. This includes many publications on Morris, sword, folk dance and mumming; original documents, the business documents of the Federation ; journals and magazines. There are also collections of photographs, mainly taken at AGMs, videos and audio recordings. For historic reasons, some of these are in the capable hands of our former president, Sally Wearing and the current president has some also.
2. Add to the archive. This can be by buying books and magazines, old photographs of relevance. Alternatively, you can sit back and wait while people offer you items. The press and modern media forms like the Morris Dance Discussion List provide current items that should be recorded. They may seem mundane now, but may be of enormous significance in future years.
3. Meeting and contacting people is part of it. This may involve the glories of Federation committee meetings, or the Ring archive activists. It also requires dealing with requests from Federation members for items or information. Questions can be quite testing and stimulating.

Nominations for the posts should reach our Secretary, Fee, together with Proposer and Secunder at least six weeks before the AGM, which is scheduled for the end of September 2003. The Terms of the Office run for one year, beginning on the 1 January of the year after that in which they were elected until the following 31 December.

“Thank goodness, the new PEL might finally put an end to Morris dancing” says AFO delegate.

A report on the Association of Festival Organisers Conference - Buxton

Friday 30th January. M11 and M25 closed by snow! When we checked to see whether or not the conference was still on they said “Of course. There is no snow here, it's bright sunshine.” So off we set. The roads were remarkably free of traffic, and snow. We arrived in Buxton just as snow was starting to fall.

The conference venue was a classic “grand” hotel with a huge stone facade, splendid sweeping staircases and an expensive dinner menu. So after checking in we set off to find the Indian restaurant which had been recommended by one of our fellow guests. The snow was falling steadily, and settling. The town took on a fairy-tale appearance.

The Morris Federation joined the Association of Festival Organisers (AFO) at the request of the members attending this year's MF AGM in Ripon. One of the reasons for joining was to seek ways to improve the treatment of Morris dancers at some festivals, to raise them to meet the standards of treatment found at the best.

Attending the conference offered three different kinds of opportunity. Speakers at a number of the formal sessions had a great deal of useful and important information to impart, notably on the PEL and Child Protection. These sessions also gave the opportunity to ask questions. Listening to what the other delegates were saying was often very informative. Finally, of course, was the informal networking done in the bar in the evening and at coffee and lunch breaks.

On the theme of the PEL we were able to make contact with Jackie Clayton of the National Campaign for the Arts. She has been involved in discussions with the Ministry formulating the PEL. John Bacon has perused this contact and has written elsewhere about how the Federation is working to influence Amendments to the Bill.

Information from the Child Protection session has contributed to the production of a Morris Federation Child Protection Policy.

Listening to other delegates has highlighted, yet again, how poor is the public image of Morris. Despite the fact that Morris and other traditional dance forms are the main public face of many Folk Festivals, Morris dancers in particular are seen in a bad light by some of the organisers. Comments about unreliability and drunkenness in particular were made. There were also a number of criticisms of low quality performance in terms of kit and appearance.

It is hard to see how the Federation can lobby for improved treatment of teams by festivals while the unacceptable levels of public behaviour of the few tar the image of all the teams in the morris world.

Rhiannon and Trefor Owen



The Ring Heye Christmas Bash

Poynton Jemmers attended a Christmas bash organised by Ringheye Morris in Mobberley.

On the shortest day of the year the weather turned very wet in the evening and I expected Sunday the 22nd to be rained off, but we were lucky and though it was cold it didn't rain.

supplying food and drink to the gathering group.

The Earl of Stanford was danced, sometimes with two sets filled up by younger

members, which was heartening to the tradition.

PoyntonJem@aol.com

There were several teams attending Ring Heye's Christmas bash some local and some from further afield. Poynton Jemmers attended with eight dancers and a full band of musicians. The dancing went well and the pub coped well with



Traditional May Cart Procession

Moulton Village Festival, Moulton, Northampton

Moulton village has a May Queen tradition that has survived for well over 150 years. The Queen is crowned and then transported around the village centre on a special cart decorated with greenery and flowers. The cart used to be pulled by a horse, then by a tractor but these days is pulled by visiting Morris teams usually numbering over 100 dancers.

Maycart leaves the yard of The Maycart Restaurant at the rear of The Telegraph Pub at about 9.45am/10am

Crowning of May Queen at 10.15am Public Gardens. Church Street

Tour of the village 10.30 to 1p.m Dancing at the Pubs

Carnival Parade 2pm

Morris dancing around village centre 3pm - 5pm

Ceilidh 8pm in Village Hall



Visiting teams this year: Britannia Coconut Dancers, King John's Morris, Saddleworth Morris, Rose & Castle Morris, White Rose Morris, Leyland Morris

The "Two in The Bar Rule"

Seminar on the New Bill

20 February 2003 Wigmore Hall London

The National Campaign for the Arts (NCA) seminar on the new licensing bill was held on the 20th February 2003 in the Wigmore Hall in London. The seminar was attended by approximately 50 people (which was surprising in the light of the importance of the new Bill and how it will affect the performing arts). The NCA were represented by their director Victoria Todd and Jackie Clayton while the Department of Culture Media and Sports (DCMS) was represented by the head of the licensing division Andrew Cunningham.

The seminar was attended by representatives from many organisations such as orchestras, operatic societies, drama groups, jazz groups, festivals, licensing authorities and local councils, professional and amateur musicians, folk organisations, ballet and of course the Morris in all its forms. I am extremely pleased to say that we made up at least 5% of the participants and I felt this was good bearing in mind the large number of other art forms that were present. Berkshire Bedlams, Bedfordshire Lace and myself represented the Morris Federation while Cliff Marchant and John Frearson represented the Morris Ring. Unfortunately there were no representatives from Open Morris. I believe that we were the only representatives of the Morris organisations present and I apologise if there were others that I did not know about. I think that both the NCA and the other organisations present were surprised that we were representing probably over 15,000 member individuals belonging to the three organisations in the country.

Victoria Todd and Jackie Clayton opened the meeting and gave a brief resume of the activities of the NCA in relation to the new licensing Bill. Basically they are lobbyists with channels into Government departments. They are funded by subscriptions and receive no grants. The floor was then given Andrew Cunningham who provided an insight into the history of the new licensing bill and logic behind its development so far. Essentially the current laws relating to the sale of liquor and entertainment are complicated to say least and many performing arts organisations had requested that the laws be simplified. This approach had essentially come from the Musicians Union in the late 90's who were concerned with regard to of the way that the "Two in the Bar" rule has been interpreted and operated. It was on this basis that the new Bill was drawn up such that in effect "None in the Bar" would replace the "Two in The Bar". However the old licensing system for a separate licence for the sale of alcohol and a separate licence for performance would disappear and be replaced by a Premises Licence. The DCMS argued that this would make it a far simpler procedure and venue owners would only have to apply for one licence. (This would be ok providing the venue owner ticked the right box in his application and identified the type of entertainment that he/she anticipated providing).

