

THE MORRIS FEDERATION

MINUTES OF THE 42nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held on Saturday 23rd September 2017 at Guildhall, Hull

Melanie Barber (President) opened the meeting at 4.32 pm, having declared the meeting quorate with 27 sides and welcomed Nicki Pickering, Chair of Open Morris.

Fee Lock (Secretary) read out those present:

Belfagan Women's Morris
Beverley Garland
Customs & Exiles
Green Ginger Garland
Harlequin Women's Morris
Jackstraws Morris
Jerusalem Jammers
Leek Morris
Mad Jack's Morris
Makara Morris
Maltby Sword
Minster Strays
Mockbeggar Morris
New Esperance Morris

Newburgh Morris
Persephone Bradford NW Women's Morris
Pigsty
Rackaback Morris
Redbornstoke Morris
Ripley Green Garters
Sheffield City Morris
The Rumworth Morris of Bolton
Three's a Crowd
Wakefield Morris
Westrefelda
Windsor Morris
Yorkshire Chandelier

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Those not previously circulated;

Babylon
Blue Anchor Morris
Chalford Stick Company
Chinewrde Morris
Ditchling Morris
Ebor Morris
Hannah's Cat
Hastings Jack in the Green
Highside Longsword
Hips & Haws Clog
Kettle Bridge Clogs
Mabel Gubbins Rapper
Maybe Morris

Medusa
Milkmaid Mollies
Milltown Cloggies
Misfit Molly
Pateley Longsword
Rainbow Morris
Ripon City Morris Dancers
Shrewsbury Morris
Somerset Morris
Somersetstep
Wight Bells
Winter Warmers

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Taken as read, having been distributed beforehand. **Melanie Barber (President)** asked for all those speaking, to give their name and side. **Ian Osborne (Wakefield Morris)** proposed them as being correct; **Diane Moody (New Esperance)** seconded. Nem con.

3 MATTERS ARISING

Gina Siddons (Mockbeggar Morris) said that they had been present at the AGM last year, but their apologies had not been noted.

4 ANNUAL REPORTS

(a) President

Previously circulated. No matters arising

(b) Secretary

Previously circulated. No matters arising.

(c) Treasurer

Previously circulated. Jenny Everett pointed out that the heading of expenditure was incorrect and should read 2016/2015, not 2015/2014.

(d) Archive Officer

Previously circulated. No matters arising.

(e) Notation Officer

Previously circulated. No matters arising

(f) Newsletter Editor

Previously circulated. No matters arising.

5 MOTIONS

Motion 1

Melanie Barber (President) announced a few minutes for **Jenny Everett (Treasurer)** to outline the proposal; the same amount of time for anyone to speak against, and then a short

MOTION 1

Proposal to change the committee structure, the better to reflect the workings of the committee today, and would involve the following changes to the Constitution:

4 COMMITTEE the Committee shall comprise a minimum of six officers. These shall include a **President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer** [first sentence being replaced]

[rest of the committee structures & roles to remain, until]

Co-opted Members of the Committee [first sentence being replaced]

The committee may co-opt members or external experts to assist in running the Federation. Co-option will be for a specific project and be for one year in the first instance. Co-opted members may be invited to continue on an annual basis.

[this replaces the first sentence; the rest of the paragraph to continue:] **Co-opted members of the Committee shall be invited to attend Committee meetings and to participate in discussions but will have no voting rights. They will be invited to report their activities to the membership through the Newsletter or personal presentation at General Meetings. Co-opted members may include those who take on a post that falls vacant before the normal term of office expires.**

This mandates the committee to review co-optees annually and consider whether the role of the co-opted has become an ongoing requirement, and thus a committee responsibility. This also gives co-optees a time frame to work to.

Proposed by Jenny Everett (Treasurer & Bishops Morris)
Seconded Jerry West (Notation Officer & Berkshire Bedlam)

Jenny Everett (Treasurer) read out the Motion. She said that this is to tidy things up: having six defined roles are quite restricting. Every time we have a change in personnel's commitment, we have to change the constitution. Also, co-opting restrictions means that we have a time-frame for projects.

Diane Moody (New Esperance) summarised that the first two sentences are being replaced. No one wished to speak against.

