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# fedextra

The quarterly newsletter of The Morris Federation  
Winter/Spring 2019

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Simon Brock explains  
what's next for his clogs

### **Brighton Morris**

looking back over  
50 years and the  
secrets of their success

# North West Morris

a brief history





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**John Bacon Gold Badge**

## Cover Stars

**Chiltern Hundreds at The Morris Federation AGM Day of Dance, London 2018**  
 Photograph: **Sam Ross**

**Do you have a great action picture of your team that could feature on the cover of FedExtra?**

Send a high quality image suitable to print in A4 portrait format, some background info about your team, details of where and when the image was taken, and the photographer's name to: [newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk)

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from the  
**editor**

welcome to the winter/spring issue of **Morris FedExtra**

It's been another year of celebrations, with many teams reaching 25, 35, 40 or 50 years of dancing. Congratulations to all those who

contribute to the success and longevity of these teams. It's also heartening to see that new teams are emerging, whether they're looking to maintain local dances and tunes, or encourage and introduce a new generation to traditional dance.

When it comes to tradition, the subject of 'evolving tradition', appears to be controversial for some. While making a note of dances and tunes so that they are not lost forever is a worthwhile exercise, interpreting dance notation as the only way to perform a dance may not be in the spirit of the tradition itself.

The infamous 'Black Book' published by *The Morris Ring* is upheld by some as the only way to dance specific dances, or even the only source of morris dances that should be performed. Similarly, those who have not learned to play tunes by ear from an experienced morris musician, but instead rely on the dots on a page, may be tempted to imply that the written notation is the only way for the music to be played.

I used to get a lift to weekends of dance and morris workshops with a good friend from *Priston Jubilee Morris* and when the sat nav shouted at him for going the wrong way he would always firmly reply, "It is only a guide!" Perhaps the same may be said for the notation of traditional music and dance.

**Sam**

next issue publication date: **02 Aug**

## advertising rates

For the current rates and advert sizes, please contact the editor: [newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk)

You can also download a copy from the FedExtra pages on our website: [www.morrisfed.org.uk](http://www.morrisfed.org.uk)

## is your team info up-to-date?

Update your team's info and contact details at any time by logging on to the membership database at: [www.morrisfed.org.uk/join/existing-members](http://www.morrisfed.org.uk/join/existing-members)



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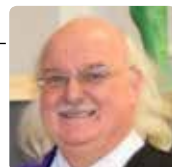
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President's  
**prologue**

**Hello!** I hope by now that everyone is enjoying the 2019 dance season!

Huge THANK YOU to *Medlock Rapper* for hosting a very successful and enjoyable Joint Morris Organisations' National Day of Dance in Manchester on 30 March. Thank you also to all the stewards who looked after the teams, the team that attended, and especially *Waters Green Morris* for representing *The Morris Federation* with a wonderful show dance. The next JMO National Day of Dance will be hosted by *The Morris Ring* in Liverpool on Saturday 18 April 2020.

As I've mentioned before, I am stepping down as President this year, so if you fancy taking up the mantle in helping shape the future of *The Morris Federation* then please step forward! I won't lie and say it's the easiest job in the world, and it can be time consuming, but overall it's extremely rewarding, and you're not alone as the committee are a great bunch to work with. The first step is to find yourself two member sides to nominate and second you, and then write a

short bio to be sent out with the AGM papers, which we normally aim to have ready for proof by the end of June. If you have any questions or want to know more, then please email me at: [president@morrisfed.org.uk](mailto:president@morrisfed.org.uk)

Our new membership system is now fully up and running, so here's a gentle reminder that you can now update your own details via *The Morris Federation* website: [www.morrisfed.org.uk](http://www.morrisfed.org.uk) under 'Join Us/Join or Renew' there's a section on 'Membership details update' with a link to update your details direct.

You'll need to use your team contact email address and request a password, then you'll be able to access the details that we hold for your team, and amend accordingly. This is especially important as broadcasts regarding *Morris Federation* business, such as renewal reminders, are now sent from the system. We're hoping that next year we'll be able to generate your PLI certificates via the system to save Jenny compiling each one individually, which as you

can imagine is a huge task, especially around the renewal date. We're also slowly moving forward with a member's section on our website, which will contain an online version of the Member's Manual, together with advice and guidance specific to Morris Federation members, so please watch out for updates as and when this happens.