So where will the Morris Federation stand in all this once the Bill has gone through. As the current law stands at present, Morris Federation teams can perform at any venue provided the venue has a Public Entertainment licence. If a pub for instance does not have one, then in theory a Morris team, Longsword, Border, Rapper team,

etc or any one else is breaking the law if they perform. We can of course perform in any "public place" without a licence. If the Bill goes through, then the same will apply for the pub - but a licence will be required if a performance takes place in a "public place" or "any place" such as on the pavement outside a pub! However there is a way round this - by obtaining a "temporary event" licence. You will be able to have only 5 per year -yes 5 per year and each will cost £20! There is also another way round it and that is for a member of the team applying for a "personal licence" - again at a cost.

Andrew Cunningham took note of the fact that this onerous requirement may result in the demise of much of our folk arts in this country and the destruction of part of our heritage and felt that the number of say 5 "temporary event" licences is open for discussion and review.

Hence I believe that it is still not too late to do something about this and to preserve our heritage and to make the performance of Morris in all its forms possible within the law. We can still lobby our MP's; we can still write to the Minister, Kim Howells, we can still write to Andrew Cunningham - and the more letters they receive the better. There has been a tremendous response to the new Bill in the form of correspondence - but more is required if we are to succeed. If you want to read the relevant sections of the Bill - go to the Government web site and look at Bills in Progress.

John Bacon - President



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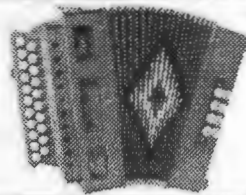
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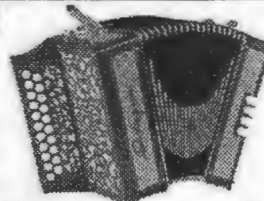
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SIDMOUTH FESTIVAL 2002

During the last Sidmouth Festival a number of team representatives approached me and complained about the changes in the Sidmouth format, and in particular the way in which workshop season tickets had been issued. The other issue that was raised was the charge that people were asked to pay to gain entrance to the Arena Showground.

For those who went to Sidmouth last year, but not for the whole week, and who therefore did not have a season ticket, the only way that they could go to workshops was to buy a book of 10 tickets for £60 - and the problem was that many people only went to the Festival for a few days. It was also understood that the tickets were not interchangeable. The result was that many visitors could not go to any of the workshops at all.

As a result of the many comments that I

received I wrote to the Festival Organisers to obtain a clarification on the points raised and I am pleased to say that I have now received a reply. This follows in full and though it is probably not what we all would wish to hear – it is a move in the right direction. I have also been advised that – for Morris teams only, if you purchase 10 season tickets, they will be for the price of 8. I understand that the general public can purchase 10 tickets for the price of 9. With regard to the Arena showground I also understand that that if a Morris team who is not booked for the Festival and is willing to perform on the Arena Showground stage, then they can obtain free access to the Arena Showground.

John Bacon – President

"5 February 2003

Dear John,

Thank you for your letter of 30th December to Alan Bearman. I do apologise that it's taken a long time to reply. Alan and I work in separate offices and we didn't actually meet up to discuss your letter until well after Christmas. Thanks for your observations and consideration. The points you raise are certainly interesting and have been raised by one or two others and I hope you'll forgive the standard reply in relation to the Workshop ticket enclosed within this letter.

WORKSHOPS FOR SEASON TICKET HOLDERS ONLY

In 2002 we introduced **Workshops for Season Ticket holders only**. We hoped to strengthen the value of Season Tickets for full week and day ticket holders by using this system. In addition, we recognise of course there are some people wishing to visit just for one day or indeed one workshop; some, for the whole week for which we made available books of workshop tickets.

These were best made available in books of 10 at the reduced rate of £60. They could be swapped around within friends, families and groups, and shared of course. We have had several requests from people asking for the book to be smaller next year and we are considering reducing it to 5 tickets.

Further, these Workshop Season Tickets gave the holder the same rights as the full week or day Season Ticket Holder, so making it easier for them to be able to get to their chosen Workshops, i.e. their commitment. to being there by buying those tickets gave them greater access and took away their need to queue as a non-ticket holder.

We have also found, in recent years an average of only 6 people per workshop have been

paying on the door for over 300 workshops and the administration back up to cater for those 6 is quite considerable. This involves floats, accounting, money checking, ticket queues being separated and staging issues. Clearly a little cumbersome for such a small number, though obviously we value all our customers.

In addition, to ease the problem in this first year, we encouraged stewards to make allowances in exceptional circumstances and take a donation from people who perhaps had travelled such a long way to attend. Sometimes this was successful and will be modified and firmed up for future years.

Regarding the Arena Showground, I'm in absolutely no doubt at all that this is one of the lowest budget tickets in the South West in the Summer season. To enter a Showground for a whole day for £4, free to children and senior citizens or free to someone holding a ticket for an Arena Theatre show has got to be a good deal. We offer site entertainment throughout the day, a "wonderful atmosphere" to quote a customer, free hands-on living craft area where people can join in and take part in making in traditional style, and in addition enjoy Market place, craft areas, music fair and the whole general buzz of the Showground atmosphere itself. Devon County Show is between £7 and £10 for entry, Honiton Show which runs about the same time between £6 and £10. We do exactly the same thing at Towersey Festival and have not one single customer telling us it's an unfair charge. I think what you may have latched on to here is the few local people who seem to think that charging them to go on the Knowle Arena is a problem. It's been banded in the press and talked about in the town for many years, but in fact most of our customers think it's a very fair and reasonable charge and one of the best family days out they can have. Putting a Festival of this size together is a colossal expense and to charge it back as a ticket at reasonable rates, which I honestly believe we do, is as you know one of the only means by which we can make it work. Funding for Folk Music still hasn't reached the mega deals that other music has achieved.

The support of the Morris Federation along with the many other organisations in the Folk movement is very much appreciated in Sidmouth and we hope we will continue to enjoy your custom, and that you will continue to enjoy the Festival.