Nicki Pickering, Chair of Open, and Phil Gray (partner of Sam Ross, Newsletter Editor) acted as tellers:

170 postal for
240 actual for

0 postal against
0 actual against

No split votes

410 in favour, 0 against
Motion 1 was carried unanimously.

Motion 2

MOTION 2

Proposal that Associate members be given the same voting rights as Full Group members. They currently have no voting rights and are not included in the insurance policy.

This would involve the following changes to the Constitution and Standing orders:

Constitution _____

2 MEMBERSHIP

Under (d) remove 'individuals and'

This would result in the point reading:

(d) Associate Membership – for practising Morris sides and, at the discretion of the Committee, clubs performing related activities.

Standing Orders _____

10 VOTING RIGHTS

Under (b) change 'Full Group Member' to 'Group or Associate Member' and remove 'Associate members shall have no vote.'

This would result in the point reading:

(b) Voting at a General Meeting on matters where prior notice has been given to members, which will include motions and the election of officers where nominations have been received prior to the deadline, shall be on the basis of ten votes per Group or Associate member, apportioned to reflect as closely as possible the views of their side.

Under (b) (i) change 'Full Group Member' to 'Group or Associate Member' and remove Associate member from the exclusion list.

This would result in the point reading:

(b) (i) Voting on administrative matters not detailed on the agenda, and voting for the election of officers to the committee where nominations have not been received prior to the deadline shall be on the basis of one vote per person present, to a maximum of ten votes per group or Associate Member present, excluding non-Members and the committee.

Rationale

This brings Associate members into line with Full Group members. There is no reason why they should not have voting rights.

Proposed by Jenny Everett (Treasurer and Bishops Morris)
Seconded by Sam Ross (Newsletter Editor & Pigsty Morris)

Jenny Everett (Treasurer) **spoke on behalf of the Motion. There are people who don't need insurance but want to be associated. It seems a shame that they don't get voting rights.**

Sue Storey (Beverley Garland) asked if Associate Members are individuals or groups; **Jenny Everett (Treasurer)** explained that they are groups; **Fee Lock (Secretary)** said that Individual Members have one vote each.

No comments were received from the floor.

Nicki Pickering and Phil Gray acted as tellers:

160 postal for
230 actual for

0 votes against
10 postal votes against

390 votes in favour
10 postal votes against

The Motion was carried 390:10

6 DISCUSSIONS

1 To seek views from the membership as to whether we should consider introducing a fixed tenure for committee members (committee-proposed discussion)

Melanie Barber (President) explained that the Joint Morris Organisations' Chair is three-yearly; this works for the president as she had been JMO Chair in her third year. She doesn't feel that this necessarily need apply to all the other committee posts, nor, for consistency, would you want the whole committee to change in the same year, especially not the three primary roles of President, Secretary and Treasurer. This doesn't mean that no one may stand against an incumbent at any time, but that a three-yearly tenure may encourage more people to stand.

Diane Moody (New Esperance) wanted clarification: if someone is elected for three years, why would someone stand against someone? **Jerry West (Windsor Morris)** said that anyone can stand against any committee member. In practice this never happened. Someone might feel that they can only stand against an incumbent every three years, this means that an officer MUST stand for re-election every three year. **Diane Moody (New Esperance)** understood that this is a good idea to refresh the committee, but if someone is doing a good job all is well but making that person then stand down doesn't seem right. **Sue Storey (Beverley Garland)** wanted to know if six years the cut off; **Melanie Barber (President)** said that it would be multiples of three years, with Sally Wearing being the longest serving President at twelve years!

Ann Gillman (Leek Morris) understood the rationale with presidency. Some skills take time to build up, and contacts, some roles can't be easily filled. **Melanie Barber (President)** accepted this but said that should someone wish to stand again there potentially would be no problem.

Diane Moody (New Esperance) said that it would help to clarify the thinking behind this if there were new wording for the committee structure: if a job came to an end it could represent a closed role. **Melanie Barber (President)** undertook to discuss this further in committee.

2 From Emma Melville, First Class Stamp

That the Morris Federation has a list of 2 or 3 North West dances and 2 or 3 Border dances that they encourage every side to learn at least one of so that at JMOs days/festivals/days of dance a massed display can be put on which is more than just Cotswold. That the Morris Federation provide notation and music for these dances to teams so that everyone is doing the same dance. (Received by email as First Class Stamp were not able to attend the AGM)

Jamie Sage (Rackaback Morris) is looking at some set dances that could be done by all. He references the Circassian Circle at the JMO day in York. He is very much in favour. **Alison Devlin (New Esperance)** asked if the idea is for the dances were Border, would they be done by all Border sides; then the North West dance being danced by North West dancers, etc. **Jenny Everett (Treasurer)** said that this discussion presumes that we have Cotswold dances in mind.