Our next main event is our AGM, hosted by *Kinfauns Step Dancers* in Perth, Scotland, on 28 September. *Kinfauns* have been busy with arrangements for the weekend, which is being based around the Salutation Hotel. There will be the usual day of dance on the Saturday preceding the AGM, followed by a Scottish ceilidh in the evening, and then workshops and more opportunities to dance out on the Sunday. We hope to see as many of you there as possible, and please remember that you can still represent your team at the AGM even if you don't have a team to dance during the day.

Happy Dancing!

**Melanie**

## diary dates 2019

**6-9 June**  
Wimbourn Folk Festival  
[wimbournfolk.co.uk](http://wimbournfolk.co.uk)

**2-10 August**  
Sidmouth Folk Week,  
incorporating the John  
Gasson Jig Competition  
[sidmouthfolkweek.co.uk](http://sidmouthfolkweek.co.uk)

**17-23 August**  
Whitby Folk Week  
[whitbyfolk.co.uk](http://whitbyfolk.co.uk)

**14-15 September**  
Lancashire & Cheshire Clog  
Dance Competitions  
Pendle Heritage Centre,  
Barrowford  
[clogcomp.org.uk](http://clogcomp.org.uk)

**28 September**  
The Morris Federation AGM  
Hosted by Kinfauns in Perth

Send details of events to:  
[newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk)

The Morris Federation is not  
responsible for events organised by  
external organisations

## guidelines for submission of articles

Please send all text and  
images via WeTransfer.com to  
[newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk)

Articles should be sent as doc,  
docx, txt or odt formats. Any  
copy over 750 words will be  
trimmed.

Accompany all articles with at  
least three high quality images.  
Images must not be embedded  
in text and should be sent as  
separate attachments.

Photographs and illustrations  
should be jpg, eps, tiff or pdf,  
though other file types may be  
accepted.

Make sure you have appropriate  
permission to publish all words  
and pictures. Credit will be  
given to photographers, and  
captions printed where provided.

keep it **social**





Photographs courtesy of David Lyons and Gwyndon John Boardman

# MALKIN MORRIS AWARDED HERITAGE LOTTERY GRANT

18 month old *Malkin Morris* specialises in researching, performing and promoting the dances and tunes of Burnley, Pendle, Hyndburn and the Ribble Valley in Lancashire. They raise the image of traditional dance and music, the culture and identity of the area and provide opportunities for participants to have fun, improve physical fitness and learn performance skills.

Three of us started with a workshop in May 2017. 16 musicians and would-be dancers aged 17- 67 arrived so we learned 'The Whalley' the dance from a nearby village. The dancers included those with no experience, some from *Clitheroe Country Fayre* (c1976), others from *Bobbins and Reelers* (1980s), *Park High School Bangles Beads and Bloomers* (1980s) and *Polyolbion*.

Our musicians, the 'Roughlee Ruffians', play a range of instruments: flute, melodeon, accordion, concertina and mandola and are determined to work to make the tunes fit the dancers and not the other way round. We are so grateful to them for this support.

We look for local tunes and only perform dances from our local area, both step and NW processional morris and the resulting dancing has been exciting, energetic and very creative.

We have been awarded a grant by the Heritage Lottery Fund to produce a nationally available, readily accessible, free resource of local north west processional clog dance, step dance and local tunes, the project runs until August 2019.

This funding has helped us offer workshops to schools and community organisations, IT resources and clogs, as well as with collecting information

from archives, libraries, books, newspapers and hopefully readers of this article! Dances and tunes are being lost over time and we must act quickly to preserve these now if they are not to vanish for ever.

Whilst talking to Padiham Rotary Club, the Shawforth was mentioned as being just outside our area. One of the Rotary members jumped and asked us where we had obtained

the dance. David Cooke, (*Rochdale Morris* and *Colne Royal*) had written it, but we had obtained it from a workshop with Belfagan in Cockermouth. The Rotary member told us how it was originally taught at a folk club, and as he was a traditionalist and didn't want to teach a current dance, he taught them basic steps and figures culled from other dances.

If you have any memories or records of morris or step dances and tunes from our area we would love to hear from you.

Contact Gin Crewe, Squire:  
07887 844025  
familycrewe@hotmail.com  
Facebook: @localmorris

Or join us! We practise on Monday nights in Roughlee or Barley Hall in Lancashire.