Best wishes,
Steve Heap
Festival Director"

NEWSLETTER COPY DATES

SUMMER	1 st May,	for publication on 1 st June
AUTUMN	1 st August,	for publication on 1 st September
WINTER	1 st November,	for publication on 1 st December
SPRING	1 st February,	for publication on 1 st March

Performance Tutor Scheme

The purpose and background of this scheme are shown below. We have not been overwhelmed with applications yet! Are we all perfect? Can none of us improve or seek help to improve? **Now is the time to start thinking ahead. Get in contact with me now** to arrange for a tutor to visit you early on in you dancing out season. Who knows what transformations might be possible by the end of the summer?

At the AGM in 2001, ways of improving the standards of Morris were discussed. One idea was that established and respected foremen (both genders of course) could be requested by another team to work as tutors with them on their style and performance.

A typical job would be in two parts. The first would entail the tutor visiting the team while dancing out in their "natural habitat", which might be at their local pub or on someone else's day of dance. The tutor would observe and record (notes and / or video) on this first meeting, but not offer feedback. The second session could require a whole day's workshop. The purposes of the workshop would be as follows.

To offer both positive and negative criticism of the team's performance. This would address aspects such as:

- dance quality
- music quality
- interaction between musicians and dancers
- interaction with the audience
- team behaviour between dances
- interaction with other teams
- kit
- overall presentation of the team.

To offer some tuition and guidance to the team on:

- improvements to any aspect of the team's performance that is lacking
- maximising good features of any aspect of the team's performance
- helping develop an action plan for the team.

It is likely that the very act of inviting an objective observer to scrutinise a team will bring with it the will and the means of improving a team. The tutor will not be able to perform miracles alone! The candidates need to be fairly robust characters, but diplomacy is also vital. There is little point attacking that useless so and so dancing at No. 3! Nothing would be achieved. Tutors must be willing to travel reasonable distances and accept feedback themselves.

The Federation will offer a subsidy to assist in the travel (and other legitimate) expenses of the tutor. The subsidy level is currently 75% of expenses and car travel can be claimed at 15p/mile.

Adrian Williams

"Team Talk"

Cardiff Ladies Morris 'Christmas Crackers in Cardiff!'

'Twas cold and well, not frosty, just *cold* morning on the Saturday before Christmas, when Cardiff Ladies Morris avoided the last minute shopping frenzy and headed towards the Vale of Glamorgan Heritage Steam Railway on Barry Island. The reason? We had been invited to play some of "Santa's Little Helpers", to entertain the passengers who were taking a ride on the steam train to visit Santa's Grotto.

Well, it wasn't the warmest day to spend beside the seaside but it sounded an interesting prospect. Moreover, one of our team was doubling as "Mrs Santa" and playing host on the train rides themselves. "And when you see



Santa, don't forget to ask him what he's putting in *my* stocking" was one of her favourite quips...not sure how Santa coped with that one in the sanctuary of his Grotto!

So there we were, complete with Santa hats and Mark our musician all set to play us through our repertoire to some carefully adapted Christmas carols. The day was certainly different. The punters were, well, a little younger than our usual audiences and certainly not old enough to drink beer! They also presented a very short attention span unless there was an opportunity to join in or be in the band. And we did have some competition from the "Thomas the Tank" video which was playing in the foyer. Then there was the moment when we caused complete congestion on the platform...

But in spite of that, and an interesting collection with the remains of pocket money plus tiddlywinks, chewing gum and assorted remains from anorak pockets – it was one of those events with a real "feel good factor". Who knows, we may be invited back for the "Thomas the Tank Specials"...?

Sally Blake, aka Mrs Santa

Fiddle *on* magazine



Fiddle On magazine is an A5 sized publication aimed specifically at the UK fiddle player, and those interested in the fiddle. Published three times a year, in March, July and November each issue includes:

- feature articles
- tips on technique and style
- dates and details of workshops
- news, views and general chitchat from the UK fiddle scene
- CD and book reviews
- each issue contains two pages of music notation

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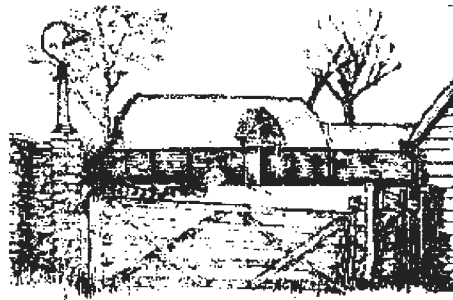
Address _____

Send this completed coupon to:
Fiddle On magazine, 4 Lee Close, Kidlington, Oxford OX5 2XZ

MorrisFed

Wantage Weekend Workshop - New and Old Directions
Friday 17th to Sunday 19th October 2003
A Gourmet Weekend of Morris, Eating, Drinking and Partying

It is only 8 months to go until the workshop! I have not forgotten to organise it - fear not! The usual arrangements will generally apply, i.e. the weekend starts on Friday night with dinner, dancing and even a drink at the **Ridgeway Youth Hostel**, on the downs above **Wantage**. There is a full day and evening at the wonderful old **Lain's Barn** on Saturday, with more until teatime on the Sunday. The caterers will provide sumptuous food and apparently endless supplies of beer, wine and cider should be on hand. Sparkling conversation, wit, music and debate will continue into the small hours.



Lain's Barn

The programme may well include the following, but these are not yet cast in stone.

Border by Rogue
Yorkshire Morris
Welsh fair dances
Scrambled Bampton
Badby or Brackley by Windsor
Contemporary Cotswold by Stroud Ladies
Ascott-under-Wychwood as danced by Downes on Tour
Historic Cotswold Talk & maybe a re-creation workshop
Marston - a contemporary novel style by Redbornstoke Morris
And who knows what guest turns we may yet have.

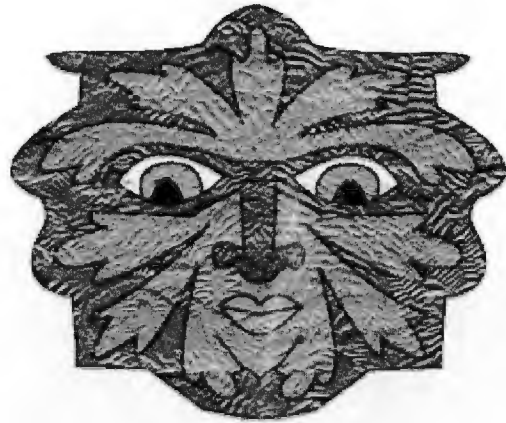
The cost? Well, some costs have risen since last time, but it should be about **£69**, including food and accommodation. Sad to say, the drink is extra, but more or less at cost. Reduced rates for those who prefer B&B are available. Please note that the hostel has some smaller rooms, which may encourage some to opt for it rather than go for B&B. I try to meet all needs!