Karen Taylor (Belfagan) said that at the JMO Day of Dance in Sheffield there was only one massed Cotswold Dance that they could join in with, which was Bonny Green Garters. She favoured this idea. **Nori MacIntyre-Grey (New Esperance)** said she thought massed dances can look effective if done really well and together, but that if Cotswold dances were to be included she would like an instructional video.

Diane Moody (New Esperance) said that they never join in massed dances because whilst you might think that Cotswold dances look the same, the styles and speed are always different. She thinks that massed dances look awful and are not a good view for Morris. The only way of getting a semblance of similarity would be to get everyone to follow a style video. Border teams might find it easier to find a similar style. She thinks the whole idea of massed dances very difficult.

Fiona Eastmond (New Esperance) said that all teams in the Morris Federation work on individuality and doing something badly doesn't advertise us at all well.

Mike Adamson (Rumworth Morris of Bolton) said he didn't think massed dances look good. He doesn't know two North West teams who dance the same. He would vote against this, the thought the ethos of the Morris Federation was individuality -

Karen Taylor (Belfagan) said that the massed dances she has seen has been spot-on and thought them to more of participation rather than a three-line whip.

Jerry West (Notation officer) pointed out that he would have to produce any instructional video, and the logistics would include who would choose the team, the dance, the music? The Morris Ring the Squire publishes his dances, they are all Cotswold, and the standard notation rarely varies. How do you control the music at such an event? **Fiona Eastmond (New Esperance)** said that we tend to use similar tunes, **Diane Moody (New Esperance)** said the speeds vary drastically.

Melanie Barber (President) has seen this at the JMO Day of Dance in Bristol and saw different tempos, which she rather liked.

Peter Grind (Jerusalem Jammers) reminded the meeting that this was discussed in 1990 and Plymouth Reel came out of this, played to Soldier's Joy. He said it never really worked as well as had been envisaged although ribbon dancers still perform it. **Barry Goodman (Redbornstoke Morris)** has seen the same tune used to difference dances, most notably at Oxford Folk Weekend when it was disastrous. It's a great deal of fun to experiment but we're not showing what we do to the best: if we have different styles, which we do, it will not be our best.

Gina Seddons (Mockbeggar Morris) recalled seeing Plymouth Reel being danced in the Chester Day of Dance and the echoing of the clogs was really wonderful.

3 From Emma Melville (First Class Stamp)

You will note from the above background that several of us went to the JMO – but with other sides, not with First Class Stamp. We would like future JMO providers to consider the issue of Appalachian sides who find it impossible to move a stage continually around the dancing venues and could be catered for by a single spot with a stage / set of boards where they can stay in one place and other teams can join them. The day in Bristol a few years ago was brilliant and catered for us superbly; we would like to see other organisations managing this too.

Mike Adamson (Rumworth Morris of Bolton) said he would like Appalachian sides to consider where they site themselves so that other sides can join, ie in the middle of a dancing spot leaves no room for other sides to dance along with them. **Jamie Sage (Rackaback Morris)** was concerned that Appalachian sides would be limited to where they dance as they wouldn't get to see anyone else; although **Shirley Dixon (Jackstraws)** said she thought that this was Emma's point, that they have a central point. **Melanie (President)** said that having one spot during the day has much to offer as it can be difficult to find somewhere flat for the boards to go.

Melanie Barber (President) undertook to ensure future AGM and JMO DoD hosts were made aware.

7 ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

Melanie Barber (President) suggested voting *en mass* and no objections were received. She handed the Chair to Nicki Pickering, Chair of Open Morris, who read out the current committee, all of whom are willing to stand again:

Melanie Barber (President)
Fee Lock (Secretary)
Jenny Everett (Treasurer)
Mike Everett (Archive Officer)
Jerry West (Notation Officer)
Sam Ross (Newsletter)

200 in favour
0 against

Nicki Pickering handed the Chair back to **Melanie Barber (President)**, who added that **Kevin Taylor** remains a co-opted member for his knowledge of the Morris Federation database.