VIRGINIA  
AND PETER  
CREWE



Malkin's musicians, the 'Roughlee Ruffians'

# BELLES AND BROOMSTICKS WEEKEND OF DANCE 2018

Belles & Broomsticks processing at Candie Gardens

*Customs and Exiles, Water's Green, Oyster Girls, Baker's Dozen, Armaleggan, Ridgeway Step Clog, Tinnors Morris and Chinewrde*, joined us for the weekend, We were based at the local Scout headquarters, a massive space that we softened with marquees, bunting and fairy lights – which made for a splendid space to eat, drink, dance and be merry.

LUCY  
SKELTON

We began the weekend on Friday afternoon with tea and cake, followed by the opening of the bar and a meal with a dessert of traditional Guernsey Apple Cake. Then there was team-team interaction, music, singing and dancing through the evening.

Saturday morning, the weather was wonderful and the tours set out to astonish Guernsey and have a great time. Some of the teams danced at the south-western point of the island, overlooking a bay with fishing boats and fortifications, and of course a pub; other teams went to the middle of the island and entertained museum-goers, park life, and café patrons.

After lunch, all teams headed up the coast to Cobo Bay where we had diverted the traffic, so we had the whole road to dance in alongside two pubs. We were there all afternoon, dancing in the road, on the beach (one of the best in Guernsey), swimming, or sitting on the seawall watching the other teams and enjoying the sunshine.

Back at our base, our excellent ceilidh band was Monkey Box with caller Annie Bolt and they kept us dancing all evening.

Sunday was another sunny day and all teams converged on Candie Gardens in St Peter Port at 10am for coffee, cake, recovery and a massed stand, followed by a processional, headed by *Customs and Exiles*. We processed through the town and on to the sea-front, dancing at various places and attracting large audiences.

After lunch we all headed for the ferry and a short trip to Herm, our nearest island. A chance to relax at the Mermaid Tavern, go to shell beach, swim or just sit on the sand. Which is not to say that there was no dancing for those who still had some energy!

The Mermaid Tavern catered very well for over a hundred of us, with huge pans full of paella, and as the sun set over Guernsey, (the best view ever from a gents loo!), there was singing, Dancing in the Dark (a massed Nutting Girl jig), and a game of Happy Salmon so uproarious that it must have been audible in St Peter Port.

When it was time to take the chartered ferry back to Guernsey, music and song broke out for those on the lower cabin deck, and for those on the upper the view of the stars, Milky Way and Mars. A perfect finish to a wonderful weekend.



Armaleggan



Customs & Exiles





Treacle Eater Clog, August 2018  
Photograph N Nelson

## Treacle Eater Clog is 35!

JULIA  
CATOVSKY

**Treacle Eater Clog** evolved in 1983 from the relatively short-lived **Queen's Delight** women's Cotswold morris team, dancing a mix of traditional NW dances both written by our own team members (past and present) and adapted from other teams.

To celebrate our 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we decided that we would make all our members a new kit to replace the faded black and red outfits that varied in shades from sun bleached pinks to reasonable reds. We got together for a sewing production line gang. It was tremendous fun and many hands made light work under the direction of our sewing chiefs, Jadi and Janet.

Our main celebration was a day of dancing in Exeter on 19 August 2018. We boarded the train at Yeovil and Sherborne and headed off to Exeter Central. We danced at various spots around the city, The Princess Hay shopping centre, the quay and the Double Locks pub where we stopped for lunch and a pint or two- it was a bit hard to get dancing again!

Our final spot was at Exeter Central Station before we descended upon an unsuspecting Italian restaurant in town for a lovely meal with great friends.

On the return train journey there were few other passengers, so we decided that it would be a fun idea to play a few tunes. It certainly made the journey whizz by, even if we hadn't noticed we were in the Quiet Zone!



Treacle Eater Clog, Sherborne, Dorset, June 1984

## Longsword Tournament



The Trevor Stone Trophy

KEVIN  
HOLLAND

At the Sword Dance Union Longsword Tournament in Sowerby Bridge on 6 October, *Sullivans Sword* won the Trevor Stone Trophy for the best traditional dance, *Southport Swords* won the trophy for the best own dance and the Snark audience appreciation award, and *Oakenyouth* won the junior trophy. Other teams attending were *Redcar*, *Maltby*, *Goathland*, *Spen Valley*, *Kirkburton*, and *Claro*.