We need at least 40 people to attend and stay at the Ridgeway Hostel to guarantee that we can have the place to ourselves. So, sign up now!

Send me a £10 deposit by 11 April 2003 to secure a place. Please send the balance by 1st August 2003. We do have to pay for the hostel in instalments, so that advance payment helps the cash flow considerably. Make cheques payable to "The Morris Federation" please.

Updates will be made and other information will be made available on the *trips-off-the-tongue-so-easily* web site at: <http://adrian-williams.members.beeb.net/www-2003.htm>

Express interest or whatever by e-mail or Royal Mail or telephone.
adrian-williams@beeb.net, 20 Verne Drive, Ampthill, BEDFORD, MK45 2PS, 01525 406332



May Day

Celebration Register

Team	Style	Date	Time	Place	Contact	Details
Chorlton Green Morris	North West	1st May	5.00am	Alderley Edge	Lesley Blackshaw	0161 4275705
Cogs and Wheels	Cotswold	1st May	sun rise	9 Maidens Stone Circle, Belstone, Dartmoor	Fiona Elsworth	01566 784646
Dead Horse Morris	Kentish Blackface	1st May	sun rise	Whitstable Harbour East Quay	Chris Janes	01227 264851
Ditchling Morris	Cotswold/Border	1st May	5.30am	Lodge Hill, Ditchling	Annie Vail	01273 844454
England's Glory Ladies Morris	Cotswold	1st May	sun rise	Top of May Hill, Glos.	Peter Cripps	01452 780401
Flag Crackers of Craven	Border	1st May	sun rise	Redcar Tarn, Keighley, W. Yorks.	George Speller	07970 770704
Glorishears of Brummagen	Cotswold	1st May	sun rise	Barr Beacon, Aldridge, Walsall	Gill Brookes	01922 639338
Hereburgh Morris	Cotswold	1st May	5.00am	Chesterton Windmill, Warks.	Avril Smolders	01926 832598
Mad Jack's	Cotswold	1st May	sun rise	LadiesParlour, Hastings West Hill	Ron Gray	01424 719758
Mockbeggar Morris	North West	1st May	4.30am	Thurstaston Hill	Mrs. S. Powell	0151 3426963
Off Spring Morris	Cotswold	1st May	5.00am	Box Hill, Kingston, Surrey	Roger Green	020 8 64419979
Owlswick	Cotswold	1st May	5.30am	Rollright Stones, Chipping Norton	Julie Webb	01295 788247
Singleton Cloggers	North West	3rd May	11.00am	The Square, Poulton-Le-Fylde	Barrie Parker	01253 395251
Wickham Morris	Cotswold/Border	1st May	5.15am	The Square, Wickham, Hamps.	Yvonne Wheeler	01489 892911
Winterbourn Down Border Morris	Border	1st May	4.45am	Brandon Hill, Bristol	Linda Harley	0117 9622111

WHITE ROSE MORRIS MEN



Formed in 1953, White Rose Morris Men are celebrating their 50th anniversary next year with a series of events and activities: a CD featuring past and present musicians playing pure Morris toons (we're trying to think of a title: Waitrose - Son of Morrison?); a rare attendance at a Ring Meeting (yes, we know....boooo!!!); the usual dinners, tours, etc; and a week-end bash in September featuring shedloads of dancing, dreyloads of beer, a cracking Saturday night ceilidh and (traditional) really stupid Sunday morning games.



White Rose has been a bastion of the South Midlands style of morris dancing in that far northern Cotswold village of Huddersfield since 1953 and have, like many sides, waxed and waned over the years. We are currently starting to wax again after a longish wane and we view our anniversary celebrations as the kick-start to a new era.

If anyone in the West Yorkshire area fancies coming along to a practice, we meet at Marsh Liberal Club (listed in the CAMRA Good Beer Guide), New Hey Road, Huddersfield from 8-10 each Wednesday evening.

Richard Fowler, Bagman, White Rose

We will be holding our 50th anniversary weekend from Friday 26 to Sunday 28 September 2003.



May Day

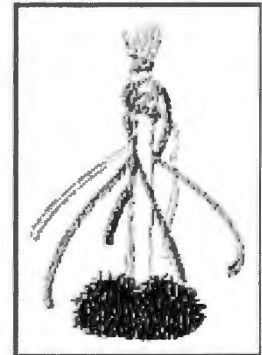
In this issue you will notice several references to May Day...the Jack in the Green front cover, the May Day Celebration register and this article. The information contained in this article has been adapted from information taken from the Internet (with revisions by Keith Leech).

The international working class holiday, May Day, originated in pre-industrial Europe. It was a festive day celebrating the first spring planting. At this time of year the ancient Celts celebrated 'Beltane' or the day of fire. Bel was the Celtic god of the sun.

The Saxons began their May Day celebrations on the eve of May, April 30. It was an evening of games and feasting celebrating the end of winter and the return of the sun and fertility of the soil. Torch bearing peasants and villagers would wind their way up paths to the top of tall hills or mountain crags and then ignite wooden wheels which they would roll down into the fields.

The May eve celebrations were eventually adopted by the church as were the May games, or ales, which were very popular in Tudor times and included Morris dancing. The Betley Window (famous for containing a very early representation of morris dancers) (originally in Staffordshire but now in the V&A Museum) may well depict one of these May games. They were looked upon badly by the Puritans and Protestant churches as not relevant to a religious or pious way of life, but were still celebrated by peasants until the late 1700's. While good church going folk would shy away from joining in the celebrations, those less afraid of puritan authority would don animal masks and various costumes, not unlike our modern Halloween. More recently adopted by nee Pagans this night became known in Europe as Walpurgisnacht, or night of the witches

The Celtic tradition of May Day in the British Isles continued to be celebrated through-out the Middle Ages by rural and village folk. The two most popular feast days for Medieval craft guilds were the Feast of St. John, or the Summer Solstice and May Day. May Day was a raucous and fun time, electing a queen of the May from the eligible young women of the village, to rule the crops until harvest. Besides the selection of the May Queen was the raising of the Maypole, around which the young single men and women of the village would dance holding on to the ribbons until they became entwined, with their (hoped for) new love.



And of course there was Robin Goodfellow, or the Green Man who was the Lord of Misrule for this day. May Day was a celebration of the common people, and Robin would be the King/Priest/Fool for a day. Priests and Lords were the butt of many jokes, and the Green Man and his supporters; mummers would make jokes and poke fun of the local authorities.

