



Newsletter Winter 2008

**THE FEDERATION AGM IN SKIPTON
AMPLIFICATION - VIEWS FOR AND AGAINST
PERSEPHONE AT THIRTY
STRANGERS IN THE NIGHT
PEL AS CLEAR AS A BELL**



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NEWSLETTER COPY DATE

Contributions for the Spring Newsletter to the Newsletter editor by

Saturday 14th February 2009

newsletter@morrised.org.uk

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

To all Secretaries, Squires, Bag people, etc.

NEWSLETTER

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

MEMBERS' MANUAL

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

ADVERTISING

The 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.

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EDITORIAL

Preparing this issue two items on the TV set me thinking. The first was "Steeleye Span Night" on BBC4 this included a 30-minute programme from the 1970's featuring a spot by the Albion Morris Men. The introduction was "Probably few in the audience will ever have seen a morris team". Hopefully the intervening years have made that less true as the folk rock revolution seemed to spur many folk to get up and dance.

But how many teams that started out on that surge of interest are now reaching their 30th anniversaries and struggling to survive? The tradition lives on because teams owed as much to their connection with a community as to an excellence in technique. Teams drew on the generations of the community to refresh their dancing and keep the teams alive, passing the tradition down the years.

The second TV item was "Strictly Come Dancing". John Sargeant was obviously not the greatest dancer but the public warmed to him over more accomplished performers. Maybe it was the fact that he obviously enjoyed the challenge of dancing and always tried to deliver that made the performance catch the public imagination and votes.

So next time you see a less than amazing performance ask yourself if the team is trying and if the audience is with them. And just as importantly does the sense of a common enjoyment of dance come across? If these things are true then they just might be doing something right!

Doug

Printing

Next Issue

Front Cover Photograph

Outline Print Service Ltd, Colne, Lancashire
Spring 2009 (Copy date Saturday 14th February 2009)
Flagcrackers drummer in full flow at the 2009 AGM
Photo :Flagcrackers of Craven

President's Prologue

Sometimes I wonder what the blind spot is about this Licensing Act... how many of you out there seriously think that if teams continue using amplifiers there will not be a substantial problem at some point in time? I know it's a totally ludicrous piece of law! Whether you believe Morris should have an anarchic streak to it or not, it is still the Law.

We struggled to get the exemption, please **desist** from using **any** amplification no matter how small it is, how much fun you have racking up the sound, how individual it makes your band sound - unless you arrange a Temporary Event Notice (TEN) for whenever you are using amplified music or only perform in already licensed venues, you are in breach of the Licensing Act and are NOT covered by the exemption.

I don't keep mentioning it just for fun you know!

Remember your membership covers you for a full year, you get insurance cover during the practice season as well as when you are dancing out. Our insurance policy is a joint policy with the other two morris organisations, the Morris Ring and Open Morris; it's one of the benefits of all three organisations being in "The Joint Morris Organisation". We do talk over issues that affect us all as dancers irrespective of which organisation we may belong to.

It's also the JMO that backs the **Joint Day of Dance**, held biannually on a peripatetic basis.

Each organisation takes a turn to "host" (i.e. do the legwork of running it) the event.

This time round it's in the hands of Open Morris who are staging it in **Nottingham on 28th of March**. Last time the Morris Ring ran it in Birmingham.

We will pass on any information as we get it, but please keep an eye of the Open Morris website for updates. In the meantime although we (The Federation) are not involved in arranging it, I am beginning to keep a note of Federation teams who are interested.

Then when appropriate I can pass that onto Open Morris for the scheduling.

Nottingham is accessible by road rail and national bus services, has been used as a venue for DERT (the Dancing England Rapper Tournament) and has a number of active local sides.

It should be a good do!

So, if you are interested, please drop me an email and I will add your names to our list.

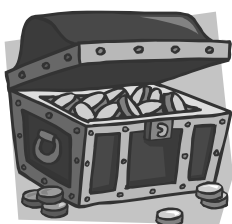
By the time you read this, the Federation representatives will have attended a conference at which hopefully more information on the new legislation regarding **Children and Vulnerable** people will have been discussed and clarified. We will report back on anything we learn.

The same conference (The AFO conference) also will be holding an update on the dreaded Olympics - although some are set against it, it is still worth trying to get as much representation as we can to promote our dance heritage.

Fancy promoting your own event or tours? Why not give a try to listing them, with dates and information, on the "Visit England" website!!! Some teams have managed to do this and it obviously gets very wide **National** publicity.

Trefor

COMMITTEE NEWS



TREASURER - Jenny Everett

Following the loss of this report to the ether, I have now enclosed the latest version for publication in the newsletter.

Treasurer Morris Federation - Annual Report 2008

A busy year again, hopefully you found renewal a smother process than last year. Certainly the Post Office seem to have lost slightly fewer mailings.

We have a record level of membership to date with 421 group members and 15 individuals. The Federation has, within its teams, 302 dancers under 16.

The money held at 31/12/07 was:

Deposit account	£30,220.87
Savings account	£ 1,472.80
Current account	£ 8,971.92
Petty cash	£ 17.11

Changing banks proved to be more hassle than expected, so the Federation accounts remain with the Alliance and Leicester.

Currently I see no need to increase membership subscriptions and recommend that they remain at the same level for the coming year.

The allowance for travel on Federation business has been increased to take into account rises in fuel prices (having not been changed for several years), it is now 25p per mile.

The major event of the year was the negotiation by Steve Adamson of the Morris Ring under the guise of 'BellsRUs'. Many thanks are due to him for his hard work on the behalf of all dancers. The result was delivery to my front door of a half pallet load of bells. So, we have plentiful stocks of new shiny bells at reasonable prices.

Sales of publications have been steady. The stock of Cotswold Glossaries ran out so, following the purchase of a comb binder, these are now being reprinted to order.



NEWSLETTER – Doug Bradshaw

Well another year coming to a close and the last edition of 208 coming together nicely. Some stirring stuff from the AGM in Skipton where amplification became a topic that seems ready to run and run. Some reaction to the piece from Sally Atkinson in the last issue on the subject of standards but surprisingly little. Maybe we're all happy with the world and accept that it's being part of rather than being the best that counts. Although in any given situation "our" team is always the best!

You will notice that this issue is short of a "Questions and Answers" item. That's down to me being incredibly slow at finding a subject for the piece. The good news is that Chris Pitt has shown an interest in answering those pertinent questions. The bad news is of course that given the short time span and the breadth of Chris's involvement's in the world of dance that the deadline has slipped past.

So next issue Chris Pitt will be in the spotlight. Who will it be for the summer issue? Once again the choice is yours dear readers. Or I could try and wrack my brains for an interesting subject within my span of experience. Or you could skip the false modesty and volunteer yourself – now there's a thought!

Finally a big thank you to all those who spotted the spelling glitch on the cover of the last issue. If it's in capitals my spell checker doesn't spot it. My human checker spotted it but I chose to ignore her – "plus câ change" as they say in Barnsley.

KEEPING UP THE STANDARDS



Dear Morris Federation,

With regard to Sally Atkinson's rant about standards in morris dancing, my only question is why she felt the need to add the self-deprecating postscript!

Sally, you don't need to defend your sense of humour, and I agree with (almost) every word. It is so depressing to see teams who think it's acceptable to present to the public ill-thought-out performances in tatty costumes.

It was interesting to read in the same newsletter an article by someone called Paul who apparently belongs to a morris side in France, and writes: 'In some cases it's more of a shuffle than a dance. But who cares? Having fun is what it's all about ...' Sorry Paul, but if having fun is your only objective then maybe you should confine your activities to the practice hall (if you have one). Personally I can't see what fun there is in doing something carelessly and badly (although that might just be me) and I dread to think what impression Paul's team is giving to its French audience.