Sullivans Sword

## Old Palace Clog in Calais

We danced, posed and paddled at every opportunity and kept other passengers occupied on the crossing. We danced Crewe on the ferry because there were signs saying "Crew Only".



Got a fun photo you want to share? Please send any photos and caption to: [newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk)

## 31<sup>st</sup> Ebor Morris York Festival of Traditional Dance

KEVIN  
HOLLAND

After the long, hot and dry summer of 2018 it all changed on Saturday 8 September for the 31<sup>st</sup> annual York Festival of Traditional Dance organised by *Ebor Morris*. Despite rain varying from light drizzle to heavy rain all day, 15 teams braved the weather to perform for the locals and tourists, interspersed by drying out periods in local cafés and pubs. This year the teams attending were *Ebor Morris*, *Acorn Morris*, *Persephone*, *Stoney Steppers*, *Stone the Crows*, *Blackheath Morris*, *Silkstone Greens*, *Leeds Morris*, *Hornbeam Molly*, *Brackley Morris*, *Makara*, *Pecsaetan*, *Herring Gals*, *Ripon City*, and the *Minster Strays*. The highlight of the day was a showcase in the pouring rain, when every team performed in front of York's Lord Mayor and civic party. On Sunday the sun returned, when *Ebor*, *Acorn* and *Brackley* were joined by *Black Diamond* and *Richmond on Swale*. This year's festival will be held from 7-8 September.



Ebor Morris



Silkstone Greens



Acorn Morris



Pecsaetan Morris

## Adrian Hilton 1955 - 2018

Adrian Hilton, who died in December 2018 after a stroke, was a member of *Chingford Morris Men* for 46 years, acting as a dancer, musician, author and performer in the mummies play and for over 20 years, Squire. He joined the *Good Easter Molly Dancers* for many Plough Monday performances. He was a member of the *Lea Valley Mummies* until they folded. He also played occasionally for the *Enfield Chasers* and *Herts Holly* among others, and for country dances in halls, pub bars and school assemblies. His music was always so danceable.

Adrian was an exceptionally talented musician impressing many with his 'tiddly bits'. He regularly attended music sessions across the country, including East Anglia, and he also built his own melodeon. He was a Friend of Broadstairs Folk Week for many years and attended a few days of the festival in 2018. In

the Singaround he was famous for playing the 'Chorus Tune' as it came to be known (Woodland Revels), because people used to sing along. He enjoyed attending Tenterden Folk Festival and played for *Chingford Morris* on the Sunday of the 2018 festival.

He also attended a number of folk clubs over time including Walthamstow, Ware, Lewes, Loughton and Waltham Abbey. He sang with Shape Note groups, and attended the first English Shape Note Convention in Hitchin many years ago.







# NORTH WEST MORRIS A BRIEF HISTORY

Old Speckled Hen  
Wimborne Minster Folk Festival, 2018  
Photograph by Helen Jones

**The earliest reference to morris in the North West of England is from 1578 in Cheshire, "morres daunces and rishe bearings vused in the Churche." This connection with rush bearing lasted a long time, and was a factor in the development of the style that we now call North West morris.**

Churches in those days had earthen floors which were covered in rushes to provide some insulation and comfort. Every year, the rushes were replaced with fresh ones and celebrations grew around the carts delivering the rushes.

Carts, piled over ten feet high with rushes, were decorated with banners and silverware and pulled through the streets to the church in front of large crowds. Some were pulled by a horse, others by large groups of men.

Now add the morris dancers, dancing along with the cart. This is why North West is so different from other morris traditions – it's a processional dance.

Rushcart processions declined over time as churches gained stone or tile floors, though some carts still brought rushes which were used to make garlands to decorate the church walls.

In 1887 Queen Victoria had been on the throne for 50 years. The nation was in

a mood to celebrate and they wanted to celebrate all things English. What could be more 'Olde England' than May Queens, Rose Queens (in June) and morris dancers?

There was a sudden explosion of civic events including long processions with groups of every kind. Almost every procession in the NW region had their morris dancers processing along to the town band.

Just ten years later, in 1897, Victoria had her diamond jubilee. By now, the towns had really got the taste for big events. In addition to adult teams, a lot of children's morris teams were formed: some boys, some girls and some mixed. Usually associated with schools or churches, these were big groups with long paired lines leading down the streets.