Over a hundred years ago many places in Britain celebrated the coming of Summer with a Jack in the Green. Jack was part of the May Day celebrations, often associated with processions of chimney sweeps or milk maids dancing with a garland, for whom the occasion was a special holiday. But who was 'Jack in the Green'? Records from Victorian times describe him as a colourful figure decorated with rags. He may have evolved from the milk maids' garlands. Today's Jack is usually around eight feet tall, covered in greenery and flowers – a "bush on legs". He usually has a group of dancers and musicians accompanying him as he offers good luck and fertility to the crowds. Jack

in the Green celebrations can be seen in several parts of the UK today, including Hastings and Bristol.

Other 21st Century May Day celebrations include Sweeps Processions, Hobby Horse Processions, Carols in Oxford, Maypole Celebrations, Church Garland Ceremonies, Beltane and of course the hundreds of Morris dancers and musicians that welcome in the Spring at sunrise on May morning. The latter has become traditional by many teams, although its origin is probably no older than the 20th Century.



Workshop Review

North West Morris – 25/1/03

Run and hosted by Mortimer's Morris, Nottingham

Mortimer's Morris and the Mortimer's Band welcomed us all to a full day workshop, to learn one of their own dances performed with slings. We looked forward to:

- 1 – meeting friends old and new
- 2 – learning an original dance that would expand our style and repertoire
- 3 – getting some exercise
- 4 – having fun!

We achieved all of this and were fed and watered to a high standard too – all home-made.

There were 5 of us from Sgt.Musgraves Dance (the venue looked very familiar – we use it for our practise night!) with other experienced dancers from near and far (enough to make 4 sets) and ably instructed / supported by members of Mortimer's.

Instruction was sensibly preceded by warm-up (how many teams do this?) before morning and afternoon sessions. Sheila led the teaching and was supported by other members coaching from

the side, demonstrating or joining in. Figures were given clear, patient explanations and time was given for repetitive practise to help the learning process.

We had the chance to catch up with news, write notes, ask questions and at the end have a bit of general dancing to the band with Vicky calling.



Thanks to Mortimer's for a successful, productive and enjoyable day – we were well looked after and felt welcome.

Sgt.Musgrave's will acknowledge the source of this dance during their dancing out season and hope the other teams will too.

Workshops like this are worthwhile for sharing what we do well – dance and music.

Celia Dyson, Sgt. Musgraves

Comments from the day:

- challenging and difficult dance well taught
- brilliant. a super dance
- excellent choices, plenty available, nourishing (food!)
- well organised, friendly and accommodating
- it was an excellent day in all aspects. I don't think improvements could be made
- happiness is a good workshop, and I'm happy.

Morris Federation AGM and Day of Dance

A Weekend in Shropshire 26th-28th September



The Ironmen and Severn Gilders will be hosting this year's Morris Federation AGM. The weekend will be based in **Much Wenlock** with a full range of events starting on Friday evening and going through to Sunday lunchtime and the AGM itself.

Saturday Dance Tours

Venues around Shropshire will probably include:

- Bridgnorth
- Coalport China Museum
- Blists Hill Victorian Town
- Shrewsbury
- Coalbrookdale

The day will culminate in a procession along the banks of the River Severn in **Ironbridge**, with a chance for all teams to dance on Abraham Darby's World Famous **Iron Bridge**.

Grand Ceilidh

Dance the evening away with one of the country's leading bands **All Blacked Up**, along with one of the UK's best-known callers **Dave Hunt**.

Shropshire Folk Concert

And if you want a rest from dancing, there will be a concert of Shropshire-based musicians and singers: **Cuckoo Oak**, **Bill Caddick** and **John Kirkpatrick**.

Workshops

Sunday morning will see two workshops prior to the AGM itself. So you have a choice of **Border Morris** or **North-West Morris**.

Children's Entertainment

If there's sufficient demand there will also be a children's workshop on Sunday morning.

Make a long Weekend of It

Shropshire is a well-kept secret we try to keep to ourselves! Thousands of people drive straight through on their way to Wales, so why not come for a couple of extra days and see what they're missing?

Ironbridge Gorge Museum

Based in the Birthplace of Industry, this complex of eight museums is world-renowned. With the recently opened interactive **Enginuity**, it has been named **Best Family Attraction** by the Good Britain Guide 2003.

Severn Valley Railway

Britain's longest preserved steam railway, running from Bridgnorth to Kidderminster. If that wasn't enough in itself, it will be hosting its own **Beer Festival** this weekend!

Wonderful Walking Country

We will be based at the very end of **Wenlock Edge**, which leads down towards the beautiful South Shropshire Hills including **The Long Mynd**, **Caer Caradoc**, **The Stiperstones** and **The Clew Hills**.

Mediæval Shrewsbury

Set in an almost completely closed loop of the River Severn, the county town boasts a host of timber-framed buildings and a maze of mediæval streets.

Gastronomic Delights

Anyone who reads the Sunday supplements will know that **Ludlow** has gained a reputation as one of Britain's leading destinations for lovers of good food. If you can't afford the Michelin-rated restaurants, then content yourself by wandering around the myriad of specialist food shops.

Invitations and booking details will be sent to all Federation members shortly. In the meantime, if you don't know who The Ironmen and Severn Gilders are, visit www.ironmenandseverngilders.org. For further information, e-mail fedagm@ironmenandseverngilders.org or phone Chris on 01952 884269. And if you don't know where Shropshire is, visit www.virtual-shropshire.co.uk!

Dancers' Diary and Events

MARCH 2003

15

Mortimer's Morris. Grand Ceilidh with the Mortimer's Band. Wollaton Village Hall, Nottingham. Contact Carole 0115 9284888 for tickets.

22

Mortimer's Morris. Guest of the Fabulous Fezheads at the Fig and Date Fayre, Penistone, Yorkshire.

APRIL 2003

18 – 21

Mortimer's Morris. Dancing at the Brandivy Festival, France.

MAY 2003

3

Three Shires NW & Garland. With Harthill Morris, Barnsley Centre am, Cannon Hall pm.

JUNE 2003

20 – 22

Caversham Charity Folk Festival. Please consider this worthy cause as part of next year's dance programme, and help to raise money for charity.

If you want to take part contact Monty on 01276-620817 or monty@yateleymm.freereserve.co.uk.

Teignmouth Mid-Summer Folk Festival. All interested teams get in contact with Martin Gosling at marting@goslingm.freereserve.co.uk.