Even though many of us belong to ageing teams, surely we can still take pride in working hard to be the best that we can be.

Love from Alice Walker

Foreman, Poynton Jemmers

BLACKING UP – TRADITIONAL BUT WRONG?

Dear Doug

I was rather sorry to read the responses in the autumn Newsletter to the appeal for information on 'blacking up', as I felt they did not really acknowledge the problem. I was especially saddened by the accusation of 'political correctness' levelled - it seemed indiscriminately - at those who would argue that the custom might be found offensive. The sad history, and modern reality, of racism is a complex and very sensitive issue. Just because an individual feels 'colour-blind' and intends no harm does not prevent him or her from being seen as derogatory. We know that the makeup disguises a white person - makes him unrecognisable, rather than attempts to pass him off as of another race - but the general audience does not know that.

An excellent analysis of the arguments was published in 'Morris Matters', Vol 22, No 1, back in 2003, in which 'Long Lankin' points out that Morris and Molly dancers cannot blacken their faces 'without regard to the audience and its perception of what is being portrayed', and argues that 'Living in a multi-cultural society is not a matter of being able to do what we want simply because it is traditional. Blacking-up may have been a harmless form of disguise in the past but to put forward such an argument today is either naive or disingenuous since it ignores wider social change of which the performer cannot be ignorant.' Bob

Dupre of Handsome Molly from Princeton, New Jersey, USA, points out that although spectators accepted the 'traditional' explanation when it was offered, 'many people of colour would not stay to hear the explanation.

We would arrive at a dance venue to find a multiracial crowd, but by the time we got to our introduction all the non-white people would be gone.'

His conclusion was 'I see no reason to get people upset because some old guys somewhere wore black makeup for some reason'. If you want to read the arguments for yourself, you can get back copies of 'Morris Matters' at a cost of £1 per issue from the editor, Beth Neill, 27 Nortoft Road, Chalfont St Peter, Bucks., SL9 0LA.






I know we can't live in dread of offending people - some people are all too easily offended - but we shouldn't dismiss the concerns of those with a different perspective

Thanks

Shirley Dixon

Editors Note: The perspective of a team in the USA on an English tradition might be influenced by that country's record on segregation into 1960's. However the current trend to elaborate face painting as a guise may eventually render the whole topic null and void.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR – E-MAILS TO THE EDITOR - LETTERS TO THE EDITOR – E-MAILS TO THE EDITOR

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Supporting Live Music across the UK

AGM 2008 - SKIPTON



October 4th dawned...no, not warm and dry, or sunny, even, but dull and damp. "Oh dear (or words to that effect)" said we. The day we'd been working towards (can't say looking forward to in all honesty!) had arrived. It had seemed a good idea, way back in January, to offer to host the AGM in Skipton and combine it with our 20th Anniversary. Many months and lots of, eventually, sorted out, problems later the 'Big Day' dawned... as above!

We managed, however, to dance all morning and most of the afternoon, as planned, despite the worsening weather. A BIG thank you to the 12 sides who joined us for this. So far, so good, we thought. Spirits fell when we arrived for the actual AGM, though, to see lots of soggy dancers and Federation 'officials' huddled under an archway trying to keep dry..."We can't get into the meeting rooms, there's another meeting still in progress". And so there was. A 'mix-up' over timings.

The AGM finally started a bit later than planned and with over 30 sides represented we felt relieved and not a little pleased with ourselves. Maybe last year's apathy stirred a few consciences and made more sides aware of the support the Federation and its officers (all volunteers) give to all forms of the Morris.

I'll not go into details of the actual meeting as I'm sure this will be recorded elsewhere, except to say that the consensus seemed to be that a one-day event is the way forward. It worked for us, and in retrospect was not too daunting, although we did quite a bit of networking and advertising at various festivals and weekends at which we danced during the year.

Again, MANY thanks to all the sides who danced or sent a representative to the meeting.

Chris Needham, on behalf of all Flagcrackers

PS. Sunday WAS warm and sunny. 4 more sides danced with us to celebrate our 20th. Thanks to them too. We (the Flagcrackers) were a bit more relaxed now that the 'official' day was over!!



AMPLIFICATION GOOD OR BAD?

After some feedback at the recent AGM / Flagcrackers 20th Birthday Dance out (thanks to Flagcrackers for a super do!), we felt compelled to write regarding the use of amplification when playing for dancing. Many Morris sides now use amplification of some sort, whether to make a solo artist heard, or to make use of electric guitars and bass.

Flash Company formed as a side nine years ago with very clear aims and views. All the founder members had already danced with other sides (and many still do), performing a wide range of traditions over a great number of years.

We aim to dance traditional, or traditional style dances, (many of our current dances are self penned or adapted) to tunes that are popular, familiar and accessible to the public. We wanted something the audience could identify and relate to.

Here lies the problem. The music that we play sounds better when amplified.

It is not a question of volume, (although some of the arrangements are improved by the quieter instruments being heard over melodeons), or playing in noisy urban settings. It is about the style of our music and the instruments we use; it is very hard to hear an un-amplified electric guitar!

When the current legislation regarding amplified music in public places came into force we thought long and hard about the implications for us. We know that on occasions we will perform on unlicensed premises and as such will be breaking the law. We also understand and accept the Morris Federation's views on this matter and realise that if we were ever prosecuted we would be on our own.

We have taken advice from our local environmental health department and have been told that as long as we accede to any reasonable request to stop using amps if ever requested to, we should not face a problem.

We always make sure that festivals and sides that invite us are aware that we play with amps and will, if asked, play without them (as we did this year at Chippenham Folk Festival).

We believe in high standards of performance, and we aim to perform interesting dances to a high standard. We care passionately about the continuation of traditional dance in its many forms in this country. We care about lines, stepping and uniformity of style within our dances but we also care about the performance.

We aim to produce interesting, accessible performances that might encourage people to think that traditional dance has some relevance to them. We are proud that we can keep an audience entertained in a shopping centre in Keighley on a cold Saturday afternoon and that many people ask us how they can get involved in Morris Dancing.

We live in Otley, a small market town in West Yorkshire (with a population of 15,000) which proudly boasts three Morris sides and an Appalachian dance side. The town has a thriving folk club, an annual folk festival and French dance festival.

Where we live, traditional dance and music is very much alive and a part of the life of our community.

We feel that Morris should be an evolving tradition, encompassing and acknowledging what went before us, but also looking at how we can take it forward to the next generation. We believe that we are part of a living continuing tradition that should have enough space in it for all.

Michael Ross - Flash Company

DEADLINE

Please send any contributions
for the Spring 2009
Newsletter to the editor by
Saturday 14th February
2009

WHY ATTEND THE AGM?

I attended the Federation's AGM this year for the first time. My team were committed elsewhere that day, but I felt we ought to be represented for once, especially since Skipton is relatively close to my home in York.

It was a very formal occasion, with the officers on one side of a table facing the rest of us and working strictly to the agenda. The voting procedures on the one motion were rigidly followed, with independent tellers being roped in from Open Morris and the Ring.

I was struck by the diverse range of subjects discussed. Insurance of beginner members, amplified music, the only source of two-piece bells in the country and even the esoteric subject of Morris at the Olympics were touched upon. I came away with the realisation that here are a group of people who spend lots of their time reading obscure bits of legislation, lobbying the less fashionable parts of government and generally sticking up for the interests of our teams. And they do all this so the rest of us can get on with hopping about and having fun without having to worry about all this boring stuff!

Now I have to admit that we originally joined the Federation principally to get Public Liability insurance. It's been hard enough recruiting members, making kit, organising events and sorting out our own squabbles (on top of mundane issues like earning livings and raising families) to worry too much about wider issues in the Folk World.