These long sets encouraged the use of figures based around groups of four dancers. Dancers would sometimes wear different colour sashes to help them

remember their place.

A leader would dance at the top of the set to give instructions to the dancers. This is especially useful for processions, as a hiccup in the procession ahead may require the dancers to either perform a couple of figures on the spot or to advance rapidly. The order of figures might be fixed, or might be called to suit the requirements of the moment. Because teams were often dancing to brass bands they hadn't practised with, the dances needed to have very regular patterns that would fit to popular tunes. Multiples of 16 bars and a steady tempo were required.

Lack of a jubilee didn't stop these events from continuing. Wakes week, the annual workers holiday continued to be celebrated with parades and festivals. Sometimes morris teams were paid to take part in these events, sometimes they could be attracted by competitions.

Competitions started around the mid 1880s and were really popular by 1920, with men's, women's and mixed troupes

JUDITH  
PROCTOR



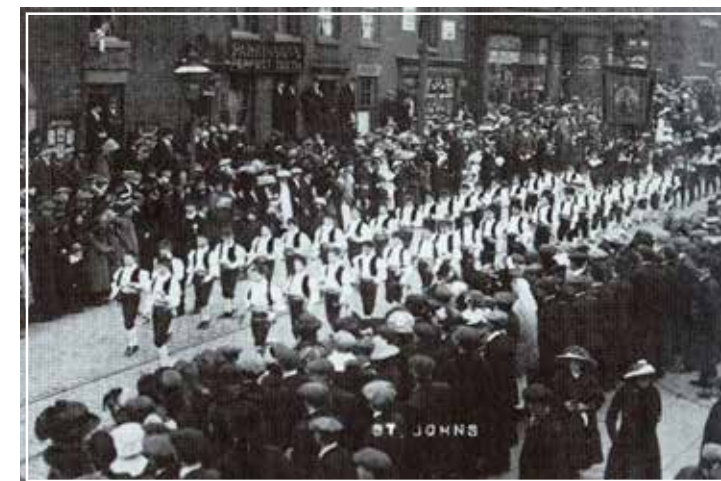
Gisburn Morris, 1906  
Photograph courtesy David Middlehurst



Godley Hill Morris Dancers with Rushcart, c. 1882  
Photograph courtesy Duncan Broomhead



Rochdale Rushcart, c.1905  
Photograph courtesy David Middlehurst



Wigan St. John's Morris Dancers, 1910  
Photograph courtesy David Middlehurst

taking part – the competitions promoted high standards and inspired the creation of new figures.

It wasn't to last. Cheap seaside holidays reduced the importance of Wakes Week and World War II brought an end to the all male teams. A few mixed teams carried on for another decade or two, but only girls' Carnival morris continued unbroken to the present day and is now regarded as an independent tradition.

The morris revival begun by Cecil Sharp and Mary Neil, at the start of the twentieth century, began with Cotswold morris and remained focused on it for a long time. As the (now-discredited) belief that Cotswold was a pre-historic male ritual dance took hold, the women who had been the first revival dancers, and most of the early teachers, became excluded. In the late 1960s and the 1970s interest turned to the rich heritage of North West morris and new teams formed. The fact that these dances had been performed historically by women and children made it far easier for both men and women to become part

of the North West revival. A majority of current NW teams are female.

Now, North West is in decline again. Most existing teams consist of older dancers and are finding it hard to recruit new blood. New North West teams are almost non-existent, although a couple buck the trend.

The question is what can be done to reverse this decline? North West is a fantastic dance style, and worthy of engaging a new generation.

Last year, I was lucky enough to get involved with a local school and with the help of some volunteer musicians we ran a successful after-school North West club for a children's team that performed at our local folk festival. Sadly, the teacher, whom I was working with has changed job and no one else at the school has enough time to be involved with an after-school club. Hopefully, I'll find another group somewhere.

Competitions have helped promote clog dancing, massively increase both

awareness and standards of solo and double jigs, as well as driving rapper to ever increasing popularity and spectacular displays. We'd hoped to hold a competition for North West dancing at Wimborne Minster Folk Festival 2019, but although we'd got an excellent group of judges, and really good line up of North West teams we don't have enough teams wanting to compete.

I know other people are doing their best to promote North West and to encourage new dancers. I hope that they will succeed. It's too good a dance style for us to lose it.