27 – 29

Three Shires NW & Garland. Armagales Folk Weekend. Info from Lesley Ellam l.ellan@shu.ac.uk

JULY

11 – 13

Foxs Morris. Fox Trot 2003, Bretforton, Evesham. Email m_de_vine@hotmail.com for full details.

Scarborough Fayre Morris Dance Festival 27 - 29 June 2003

All sides/part sides welcome.
Details from : wbostock@mistral.co.uk
Tel/Fax: 01723 350078

Bishop's Castle Folk Weekend, Shropshire 13 – 15 June 2003

Contact: Sally Vowles
Phone: 01588 638438
email: thelemonadelady@hotmail.com

www.bcfolkweekend.co.uk

Chester Folk Festival

FRI. 23rd MON. 26th MAY 2003
(SPRING BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND)

Many national & local guests including:

The John Wright Band
The Old Rope String Band
Strawhead · Tim Laycock · Xim
The Simon Care Trio · Louis Killen
Joe Broughton & Kevin Dempsey
James Keelaghan & Hugh McMillan

CONCERTS, CEILIDHS, WORKSHOPS
SINGAROUNDS, DISPLAYS, CRAFT FAIR,
CHILDREN'S EVENTS

All enquiries (SAE please) to:-
21 Dee Fords Avenue, Chester, CH3 5UP
www.chesterfolk.freereserve.co.uk

01352 762931

"Team Talk"

Poynton Jemmers in Germany 23rd – 26th August 2002

Some time ago, Poynton Jemmers were approached by Macclesfield Borough Council to see if we would be interested in taking part in the 700-year festival of the founding of Eckernforde, Macclesfield's twin town in Germany.

Having decided that we could raise a team, travel arrangements and negotiations over accommodation seemed to take for ever, but were efficiently handled by our leader, Chris Conway and her husband, Brian. At last our party of 13 dancers and 5 musicians set off from Manchester Airport on Friday 23rd August, for the short flight to Hamburg, then by train to Eckernforde. Three Jemmers opted to go the long way round by ferry.

On arrival, we were taken to our accommodation at the naval base, which was spacious and comfortable, although the door-less showers took some getting used to!

Eckernforde is a holiday resort on the Baltic Sea coast and we'd imagined it to be rather cool and breezy but the weather was gloriously hot for the whole of our stay. After some Jemmers had taken a refreshing dip in the Baltic, it was time for a barbecue with performers from Eckernforde's other twin towns and with our guide, Christiane. After the meal, we were taken to the harbour, where the festival market was in full swing, complete with a revolving bar – a carousel that was really a pub – what a good idea!

The following morning we gathered in the Kirchplatz for our first dance display and attracted an appreciative audience. After lunch in a local community centre, we were taken on a coach tour of the town, ending with a walk through the magnificent Kurpark. Then it was time to prepare for our display at the dance festival on the harbour stage. From the wings we watched the other groups' performances. The dance club of Eckernforde gave a display of modern jive then groups from the other twin towns performed. There were three excellent young musicians from Hasselholm in Sweden, a modern dance group from Brzeg in Poland and a children's song and dance group from Nakskov in Denmark, who performed their version of 'The Little Match Girl'.



We started our performance with our signature dance, Poynton Green, followed by Mobberley and Reddish. Our clogs made a great sound on the wooden stage and we were the only group to use live music, so our performance was very much appreciated.

In the evening, we had a relaxing drink and buffet aboard the Seebad Borby, a pleasure cruiser moored in the harbour.

We had a free morning on Sunday and several of us chose to spend it at a beachside café, drinking coffee and eating apple cake with cream in order to build ourselves up for the

grand procession which took place that afternoon. This was certainly the longest (and possibly the hottest!) procession that Poynton Jemmers have ever taken part in. The whole town seemed to

Argarameles Clog Morris

'Argarameles Day of Dance' is June 27th to 29th 2003 held in the North West seaside town of Southport, most of the dancing takes place on the new plaza outside the Town Hall on Lord Street a fine example of Victorian arcades and verandas. The plaza is very flat and a super dance surface. We also use the promenade and even our Victorian pier that has just been re opened after being restored. We camp at an excellent venue a few miles inland where we can provide a good camp site, breakfasts, showers, a ceilidh & pub sessions in a real ale pub. If you fancy a weekend at the seaside contact George Garside 01704-871430 george.garside@talk21.com or see our website for photo's of the Kendal weekend or our Day of Dance. You may even get to see the sea!

turn out for it, either as participants or spectators. Every club and society in Eckernforde, from the Chess Club to the Allotment Society was represented, including all the groups from the twin towns. The procession made its way along the promenade (which had been renovated to celebrate the 700-year anniversary) then went round the town centre. We danced our processional version of Worth Clough. We had thought that, being a very large procession, it would be a very slow one, but it proceeded at a cracking pace and we needed all our energy to keep going. Dancing to avoid the deposits of the horses further on in the procession added extra interest! The crowd were wonderful – they clapped along in time to the music and really encouraged us. Thanks are also due to Brian, our water carrier, without whom we would never have made it.

Later that day, on the harbour stage, Chris presented the Mayor of Eckernforde with a gift from the Jemmers then we gave our final performance. At last we could peel off our sweaty kit and clogs, then it was back to the Seebad Borby for a trip into the bay to watch

a magnificent firework display – the grand finale to the festival.

The following morning, we said goodbye to Eckernforde and a special goodbye and thank you to Christiane, who had done a wonderful job of 'minding' us for the past three days.

A few weeks later, we were invited to the Mayor's Parlour in Macclesfield Town Hall, to receive a certificate marking our participation in the festival.

To sum up, it was a wonderful weekend that we will remember forever. We had such a warm reception and an enthusiastic audience in the people of Eckernforde. It was really interesting to meet the performers from the other twin towns and to experience their musical style. It was certainly well worth all the months of planning and organising to take our tradition of north-west morris to Germany. Where can we go next?

Tricia Gallimore, Poynton Jemmers

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Morris Dancing In Schools



In the last edition of the Newsletter I promised to include some of the letters that people had written in response to Rachel's piece about Children and Morris in schools in the Autumn 2002 Newsletter. What follows are extracts from these articles which are very inspirational:

"I was interested in the piece Rachel Pinkney wrote about Morris dancing in schools and junior sides. For many years 'Maenads' had a children's side (5 - 12 year olds) and some of our best current dancers were involved with the 'Maids of Kent' as they were known. Unfortunately about 3 years ago this junior side folded through lack of members and although we would love to start it up again none of our current dancers have children young enough.