Having been to Skipton this year, however, I can see that at least once in a while the organisation deserves our support. AGMs in general can be a bit tedious and may seem a little removed from the day-to-day but they are *necessary* to an organisation, to give it vitality, direction and above all to allow decisions to be made. For this to have any value, it needs active participation from the membership.

There is a problem. Personally I would not travel as an individual to a Federation AGM south of, say, Leicester. As a team we rarely manage to leave Yorkshire. It is too far to travel for what is, for most of us, a hobby to be squeezed in around the rest of life's distractions. This does naturally leave the AGM desperately short of representatives and shy of its quorum on at least two recent occasions.

To address these issues I would like to float the following ideas for discussion:

- That all member teams recognise the efforts made by the Federation on their behalf and show their support by participating in the AGM on a regular basis;
- That the AGM be made more accessible to the member teams by having its location rotated around the country (e.g. a southern, midland and northern venue);
- That the AGM (as a stand-alone business meeting) be divorced from the Federation weekend to allow it to be more easily hosted by a member team;
- That the continued membership of the Federation be linked to the attendance of a representative from a team at least once every three years.

The last one is, of course, the controversial one, since membership provides insurance, which is possibly why lots of us joined in the first place. But if we don't support umbrella organisations like the Federation, who is going to campaign for our right to dance at pubs without a license, keep the bell factory going or obtain cover for us at an absurdly cheap rate?

Surely if we value the work of the Federation, we can get one member of each team to a regional venue once every three years?

So come on, use 'em or lose 'em!

Gez Pegram - Minster Strays, York

AMPLIFICATION THE FEDERATION VIEW

In this issue Flash Company have written an explanation/defence of their use of amplifiers when performing. This follows yet another warning from the Federation president that by using amplifiers at an event that operates using the PEL exemption from licence requirements they are breaking the law.

The view of the Federation committee is that whilst we may not agree with the law we must live within the rule of law. By continually ignoring the law and using amplified music at events which otherwise comply with the law then Flash Company are promoting an activity which is illegal. This breaches the condition of Federation membership that requires sides to promote a positive image of traditional dance.

Accordingly the committee have decided that Flash Company will not be invited to renew their membership of the

Federation. All sides are reminded that the exemption from licensing for traditional dance specifies unamplified music. If a side wishes to use amplification then they can only do so where a license is in effect.

If local licensing officers discover that traditional dance events can be a source of revenue because even a single side chooses to use amplification then they will inevitably seek to charge for a license. It only needs one authority to spot this opportunity to generate revenue for the canker to spread. The hard won exemption will become valueless. Readers are referred back to the saga of English Miscellany and the demand from one of their local councils for a license based on the fact that a planned display would involve a European dance side. This was a case the Federation could defend. The use of amplifiers in contravention of the law the Federation cannot defend.

Trefor Owen, a Traditional Clogmaker

~These are not just Clogs, these are Trefor Owen Clogs~

**Gweithdy Clocsiau
(The Clog Workshop)
Henbont Road
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Gwynedd
LL52 0DG**
Office tel/fax: 01766 523 695
Workshop Mobile: 07712 822 453
Email: clogs@globalnet.co.uk



First set up in Yorkshire in 1978, this year we clock up 30 yrs of clogmaking, having made over 20,000 prs of clogs- you do the sums: averaging one and a half prs per day for 30 yrs!!!!

*The workshop is **open to the public** at reasonable hours during the week and on Saturday mornings unless we are away at a festival/event – suggest you ring first to check before travelling!*

*Full clogmaking and repairing services available on site, most while you wait (or get you ice cream, visit the castle, a tea shop, a pub) including a **Fitting Service** for orders previously taken*

*Manchester/Leyland/Shrewsbury 2hours; Leeds/Sheffield/Birmingham 2hours 45mins
We make **All** our own Soles, Uppers, Rubbers and most of our own fittings, despite foul rumour to the contrary put about by some of our Competitors!!!!*

Remember: Often copied, never bettered!!

Bullnose Morris in Search of the Missing Link



Bullnose, seen here in their Border kit, were proud to receive the “Green Man Shield” at this year’s Rochester Sweeps Festival. Carved from a section of a tree that was blown down during the 'great storm' in October 1987 in The Vines Park Rochester and awarded for their outstanding contribution to The Festival over the years.

Gordon Newton, the Sweeps Festival organiser, says “It took a few years after 'great storm' in October 1987 for the idea to come to fruition, hence the time lapse from 1987 to 1990. To the best of my knowledge listed below are the teams that have been awarded it so far:

1990	Woad Works	2000	Motley Morris
1991	Wakefield Morris	2001	?
1992	Witchmen	2002	Hands Around
1993	Benskins	2003	Hobo's Morris
1994	Chiltern Hundreds	2004	Witchmen
1995	Loose Women	2005	Motley Morris
1996	Stockport Morris	2006	Sheppey Beaver Group
1997	Persephone	2007	Bishop Gundulf
1998	Witchmen	2008	Bullnose Morris
1999	Stone the Crows		

Unfortunately Gordon has no record of who won in 2001; he will try to investigate, but do you know, Dear Reader?

Replies to: bullnosemorris@talktalk.net

John New (musician, Bullnose Morris)

THIRD ANNUAL LINCOLN BIG MORRIS FESTIVAL
6TH SEPTEMBER 2008
DAMP BUT HAPPY!!!



The third annual Lincoln BIG Morris Festival managed to mostly dodge the heavy showers throughout the day to go ahead as usual. This year's event had the largest attendance yet of Morris teams from across the East Midlands and Yorkshire, with thirteen sides dancing at the festival and enjoying a damp but enjoyable day out in Lincoln.

The event is sponsored by the Lincoln Business Improvement Group and is a welcome event in the Lincoln calendar for locals and visitors to the city. As well as dance displays the festival also featured lunchtime sessions and live music, as well as an evening ceilidh at Lincoln Drill Hall.

Organiser Liam Robinson said

"I was slightly worried that the weather would be a problem this year but all of the dance displays have gone ahead as planned. It's always a pleasure to meet all the teams. They all danced well, we're really friendly and hopefully had a really enjoyable day themselves."

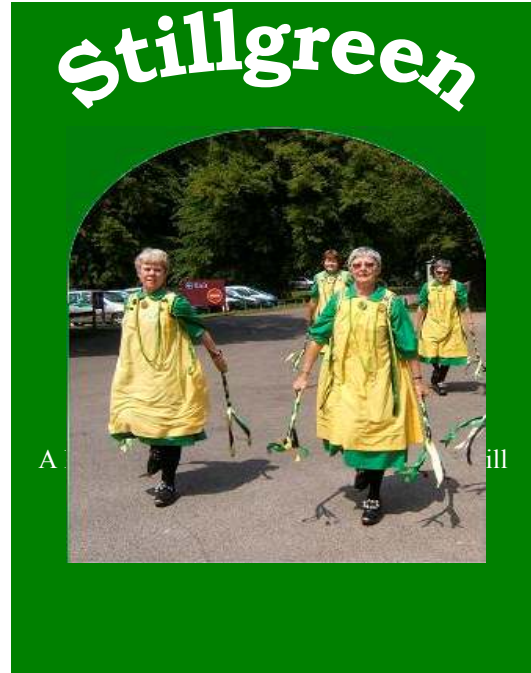
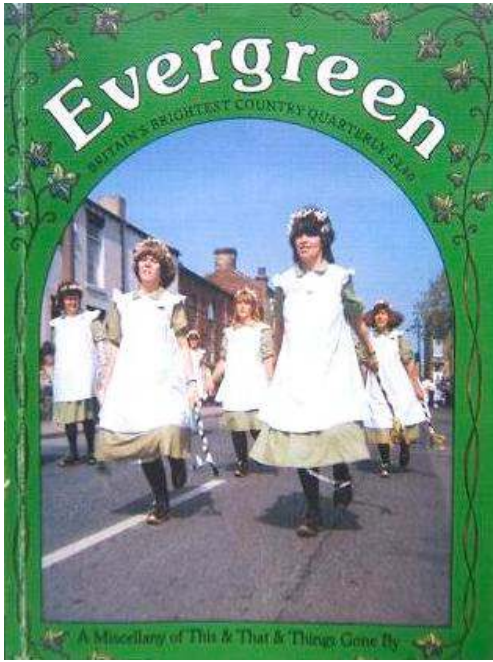
"... there was a great mix of styles this year and it's really good to be able to see the width of what's going on in the Morris world."