8 DATE(S) OF FUTURE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

The next AGM will Saturday 22nd September 2018 hosted by New Esperance in London. They are proposing to make it a whole weekend and an information sheet had been tabled by **Diane Moody (New Esperance) - (shown as the final two pages)**. Please fill in/contact her.

This will be based around Cecil Sharp House: EFDSS do not permit black face paint in the House or grounds. This means that those wearing face paint during the day will have to remove it before entering the grounds. Furthermore, there are several places in London where wearing blackface paint is not recommended. Morris sides who wish to wear black face paint may wish to consider this carefully, and perhaps taking the advice of **Diane Moody (New Esperance)** and if using public transport to apply it when they arrive at the stands, although **Nori MacIntyre-Grey (New Esperance)** said that the full-face black face paint is the main issue here.

Diane Moody (New Esperance) will attempt to find wooden floored places for rapper & Appalachian sides.

2019 – courtesy of Kinfauns in Perth

2020 – courtesy of Customs & Exiles in Wokingham

2021 – Although it seems a long way away we are asking for any volunteers?

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

10 PRESENTATIONS & VOTES OF THANKS

Melanie Barber (President) thanked **Beverley Garland, Rackaback Morris, Green Ginger Garland & Makara Morris** for putting on such a fabulous day in Hull, City of Culture. She gave out Butterworth badges to a representative of all four sides.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5.29 pm

ooOoo

Morris Federation AGM weekend, 21st – 23rd September 2018

New Esperance Morris has secured the use of Cecil Sharp House in Camden Town for the whole weekend. We would like to run a 'Festival of Morris', rather than holding a single day of dance.

The EFDSS has agreed to 'indoor camping' in Cecil Sharp House for a number of people. We would appreciate an early estimate of how many people will need to take advantage of this arrangement, as we are aware that some people have friends and family in London who they would prefer to visit.

We would advise against bringing cars into London. There is some free street parking over the weekend, but Parkopedia suggests that you might have a 20 to 30-minute walk. Saturday tours will use public transport, and will be within zones 1 – 3, for which the daily price cap is currently £7.70.

We would like your help to decide on which of our many ideas we should pursue. Here is an outline timetable for the weekend, with several alternatives. Which ones interest you and your side?

Friday

- As this will be the third Friday in the month, there will be the regular 'Knees Up' ceilidh on the Friday night. We don't yet know who the band and caller will be, but this is a popular public series with a vibrant atmosphere. We have negotiated reduced-price admission of £8.00.
- Music session in the bar.

Saturday

- Daytime dancing. Each tour will visit an area of London, (e.g. Hampstead, Marylebone, London Bridge, Docklands), include one or more popular tourist venues, some proper local pubs, and possibly a food market for buy-your-own lunch. Tours which include sword dance teams or other 'indoor dancers' will include some pubs with wooden floors.
- AGM in Cecil Sharp House
- Food (centrally arranged or self-sourced?)
- Some or many of the following -
 - Another ceilidh
 - A 'Library lecture' on some aspect of Morris history
 - A presentation on e.g. costume
 - A discussion on a contemporary topic, e.g. the public image of Morris
 - A workshop on e.g. writing new dances into existing traditions
 - Music session
 - Song session
 - Cards and Board games

Sunday

- Breakfast
- Some or many of the following -
 - Taster session – e.g. rapper for those who want to try it
 - Experienced workshop – e.g. a specific Cotswold tradition, or a "swap shop" of techniques
 - Musician's workshop, e.g. tips on playing for dancing
 - Fools and Animals – ideas exchange
 - Dancing at a local pub

Please use the form below to help us plan or contact Diane directly.
We're not asking for definite numbers, but a vague idea would be good!

We would also be interested in any other suggestions or (helpful!) comments.
Could you volunteer a workshop leader?

Name of side:

.....
....

Email address of bag:

.....
...

Number likely to attend

On Saturday only (approx): for whole weekend (approx):
.....

Number interested in indoor camping at C#H

On Friday 21st: on Saturday 22nd:
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We like the sound of:

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More ideas / comments / suggestions :

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Contact - diane.moody@blueyonder.co.uk

Diane Moody
124, Streatham Road
Mitcham
Surrey
CR4 2AE (It's in Greater London, honest!)