In an effort to keep the side going, another Maenad and myself started to visit a couple of local primary schools to run 'after school' Morris dance and maypole clubs. These were warmly welcomed by the schools and were successful in the interest they generated in the children but unfortunately not many parents were willing to wait for their offspring after hours on a regular basis, or to make special journeys to collect them or take them to or from special events.

Morris dance can be included within the curriculum in the same way as any other dance is included within the PE timetable but more often than not teachers are not familiar with the dance technique and experienced dancers have their own jobs during lesson time. I am myself a teacher but cannot take classes in school because my timetable is full teaching my own subject.

Unlike country dance or modern dance an element of commitment is needed to master Morris dance techniques and it is this time that it takes to learn that is prohibitive. I'm not sure what the answer is but I know that I have personally tried to keep clubs going in three schools and it wasn't complacency by the schools that led to our attempts failing - they fell over themselves to provide equipment such as kit and maypoles and bells!

My most successful efforts were during my time helping at a local Brownie Pack. Our 'Brownie Belles' were very popular at local fetes and even now I have moved on, one of our Maenad musicians is still keeping the girls dancing and the brown and yellow tatters are still being used! The Hatfield house Children's Festival sounds wonderful - maybe more events like this with special categories for Morris Dance could help promote interest amongst youngsters.

Trisha Payne, Maenads".



"...Morris dancing is taught in our local school in Witney, at an after school club, and has been for over five years now. Our foreman, some 18 years ago, taught Morris at Queens Dyke School for a while. I also taught Morris there a few years later...Later I was asked to teach Morris dancing at West Witney School. We had a weekly class of an hour that proved very successful with an average of 20 children, some of which went on to join Queen Emma's. I finished teaching Morris there...but the class is still going strong. Over the past five years the children have danced in Witney town centre, with Queen Emma's and other adult Morris sides, collecting money for childrens' charities and Breast Cancer charity. They also attend a yearly event at the Town Hall in Oxford along with other children from schools in Oxfordshire, where they dance Morris, Maypole and Country dancing all day. The Morris dancing class is taken by Headington Quarry Morris Men and held in March.

Chris Clements, Queen Emma's".



"I teach at Hawthorn Community Primary School and every year we celebrate both May Day and Midsummer Solstice with Folk, Maypole and Morris dancing, performed by Key Stage 1 and 2 children.

Our Morris teams are called The Hawthorn Horrors, who dance border, and The Mayflowers, who dance North West dances. These are usually comprised Year 6 children and we practise after school for an hour per team from February to May. The Horrors (boys and girls) wear multi-coloured rag waistcoats, white tee-shirts and jeans and have black faces. The Mayflowers (girls) have black skirts, white blouses, a green sash and a flowery crown.

We also dance at the annual school Fayre and go into the town centre for a busk during the summer. I play melodeon for the dances along with some percussion and drums played by the dancers. Our repertoire consists of versions of Dilwyn, Brimfield, Pershore and a border dance that I invented for The Horrors. The Mayflowers dance various North West figures put to tunes such as Donkey Riding. They are also pretty hot at the Plymouth Three Hand Reel plus a Garland Dance that I also invented. We use single step for both teams, plus a polka step for The Mayflowers. I always get an excellent response from the children and sometimes have an over-abundance of recruits; I try my best to fit everyone in.

On May Day we have a King and Queen, a Town Crier and Jack in the Green; all of the Key Stage 1 children take part, even the toddlers from the Play School!...parents come to watch and also the older children whilst we process through the playground to the Helston May Day tune. On Midsummer Day, Key Stage 2 children dance for the younger children and for parents; each class presents a dance which includes Maypole and the Morris teams.

Linda Dix, Witchmen".



"My son is at Selwyn Junior School in Highams Park. In July they had a multicultural event over 2 evenings and I went into school a few afternoons to teach a group of children Morris dancing. We did a version of Blackrod for eight dancers and a garland dance called Bean Knot for six dancers. They were extremely quick at learning the dances, especially Bean Knot. They wore black trousers, white tops and crepe paper sashes. Our melodeon player came to play on both evenings and we have one interested parent who will hopefully come along to join us, as a result of this event.

Last year I was also involved with the Borough annual folk (country) dancing event. Each school learns 2 dances plus a massed dance. Each school learns a dance (usually country, but I was approached to teach Morris) and then they display it to the others who have to watch carefully as they they all have a go. The playground was then full of groups from other schools all having a go at a massed Morris dance.

I know that these are 'one off' occasions....but I do think that it does introduce the children to Morris dancing and they really enjoy it. And when ten year old boys tell you Morris dancing is 'really cool' they must be having a good time.

Wendy Wright, Blackhorse and Standard".



"Linda Corlett has run a children's side (not school-based) for five years. They were North West but now dance border as well. Based in Swanage they have of course danced at Wimborne and Swanage, but also Weymouth and Dartmoor.

Gordon Reddell".

Thank you to all those that contributed their time to share their experiences with us. If you enjoyed reading this article and you have done something similar, then why not write in and let the rest of the Morris-world know about it?! (My address is on the Contacts page)...Ed.



Kendal's Torchlight Procession 13th September 2002

In the Winter 2002 newsletter there was a review of Westmorland Step and Garland's 25th Anniversary Celebration Weekend. I was sent 3 reviews of this weekend and due to shortage of space could only feature 1. The following review features extracts from the other 2.

As the final event for their 25th birthday celebrations, the Westmorland Step Garland Dancers hosted a National Weekend of Dance, over the weekend of 13th/14th 15th September. Twelve teams assembled, from as far a field as Sussex, and joined the local team in Kendal's Torchlight Procession.

This Annual event, on a Friday evening in early September, is a great spectacle in itself; it is almost two miles long with over a hundred entries, including horse drawn and steam vehicles, large floats, street entertainers and many different bands.

Ken & Kathy Trimmer

The torch-light procession is a well-known event in the North of England, especially in the Lake District, part of Kendal Gathering.

All of the 100 or so entries parade the streets of the old market town of Kendal, criss-crossing the river Kent around most of the town centre.

The parade begins at dusk, around 8.30 pm, and lasts about 2 hours, wax torches are carried by those on foot in each

group – quite a spectacle. The whole route is lined by thousands of enthusiastic onlookers including hundreds of children, all waving cheering and waving light sticks, all adding to the carnival atmosphere.



We were invited by Westmorland Step & Garland along with the other Morris teams taking part, this group included the Federation President and his wife who was dressed in a wonderful dragon costume.

The evening culminated for the dance teams in a supper and informal session at the Brewery Arts Centre in Kendal. Our team 'The Argarmeles Clog,' from Southport, along with other teams had been invited for the weekend, the procession was just the start.