Chris Rose of Rattlejag Morris said

"A brilliant day despite the rain and we all thoroughly enjoyed the day."

Next years festival is provisionally Saturday 5th Sept. For more information on the festival, just get in touch — www.minimorris.co.uk

Spot the difference!



A long time ago at Gawthorpe and not so long ago at Castle Howard

Regency ReJigged

Regency what? Regency ReJigged may be a little different from the majority of Morris Federation sides. However, our first outing, in May 2008, was as guests of a Morris team – Belfagan - at their weekend of dance at Cockermouth Georgian Festival.

We dance 17th and 18th century dances in Regency costume. Our aim is to combine elegance and enthusiasm! We are based in Lancashire but our members are from a wide area and prepared to travel. We are planning a programme for next year and would welcome information from anyone who knows of appropriate events for us to perform at. If you are organising a suitable one, you might like to invite us!

Our website, www.regency-rejigged.org.uk has photos and more information. We'd be pleased to hear from you. Contact us through the website or through our Morris Federation details.



Persephone at 30

As they say – been around for a long time! This year, celebrating our 30th anniversary (along with several other sides it seems), has been one of the busiest in recent times and has certainly kept us on our toes. Although we only have one original member still dancing with us, you're sure to notice that many others of us have been in the side for almost as long.

We kicked off the year with a New Year Ceilidh at our practice hall for invited friends, which was a great starter. The following weekend saw the beginning of our dancing season at Whitlesea Straw Bear Festival – who said Persephone rests in the winter?

A series of days and weekends started in April, which seemed to continue without a break until July, followed by a short rest before the next round. The highlight of the summer was our own 30th birthday weekend, when we hosted over 160 folk from various teams in the wilds of the West Riding. Everyone seems to have had a good time (even ourselves after many hours, nay weeks, of planning, organising, checking, re-checking and scrubbing the showers). It's a long time since we organised a weekend, so we really had to start from scratch. A Friday evening with Sid Kipper was a great opener, and Sunday morning saw us competing in school sports (some wonderful entertainment from Ripley Morris Men!) before encouraging all our friends to dance outside our local hostelry on the hottest day of the summer.

After a few more such events and some local pub dance outs (pity about the deluge at the top of the M62), several of us took off to Prague to a folklore festival, along with local sides Ripon City Morris, Betty Lupton's and Rainbow. A three hour procession completed this event! It was interesting watching groups from other countries – and you could see that some of them were quite intrigued by Morris Dancing.

Now we're off to Whitby Folk Festival – we're always there in some form, but this year as a booked team, out in force again. We've a few other festivals to do yet – Fylde, Bromyard and Otley and some other events too, through into early October. We offer a series of open evenings for potential new members through October – we can always do with new people as we get older and creakier!

Hopefully you'll see us around for a bit longer. We look forward to the next few years – travelling the country meeting friends old and new, not forgetting the health benefits!

Find out more about us on:
www.persephonemorris.co.uk

www.nw-clogs.co.uk

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SKIPTON AGM

This AGM was the first to run as a one-day event combining the elements of dance displays, the official business of the AGM and a social event all in the single day. This format was the top preference as indicated in a survey of members carried out last year. The host side "Flagcrackers of Craven" took the opportunity to combine the AGM day with a further day on the Sunday when they celebrated their twentieth year of dancing. Their report on the day is elsewhere in this issue.

The only motion to be voted on at the AGM was the proposal to delete the post of Events Officer from the Federation committee. This was basically a recognition current situation in that although the post had been vacant for a year and advertised in the Newsletter no volunteers had stepped up to fill the post.

Voting on this motion was a first in my own experience of attending AGM's in that postal votes were included and the proportional nature of voting was taken into account.

So with official tellers appointed the 30 teams represented in the room polled 300 votes in favour with 1 additional vote from an individual member present. Postal votes then polled 95.5 in favour, 13 against and 3.5 abstentions. To see how half a vote can be cast refer to your membership pack! So the events officer post no longer exists – officially.

Some discussion on making attendance at an AGM a condition of Federation membership then followed together with discussion of the format. It was suggested that this proposal should be explained in the Newsletter and if a seconder could be found then it could be put forward as a motion for the next AGM.

The current officers of the Federation all stood unopposed for re-election. However Trefor, our president for the last five years, did point that this will definitely

be his last year. So over the coming year volunteers or pressed persons must be sought.

The subject of amplified music for dancing came up under any other business. Biker Urban Morris made the point that they used amplified music. In their local area, Monmouthshire, the council had been contacted and had not made any objection to the use of amplifiers. They had tried to get a view from Skipton council but had had no reply. During the day the Federation president had told them they must not use amplifiers. The members manual on the topic was confusing could a clearer ruling be made.

Once again the president made the point that the exemption under PEL legislation is for "unamplified music". Unless a Temporary Events Notice (TEN) has been applied and paid for the use of amplifiers of any sort is clearly in contravention of the exemption. Essentially teams using amplifiers without a TEN are flouting the law and this reflects badly on the whole traditional dance world.

The topic of the London Olympics bought up the view that massed morris as part of the opening ceremony was a dream that is unattainable. Some representation of the tradition of dance would still be an aspiration and would probably be more achievable if the focus was on showing the very best that is to be seen. Think of a single figure performing a solo Cotswold jig or a dazzling high energy rapper.

This however did not preclude traditional dance being part of the Cultural Olympiad that runs alongside the main sporting events. The Joint Morris Organisations (JMO) would be working on the presentation of dance during the Olympics. A primary conduit for this effort would be the FolkArts England (FAE) organisation that is a main point of contact on matters traditional for the government

CLOGFEST 2008

The President speaks

Paul Hudson one of the organisers of the annual of Clogfest in Skipton wrote in to draw my attention to the Federation president's (Trefor Owen) speech at this years Clogfest. Paul felt that the opening address deserved a wider audience. So I visited:

http://www.clogfest.org/Videos/Pages/CF08_Trefor_Owen.html

and here to the best of my efforts is a transcript of the main body of that speech.

"It's intriguing to think that this event carries on going from strength to strength despite restrictions, controls, legislation, laws and silly governments. Not that long ago we were actually struggling to fight for our right to dance traditional dances in public and we had to fight the 2003 licensing law.

Just earlier this year we had to battle parliament again when what sounds like the wonderful concept of the extension to the dangerous weapons act; using swords to kill people, was going to be affecting longsword and rapper dance. Fortunately we are an historic re-enactment according to the Home Office and thus we are exempt under this new law.

It's difficult when you start talking about laws because we are part of society, we are deeply embedded in the culture and society of this nation. Sometimes you get laws which sound brilliant on the surface. Looming on the horizon is the Independent Safeguarding Authority – wonderful title. What that means, possibly is the end to all young people dancing; young or vulnerable people.

It's a law that will possibly, in the worst case scenario mean that every member of every dance team has to have a criminal record (CRB) check to prove that they are eligible to work with young or vulnerable people. Which means that a lot of young people will sadly drop out of

the dancing world as they are already doing in sporting clubs because of the effect of this new law. It seems we struggle to show off our own culture; our own heritage which I think is a really sad scenario to be in.

Moving on from that; one of the things, which I think we in our own community neglect. We have a small core of the most incredible teachers of traditional dance. There are a number of them in the audience today; they're lurking being embarrassed behind me. They pass on the tradition, they teach the rest of us what it's all about and how to do it. I think even though they probably won't all come forward could you give all of those who teach us what we know and what we perform a big hand please".

New child protection laws for 2009

"The creation of the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) is part of the biggest overhaul of vetting and barring arrangements ever undertaken in this country. It will cover 11.3 million people wishing to seek work or volunteer with children or vulnerable adults.

From 12 Oct 2009, anyone employed or volunteering to work with children or vulnerable people must apply to be registered with the ISA, in addition to the existing CRB checks. After this date it will be a criminal offence to employ anyone to work with children or vulnerable adults who is not registered. Applicants (apart from volunteers) must pay a one-off fee of £64 to register (£28 for registration with ISA and £36 for an enhanced CRB check)."

The report above comes via the South East Folk Arts Network. The Federation continues to seek clarification on how this affects our members. This is especially relevant as the Federation had 302 members of sides who were under 16 years of age at the last count (See the treasurers report in this issue).

STRANGERS IN THE NIGHT

In the gathering dusk of a late afternoon in winter, two figures could just be seen making their way along the track that skirted the heath land and kept close company with a wood. They were walking in the shadow of the wood despite the gloom that was descending, all the time looking around as if for fear of being followed. One of the figures was noticeably taller and slenderer than the other, moving with an easy grace and was obviously the younger of the two. The second was about half a head shorter and stocky. Both were clad in old felt hats that covered their faces and in old labourers' coats that had seen much better days. This last fact was obvious despite the fact that there were worn inside out and covered with strips of cloth of various types roughly fastened to them. In fact, a closer look at their faces under the hat brims would reveal that they, too, were similarly obscured with liberal smudges of charcoal.

They travelled in silence for most of the journey, walking briskly to keep out the cold, for it was a clear sky above them and already the air was becoming chilly. Eventually the younger of the two broke the silence and said,

'I'm still a bit scared of all this. Do you really think they'll let us join them? I mean they don't know us and they might not trust us.'

'Don't worry about little things like that. They need as many as they can get tonight. It's a good night for catching rabbits and some of their men will be out doing just that, the same as our lads. This will be our best chance of the winter for some prime busking, with the wedding feast at the rectory. There will be strangers in the village, so to them we will be a novelty. You know how some of these toffs like to make fun of simple folk like us. No, we've nothing to worry about there. I just hope these old boots hold up – I would never have made it to the village without them, but they are wearing a bit. They were my father's, same as the

coat. I fancy he would turn in his grave to see the use it's being put to tonight!'

The younger one relaxed a little, 'These boots were my grandfather's – they're a bit big, but I've wrapped some rags round my feet so they are nice and snug now, if a bit on the heavy side.'

They both laughed at this, and walked on until the path parted company with the wood, and began descending the open hillside towards the next village, with the church and rectory off to the right. These could be distinguished by a glow of lanterns in the rectory garden and the church windows. The younger traveller hesitated for a second, but was encouraged by an arm round the shoulder, and they both straightened up and walked purposefully towards the lights. As they approached the gardens, a figure detached itself from a small group in the shadow of the wall and approached them. He was clad in a similar way to the companions, with a grey beard fringing his blackened face.

'Who are you?' he asked gruffly, 'Have you come to take our pitch from us?'

'Not at all,' replied the older newcomer, 'We've come to see if you will let us join you. There are not many of you tonight, are there.'

'How do we know we can trust you? Come to that, are you any good? What can you do?'

'Just about anything you can.' The speaker hesitated, 'Come on now, give us a chance.'

'Your friend doesn't have much to say for himself.' Observed the bearded man nodding toward the younger newcomer. The other added: -

'He lets his feet do the talking. Come on now, give us a chance.'

'Well I suppose you're worth a trial. Let's see how you get on.' He called to the rest of his companions and produced a battered concertina from somewhere

within the folds of his coat. Once he started playing old dance tunes people started to appear in ones and twos from the garden. Some of the women seemed alarmed by the group, but one of the men said. 'It's just them Moorish looking dancers again – they're harmless rogues. We can send them away.'

'No, answered one of the women, 'Let them dance if they want to. I've never seen anything like them before.'

At this encouragement, the musician started playing with more earnest and the dancers started stepping around him one by one. Suddenly, the younger newcomer became bolder and joined in, dancing an energetic jig with an almost balletic grace despite the oversized boots.

'That scrawny young fellow's light on his feet isn't he,' observed one of the bystanders.

After that was over the group performed a few set dances and another jig, then from somewhere one of the group appeared with a jug of ale which he passed round the dancers, coming to the new ones last.

'Drink it daintily,' he said, then when faced by questioning stares, he added, 'Otherwise you'll find your faces half washed.' The pair relaxed and helped themselves from the jug. After that it was more dancing until they decided it was getting late and another member produced his hat which was, by now, full of coins. The musician counted them out and called his novices over.

'Here, you've earned your share.' He said, giving the older one a handful of assorted coins.'

'Thank you!' came the answer, 'We never expected to do as well as this.'

'Well, you're not bad dancers, he answered, then added, 'Are you coming to the tavern to whet your whistles before we all go home?'

'We don't like to be unsociable,' came the answer, but we can't. I mean

we have a long way to travel home and...' but seeing the disappointed, almost disapproving look on the leader's face, the younger stepped forward, took a deep breath and then added, 'You see, it's like this – we have to make sure we get home before our husbands do.'

Marian Connor

FOR LOVE OR MONEY – HELP!

Have any other teams danced at "A country Affair" (run by "Stage It" events) and not been paid this year? I have been chasing our fee since August and have finally received a letter saying they are in financial difficulties – would we consider a payment plan? We are not happy with this and wonder if anyone else is experiencing similar problems? They are not replying to subsequent letters and their phone mailbox is full. It would be helpful to know any strategies that have worked for anyone with this or any other agency.

On the positive side we think this is first defaulter on payment we have had in over 30 years!

Please reply to beth@neillpoole.co.uk

Beth Neill (Windsor Morris)

STAGGERING ON

Red Stags Morris - still dancing after all these years - will be celebrating our 40th anniversary on Sat.23rd and Sun. 24th May 2009. We would like to invite as many past members as possible.

If you are, know of, or suspect anyone else of being a previous member or associate of the side and are interested, please, contact me at bagpuss@redstags.org.

Also, if you have any photos, newspaper clippings, amusing anecdotes, etc, we would be grateful for copies of these for the archive.

Many thanks,

Christina - Bag for Red Stags Morris

Carn Brea Morris Celebrate 30 Years
/Yma Morrrys Carn Bre Owth
Omlowenhe Wosa 30 Bledhen



Carn Brea Morris are this year celebrating their 30th anniversary.

The team started out as Carn Brea Morris Men and they practice at Carnkie near Redruth, Cornwall. Many of the original members were part of the former Kernow Morris Men based in Falmouth. The team has experienced many highs and lows over their 30-year history. During their heyday the team organised regular meetings at Hendra Holiday Park, Newquay, inviting other teams from all over the Country. In 1998 members were shocked by the tragic death of their Squire, Vince Webb, while dancing.

At the beginning of the current decade the number of members became perilously low and the future of the team looked in doubt. The decision was therefore made in 2003 to invite ladies to join and enjoy Morris Dancing in the Cotswold style. Because of the change the team then resigned from the Morris

Ring and became a member of the Morris Federation. The Morris Ring at the time fully understood the reason for the change and our resignation was completely without ill will.

Since that time the future of the team has been more secure and as well as ladies there are two younger members. Carn Brea Morris can be seen dancing on most Monday nights in the summer in towns and villages from Hayle to St Newlyn East. We have performed at festivals such as Polperro, Wadebridge, Crediton and Dartmoor and have weekends away for gatherings of other dance teams. This year we went to Dorset for the 25th anniversary of Treacle Eater Clog and a good time was had by all.