The next day was usual Day of Dance format, coaches to deliver us to various dance venues. The weather was glorious for late September; Brockhole Visitor Centre was our first stop, dancing on the terrace with the Lake District hills as a backdrop. Next stop

Bowness where we danced by the lake before lunch, after this we took the steamer and sailed up Windermere to Ambleside. Where the coach was waiting to take us to Hawkeshead, a super little village with church and pubs clustered round the square, where we danced on the cobbles, before retuning to Kendal by coach for a short rest before the evenings festivities got under way. We had a super meal followed by a ceildh. The final day, Sunday was spent at the Brewery Art Centre dancing outside, a most enjoyable weekend.

Linda Brown (Argarmeles Clog)

PEL UPDATE February 18 2003

A clause which would have made it an offence for musicians to perform at an unlicensed venue has been dropped from the controversial bill, currently going through parliament.

The culture minister, Kim Howells, said that the bill should help promote live music in Britain's pubs, clubs and community halls - not kill it, as the Musicians' Union has claimed.

"Our principle is clear - we want to spread live music. The licensing bill will do that," said Mr Howells.

"I want to ensure the bill is enforced with a heavy dose of common sense on the ground. I hope the music world, local authorities and the industry will take the opportunity to help shape the guidance and make sure this happens."

"Team Talk"

Powder Kegs

It's not as easy as it looks!

That's what you could say about starting up a Border Morris side. The idea of was born through watching other sides on various weekends and days out with Chapel-en-le-Frith Morris men (the most hyphenated side out). Some of us groupies and dancers started thinking that we would like to "have a go at that". The next idea was to find a side to join, we are unfortunate that in North Derbyshire, few have heard of Border and the nearest side was a long way over the hills. So we came to the conclusion that to dance Border would mean setting up a side of our own. We got talking to Flagcrackers by e-mail and were invited to a tutorial one Saturday afternoon in September 2001. They were great they taught us Hey up Joe and Upton stick, fed us, gave of lots of ideas and encouragement and we travelled back to Derbyshire full of enthusiasm. We had persuaded Ian, (one of Chapel's men) to act as temporary foreman as he had danced a bit of border in the past. We had a merry band of 12 men, women and youngsters which seemed adequate to get going.

We practised weekly all through the winter and began to discuss a name and a theme for our kit. We live in a beautiful valley on the edge of the Peak district and it was to here we looked for inspiration. Back in the 19th century there had been a gunpowder mill that had supplied explosives for the quarries and mines in the locality. Now this was just as we needed and the Powder Kegs were born. We could use the colours of fire in our rag jackets and had good reason to be 'blackened up' as there had been several accidents over the years of producing explosives. We chose red and yellow as our main colours for rags and allowed members to add their own colour to this. We decided upon black shirts and Top hats to finish the 'look'. We would have liked to dance in clogs but as some families had four members it was a big expense to start out with. We had our first dance out on Jubilee Tuesday at two pubs in the Peak park, we didn't tell them



how inexperienced we were, we had six dances that we knew reasonably well. It was terrifying for those of us who had never danced and frightening for those who had as the side had no experienced Border dancers. We had an excellent response from the public and within a few weeks were feeling more confident.

Chapel-en-le-Frith Morris (five of our dancers belong to both sides) had a late invitation to Conwy in June and it was suggested that we go along to dance as many of us would accompany them anyway. Dancing in front of the public was one thing, but in front of other dancers didn't fill us with confidence. Well we went and had an excellent weekend, with good company, excellent facilities and the weather was perfect. We did our best and managed with some of the side 'cross dressing as Cotswold' which entailed a quick change of kit prior to the next dance. This is not an ideal way to spend a weekend as they had little time to catch their breath let alone having two squires bidding for their attention. This was certainly throwing yourself in at the deep end but proved valuable experience and we made it into the local paper (even if they did spell our names wrong).

One problem over the summer was building up stamina, not straining ourselves too much (thank goodness for tubigrip and ralgex) as our replacement dancers don't exist. We also found that we needed a good range of dances when on a weekend or day out, as it was embarrassing when you soon got through your repertoire. We continued to dance into the summer joining Chapel-en-le-Frith Morris men on their day of dance in Buxton (a very wet, cold affair), and joined with the Glossop Victorian weekend in August hosted by Milltown cloggies. We also danced with the Poynton Jemmers in Macclesfield. We have had a lot of fun dancing this year and have learned a lot especially when dancing with more experienced sides.

Where are we now? We have had problems in attracting more dancers and musicians, we are conscious that we are relying on our youngsters for numbers which is fine while they have been enthusiastic. We have raised a side from love of dance a lot of hard work and tremendous support from the many dancers we have met. We are back practising and adding new dances and improving the ones we have. We are looking forward to a second season (well we have paid our MF subscription).



So as a final note – ‘Wanted desperately: any new members or advice’.

Therese Kennett, Powder Kegs

JOB VACANCY

**PRESIDENT
of the
Morris Federation**

*for further details
please find the job
description under
‘Committee News’
(page 7)*

JOB VACANCY

**ARCHIVE OFFICER
for the
Morris Federation**

*for further details
please find the job
description under
‘Committee News’
(page 7)*

"Team Talk"

Buttercross Belles' Warm Summer Memories in Switzerland 2002

The Buttercross Belles is a women's, north-west Morris side from Otley in West Yorkshire. One of our team is a regular visitor to Lauterbrunnen in the Bernese Oberland and asked us in 2001 if we would like to dance there. After a definite 'yes' was given in reply there then followed several months of e-mails, letters and videos flowing between Lauterbrunnen and Otley.



So it was that we all arrived one Thursday evening in July 2002 and found ourselves within a short space of time embroiled in a rehearsal with the local dance team in preparation for a folklore concert the following night. During the winter months we had each learnt one of the other's dances and duly performed them together at the concert.

It was a night to remember! We were preceded by giant cowbell ringers, flag throwers and yodelers, but at the risk of seeming immodest, the biggest and most

enthusiastic applause was for the Belles. It was truly exhilarating.

We then had two days of dancing up mountains and down valleys whilst experiencing every ingenious form of transport that Switzerland has to offer. The weekend had all the ingredients for it to be a complete success. Stunning scenery, hot dry weather, warm hospitality and large enthusiastic audiences, not to mention convivial evenings involving free flowing food and drink.

We have so far had two trips to Normandy and one to Switzerland. The question is, 'Where next in 2004?' So far Belgium, Greece, Russia and France have been mentioned—the world is our oyster!

*Louise Wilson
Buttercross Belles Squire*

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