Carn Brea Morris and formerly Carn Brea Morris Men have throughout their 30 year history tried to maintain a high standard and present the Morris tradition to the public at its best. Our current lead musician Barrie Jarvis was encouraged to play music for Morris by a former musician and he in turn is giving encouragement to new musicians. This year we spent a lot of money in order to get member's kit up to an identical standard

A celebration took place on Saturday 8th of November at Marazion Community Hall with three bands including one specialising in Breton dance. Many former members of the team were present and we are quite hopeful that a few members who had left for family reasons will join us again now that their children are older.

Ray Chubb Publicity Officer

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PEL – CLEAR AS A BELL?

Federation secretary Fee Lock picked up this posting on a web forum which must be of interest to our readers. The posting comes from Hamish Birchall, who since the PEL became law in 2003 has been campaigning to expose the anomalies in it.

“Once again, the lack of clarity in the law that regulates music and dancing has exposed fundamental differences of interpretation between local authorities.

On Saturday 18 October thousands of people around the UK and beyond danced in the Big National Ceilidh to raise money for WaterAid:

Most if not all the 90 or so events took place in venues already licensed for dancing, including town halls and community centres. But need they have worried about entertainment licensing?

I asked six councils whether they would allow such ceilidhs under the Licensing Act's exemption for morris dancing and any dancing of a similar nature. Four failed to reply, but of the two who did one (Camden) said 'yes' and the other (Swindon) said 'no'.

A spokesperson for Camden said: 'We would take the view that this [ceilidh] would be of a similar nature to morris dancing and therefore exempt from needing to be licensed. The exemption also includes unamplified live music that is integral to such a performance.'

However, Lionel Starling, licensing manager for Swindon council, saw it differently: 'I think this ceilidh is licensable mainly because it is planned and widely promoted in advance. As with many aspects of the Licensing Act 2003, a great deal depends on interpretation. An exemption for 'morris dancing or any dancing of a similar nature' leaves many questions unanswered. Is the distinction based on the 'traditional' nature of morris dancing or is the emphasis on the fact that it is impromptu and therefore

negligible in its impact? A performance of Riverdance involves a 'traditional' style of dancing but it would be perverse if that were exempt. For now, practitioners can only focus on the 'impromptu' aspect, in my view. Clearly, that does however leave us with the anomaly that a morris dancing festival is exempt from the scope of the Act.'

Richard Bridge, solicitor and founder of the Performer Lawyer Group, commented:

'I'm interested to hear of the views expressed by Camden council. It seems to me that part of the reason that one refers to a ceilidh as a ceilidh and to morris dancing as morris dancing is that they are very different. A ceilidh is one form of local social dance, whereas morris dancing is a display dance and indeed has only recently permitted the two genders to dance in the same displays!'

One comment on this posting was the belief that the Notting Hill Carnival had used the “dancing of a similar nature” clause to avoid the need for a licence. This was rebuffed when someone pointed out that the carnival is licensed by the borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

But here's a topic that might raise some heat and possibly some light round the table this winter “What is dancing of a similar nature?” At an the Federation AGM two years ago a motion to amend part of the constitution to fall in line with the wording of the PEL fell foul of some entrenched views. The Federation does not accept Irish dance sides or Carnival Morris sides as members but does accept Appalachian teams. Last year a council argued that a display by a Federation side involving a visiting foreign dance team required a licence. Only strenuous efforts by the Federation president persuaded the council to reverse their decision.

So what do you the members think? The floor is yours!

DANCE FOR LIFE

At last! A use for Border Morris!

On July 13th 2008, members of O.B.J. Morris took part in the Cancer Research U.K. 'Walk for Life'. A Bracknell- based side, we had a special wish to support this event as three of our twenty strong side have had treatment for breast cancer and another of our members has died from this indiscriminate disease. It's a sobering thought that one in three of us will be touched by cancer in some way. That's the same proportion of people as will fail to hand in their sponsor money.

The Walk for Life takes place at a number of different venues each year. We went to Prospect Park in Reading. a superbly well organised event. Over 3.000 women took part on this very hot day, hoping to raise £500,000.



O.B.J. stood out like a banjo in a symphony orchestra as we wore our black, white and green kit in a sea of pink. (Only women only take part in this event). As a consequence we were singled out for photos, interviews and a short display before the assembled throng. However, even a vigorous 'Dilwyn' couldn't compete with one of the sponsors secret weapons in the shape, (and I do mean SHAPE), of 'The Nivea Boys'. They gyrated their stuff to a most appreciative audience. It's not only you middle-aged men who have fantasies.

So, nicely warmed up in more ways than one, we set off on our five-kilometre walk. There were runners and walkers, mums and grandmas, tots and teenagers. Everyone wore a notice detailing for whom they were especially doing the walk. These brought tears as we read of mothers and fathers, grandparents and siblings, friends and children lost to the big C. But there were also testaments to survivors, helped by the research to which we were trying to contribute.

We zigzagged round the park, encouraged by partners, dog walkers and pram-pushers. The stewards clapped and urged us on. 'Only one more kilometre go!' There was even a bit of melodeon playing. Someone has to do it. The blacking ran down our faces as we sweated the last few metres.



On to the finish, we danced over the line to applause and smiles, medals and goodie bags. So. What is your side doing in July 2009? Hey, it's bigger than Sidmouth!

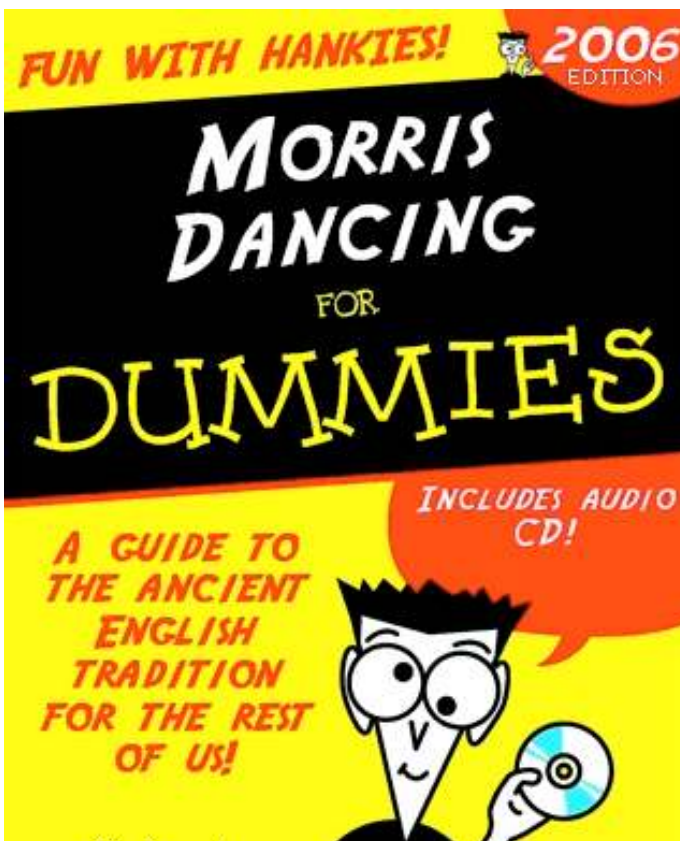
Photo Credit Bob Tunbridge

Pamela Hibbert July 2008

Editors Note:

On reading this piece I was reminded of a comment passed by one of my own team on a hot summers day "Horses sweat, men perspire but ladies glow – and right now I'm glowing buckets!"

AN ANSWER FOR 'DUMMIES'?



At first glance this may seem funny and whilst those familiar with the 'Dummies' series will recognise this is a hoax, it does illustrate the low esteem the British, especially the English have for their heritage dance.

I do not profess to know how to raise the bar and I know, despite great effort, The Morris Federation, The Morris Ring and Open Morris all are equally at a loss, as no doubt is EFDSS. But recently I attended the London Borough of Redbridge's 'World of Dance 2008' where England was represented by Morris dancers, dancing energetically and enthusiastically to live, unamplified music. This went down spectacularly and the Mayor of Redbridge was overwhelmed, struggling to be seen as impartial, and the whole audience, (some 500 ethnically mixed) were clapping and stamping in time, did give me an idea. It was a joy to watch the

audience from the stage and was the first time for a long while I felt Morris was fully appreciated.

So maybe being involved with or organising similar events around the county/country utilising local talents could be a way forward?

John New (Bullnose Morris)

A weekend of dance, music and song in the heart of the North West



Newburgh Morris Weekend of Dance and 'Traditions' Festival

26 – 28 June 2009

Newburgh Morris have combined our weekend of dance with the festival for the past seven years. Those who have been our guests know that we offer an excellent weekend, with plenty of dancing, good company, real ale (and Chorley cakes), plus a ticket for events at this long established Festival, now including craft demonstrations and workshops. Teams last year included Medusa, Carlisle, Chip off the Old, Furness, Sheffield City, Stone the Crows, Royal Oak, Jet Set, Mucky Mountains, Solway Morris, Great Northern Belly Dancers and Charnwood Clog.

On Saturday we dance in the historic Lancashire market town of Chorley, returning to the Festival site in time for early evening events and a Ceilidh later with English Rebellion.

On Sunday there is dancing for all teams on site in the morning, followed by the chance to join in Festival events or one of the many craft workshops, including spinning, jewellery making, bookbinding and more..

The **Traditions Festival** itself includes well known performers from across the folk scene. It now has the added attractions of craft displays and

workshops on the Sunday. We offer teams **free admission** to Festival events if dancer or musician - concerts, singarounds, music, song and craft workshops, Folk Club, as well as the Saturday evening Ceilidh. All Festival events are on site. **Half price admission to events** for non-performers. A small fee for any workshops

Camping is just £5 per head for up to three nights on the secure Festival site with showers, real ale bar and hot and cold food.

If you're interested, contact Barbara Barclay: at b_barclay@sky.com or ring 01695 723100 or Rebecca Richardson at bec.richardson@btinternet.com

If you want to know more about the Festival you can access Angie and Ken's Festival website at www.madontrad.org.uk

We offer plenty of dancing with appreciative spectators and a wide choice of music and song during the weekend. Join us!

Rebecca Richardson

JOINT MORRIS EVENT 2009

The organisers on behalf of Open Morris are "Lady Bay Revellers" who report that they have the full backing of Nottingham City Council for this event. The Council has given advice on dance spots and is keen to do more publicity.

Taking the title of "Nottingham Revels" participation will be for twenty-five Federation sides, fifteen sides from the Ring and ten Open Morris sides. There will be a separate rapper event with indoor venues. Numbers for the rapper event are additional to the fifty sides in the main event. Sides should apply to their own organisation for a place and these will be passed to Lady Bay Revellers at the end of January to be put in the master plan. Rapper sides should apply to Linda Hewing of the SDU email: mlindaloo@yahoo.co.uk.

Notation from the Archive

Polka Dot

A NW style Dance

The world of Morris seems to mirror the natural world in that new teams are born while some existing teams disappear. One team, which disbanded this year, is Stane Street Morris from Sussex who danced "North West". They sent me some of their notation for the archive. Most of the dances are for six but there was one for five. They are happy to share their ideas so here is your "starter for five" in their own words.

"Polka Dot"

Stane Street Morris

A dance for five people based on the country dance of the same name. Four dancers standing in diamond shape facing in with another in middle facing up. Polka step with hands by the side except during chorus during which the hands go across body to the right (Rt) with right polka step and to the left (Lt) with a left step.

Music: Galopede, Soldier's Joy A,AABB x 5

Chorus: Middle and dancer number 1 two polka steps on the spot moving left then right – hands flourishing in same direction, change places with two polka steps, moving left and right – ex middle turning to face in and ex number 1 turning right to face number 2. Numbers 1 and 2 repeat to change places. Ex number 2 repeat with number 3 to change places. Number 3 repeat with number 4 to change places. (All 2 + 2 polka steps).

N.B. Do not dance until you have been brought in, and then continue dancing till the end of the chorus – no hand movements.

Figure 1 – Heys

Middle face up into whole hey up and down with new numbers 1 and 3, middle then turns left to hey across with numbers 2 and 4 (left shoulders first).

Chorus – as before.

Figure 2 – Stars right and left

Turning out to return. Middle person dances out through nearest hole and dances each way contra and returns to middle between 1 and 2.

Chorus – as before

Figure 3 – Lines

Dancers 1 and 3 move forward bearing left to stand in line with middle, 2 and 4 – all arms on adjacent shoulders. Line turn right half way, 1 and 3 back out to new places then forward again bearing right to make new line (arms on shoulders) which turns back half way and 1 and 3 back out into original places.

Chorus – as before

Figure 4 – Stars on corners

Middle stars right with numbers 1 and 4 (top right corner), then stars left with 1 and 2 (top left corner), then stars right with 2 and 3 (bottom left corner), then stars left with 3 and 4 (bottom right corner)

Chorus - Leading off

Middle faces No1 – 2 Polka Step on spot, dances round 1 who retires, middle same to No 2, 3, and 4 – who each retire in turn, leaving middle to take a curtsey/bow to tumultuous applause.

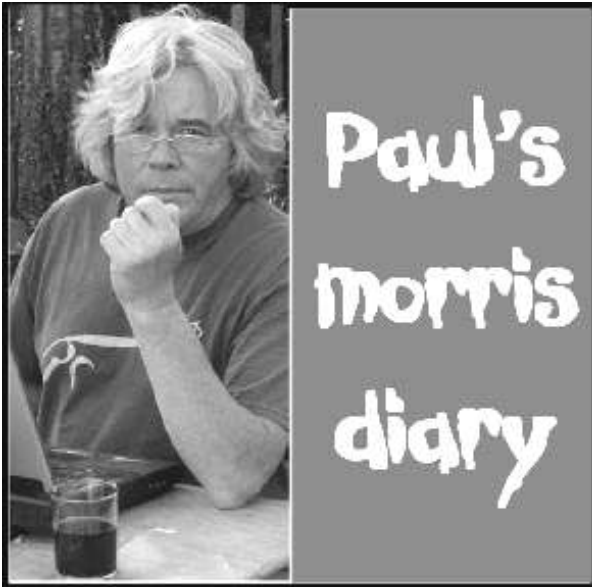
Rhiannon Owen – Archive Officer

GONE TO A GOOD HOME

Thanks for facilitating in this matter. In fact all the slings and bobbins have been taken by Old Speckled Hen although since they took the bobbins because they "might be useful" and Saffron Maids were in hot pursuit - I put them in touch with each other. Hope they end up in a good home. So the stall is bare I am afraid. I will let Haughley Hoofers know. I only wish Hungerford Çlog Morris were still dancing, we had such fun. Thanks again.

Joanna

As one door closes another opens! (Ed)



YOU CAN'T DAMPEN THE SPIRITS OF THIS INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE!

You can get fed up of rain, can't you. We got to the Swanage festival from many different corners of Europe. The Loire region of France, Tavistock and Scarborough. All come together to form Couptrain Morris.

All arrived a day early so we could get in the necessary practice. Sandy, who drove down from Yorkshire, is a regular member of the side but had been back in Scarborough for a spell. Seven made it over from France (including the two of us who detoured through Cornwall) and our two ringers, Pete and Em, drove up from Devon.

We were first to arrive so our task was to erect three tents. Then it began to rain. And it didn't stop while we on the camp site for the next three days. The French group arrived at around midnight and had decided upon different sleeping arrangements than those we had planned for. Much confusion, re-arranging of sleeping bags and slopping through the mud in the dark, fortified only by the odd glass of red.

In the middle of the night the rain and wind laid nearly flat one of the tents. Jo, who had done all the driving over from France, was soaked through and got no

sleep. How she got through the rest of the weekend I do not know.

So next morning the bedraggled bunch piled into our camper and we trundled off to Poole in search of a new tent for Marc, who had slept soundly in Jo's tent while she was enjoying an impromptu shower in his. I hope you are following this!

We found a tent in Poole but not until we had visited the biggest Asda in the world, sourced, purchased and eaten a pasty, visited the charity shops and toured the town three times in search of a parking space.

Back at the camp site, the rain started again. So outdoor practice was out of the question. When we got to the pub that evening though, the rain stopped. So we headed for the road outside.

No good. As soon as we started, down came the rain again. Back inside, we did the best we could in a corridor. Then the landlord suggested we used the snooker room in the garden. Good man! But he forgot to tell us there was a snooker table in the way. So in a space four-feet wide we practised stars and circles, swings and squares. They all ended up as oblongs but it had to do. Maybe our audiences would think we had a unique, Gallic interpretation of La Danse Morris.

Gloom next morning as we set off in crashing rain. Sat in a café for half an hour drinking coffee bought by Colin who had come over all the way from Bristol to watch our performance. Our first scheduled dance was not going to happen. Optimism was in short supply until Pete and Em told us they had found a covered space in which we could strut our stuff.

And dance we did, to a growing number of fellow dancers and musicians. It was such a relief after all the wet and waiting to get some action in and we thrilled to our new-found freedom.

After that, there was no more rain for the whole of the dance timetable (it was all back at the camp site) and the morris



2008

December

13th

Sundorne School, Shrewsbury. Shrewsbury Morris Dancers present their world famous Christmas Ceilidh. Details 01939 233977

16th

Harrogate Pub Tour of Blue Stots Play by Knaresborough Mummers

20th

Knaresborough Pub Tour of Blue Stots Play by Knaresborough Mummers

26th

Three Shires and Harthill Morris in Harthill. 11am Blue Bell & 12 noon Bee Hive

27th

Easingwold Area Pub Tour of Blue Stots Play by Knaresborough Mummers

28th

Nidderdale Pub Tour of Blue Stots Play by Knaresborough Mummers

2009

January

3rd

Marton-cum-Grafton Area Pub Tour of Blue Stots Play by Knaresborough Mummers

March

28th

Joint Morris Organisations day in Nottingham
The Fezheads Fig and Date Fayre in Chepstow, Wales.
For details, see this post on the Morris Federation Blog. <http://morrised.org/mfblog/?p=65>

May

23rd - 24th

Red Stags Morris - still dancing after all these years - will be celebrating our 40th anniversary and would like to invite as many past members as possible.

June

19th - 21st

Scarborough Fayre 's 20th Morris Festival.
Contact Shirley Doyle at Northfield, Middle Lane, Hutton Buscel, Scarborough, YO13 9LP.or email sadoyle04@yahoo.co.uk

Evesham Morris, Medieval and Cider Festival

Contacts for details:

Judy Watkins wat.courtfarm@tiscali.co.uk

Rosie Stroud stroudrosies@aol.com

.....magic worked, as it always does. Apart from having a thoroughly good time, there was an added bonus. Seven or eight other sides asked if they could come over to France to dance with us or invited us to their own dance events.

What a wonderful result. We have spoken to the mayor here (*I assume Paul means in Couptrain! – Ed*) and he is very keen indeed that we should get the invitations out and get a weekend festival organised. So that's what we are in the early stages of planning right now. All those who spoke to us at Swanage do not worry, Couptrain Morris is about to be in touch. Anyone else who fancies a fling in France, please email*. We have no dates as yet but if you register interest, we will keep you informed of progress. So keep looking at www.danseurs.hey42.co.uk for updates.

Good news from the Cornwall Festival of Dance – which we are currently deeply involved in arranging for 2009. This event happens at the Royal Cornwall Show. It has its own stage and marquee. We have a programme of all kinds of dance – mostly traditional, and from many different parts of the UK and indeed, the world!

On the Saturday we have a dedicated morris day when various sides dance at a number of key spots around the show ground. For 2009 we have teamed up with Cornwall College – which runs a brilliant music and theatre programme – and we hope to have the students (both musicians and dancers) creating and performing an exclusive modern interpretation of morris. We all bemoan the fact that not enough young people get into morris. This could pay real dividends.

Paul White

**whitepaul@orange.fr*

MORRIS FEDERATION SHOP

PUBLICATIONS:

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

£4.00 + £1.75 UK, £3.50 OVERSEAS (p&p)

Adderbury: Produced jointly by Tim Radford and The Morris Federation, this book contains the history of the tradition, copies of original notation from the Blunt manuscript and modern notation with easy-to-follow diagrams for 13 stick and 13 hanky dances. Includes photographs and music.

£4.50 + £1.75 UK, £3.50 OVERSEAS (p&p)

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

£4.00 + £1.75 UK, £3.50 OVERSEAS (p&p)

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

£3.25 + £1.75 UK, £3.50 OVERSEAS (p&p)

Hinton: Traditional and creative Morris by Sue Swift.

£4.00 + £1.75 UK, £3.50 OVERSEAS (p&p)

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

£3.00 + £1.75 UK, £3.50 OVERSEAS (p&p)

Molly: Dancing into the Twenty First Century, by Tony Forster

£3.50 + £1.75 UK, £3.50 OVERSEAS (p&p)

BOOKLETS: A series of A5 sized booklets with between 8 and 20 pages

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

£0.90

Publicity tips: Hints on promoting your team, attracting new members, etc.

£0.90 (Temporarily out of stock)

Twenty Years On, 1975-1996

£1.25

Women and the North West Morris Dance

£0.90

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

£1.25 + £0.50 UK, £1.00 OVERSEAS (p&p)

Beginners and Basics: Roy Dommet's ideas on the basics of Cotswold. Essential reading for leaders and foremen.

£1.25

Border Morris: a brief outline

£0.90

A Few Facts About the Morris

£1.00

BELLS

Brass	Members			Non-members		
	25	50	100	25	50	100
¾"	£9.00	£16.00	£32.00	£10.00	£18.00	£35.50
⅞"	£9.00	£17.00	£33.00	£10.00	£19.00	£36.50
1"	£11.00	£20.00	£39.00	£12.50	£22.00	£43.00
1⅛"	£12.00	£23.00	£45.00	£13.50	£25.50	£49.50
1¼"	£16.00	£32.00	£62.00	£18.00	£35.50	£68.50
Nickel						
¾"	£9.00	£16.00	£32.00	£10.00	£18.00	£35.50
⅞"	£9.00	£17.00	£33.00	£10.00	£19.00	£36.50
1"	£11.00	£20.00	£39.00	£12.50	£22.00	£43.00
1⅛"	£12.00	£23.00	£45.00	£13.50	£25.50	£50.00
1¼"	£16.00	£32.00	£62.00	£18.00	£35.50	£68.50

Bell prices include postage and packing.

PROMOTIONAL GOODS:

Sweatshirts & T-Shirts: may be available on request – please telephone or email for details.

Stickers: 4" diameter bearing MF name and logo – self-adhesive for music cases, files, etc. £0.50

Leather Badges: 2" in diameter bearing MF name and logo (Black and colour on natural background or Gold on black background)

£1.25

Leather Key Rings: 2" in diameter bearing MF name and logo on natural background

£1.25

Compact Discs:

The Magic of Morris - Double CD £15.00 p&p £1.00

Prices are correct at time of printing.
Order form on the Federation web site or from the treasurer.