Further reading:

- *All About the Morris* by Mike Salter
  - *Morris Dancers and Rose Queens* by J Haslett
  - *Morris dancing on the Lancashire Plain: The Preston Tradition 1890 to 1939* by Prew Boswel
  - *Rushbearing* by Alfred Burton
  - *This Girl Can Morris Dance (The Histories of Morris)* by Lucy Wright
- Thanks also go to Duncan Broomhead.





supported by  
**The Morris  
Federation**

# TRADMAD!

*TradMad, with the support of The Morris Federation, were formed in 2018 to create and sustain a new rapper team of dancers, musicians and characters and encourage new members to join.*

TradMad are of mixed gender and aim to promote the art of rapper dancing to the younger generation.

In the words of Bryony Griffith, who along with Will Hampson, tutor TradMad, "The group did their first rapper

performance at the Shepley Singers winter concert, which was brilliant - their parents didn't know we were going to do it and were well made up! Hopefully they will also be performing at Shepley Spring Festival in May and the National Coal Mining museum youth music day in July.

They're all musicians and singers and have done various concerts that didn't include the rapper!"

Find out more about our Sponsorship, Grants and Bursary Policy at [www.morrisfed.org.uk](http://www.morrisfed.org.uk)



Tradmad showing off their first rapper sword lock  
Photograph by Bryony Griffith

# 25 years of Green Dragons



ANDY  
REEVES,  
SQUIRE

22 September 2018 saw the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Green Dragons in Bury St Edmunds.

The side started in 1993 dancing a mixture of styles and wearing jogging bottoms with one red and one green leg (it helped everybody skip on the same leg, I guess). Now a prominent border side we have long-since waved goodbye to the coloured leggings!

We held a day of dance in the town which started with a procession before dispersing to various dance locations. Celebrating with us we had, Bury Fair, Kenninghall, Pretty Grim, Danegeld, Milkmaid Molly, Golden Star, Leading Lights, Rumburgh and it was very nice to see Boudica Morris from Hadleigh, a new side enjoying their first day of dance. We ended

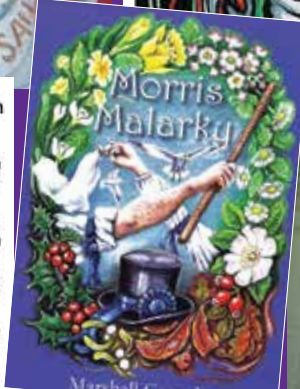
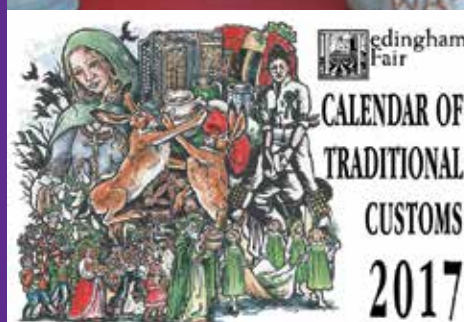
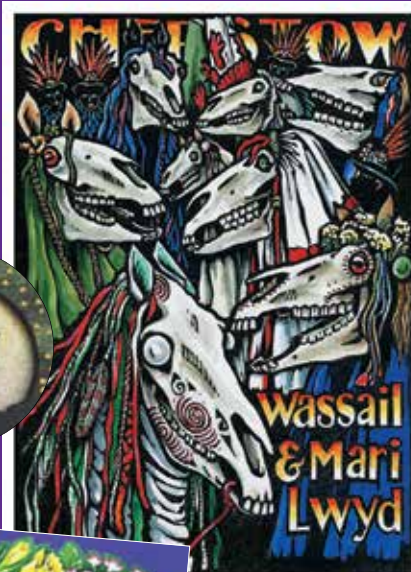
the dancing in The Abbey Gardens in one long line and danced Vandalls.

The celebrations continued into the evening with a very well-attended ceilidh, dancing to the sounds of *Clutching at Straws* with their excellent caller Gill Bosley.

It was great to see some of the founder members and many faces from years gone by. One of the founders even liked it so much he has re-joined us.

Here's to the next 25 years!  
[www.greendragonmorris.com](http://www.greendragonmorris.com)

**H**eddingham  
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[www.heddinghamfair.co.uk](http://www.heddinghamfair.co.uk)



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## STEPPING ON: A CONFERENCE ON STEPPING IN DANCE ACROSS THE BRITISH ISLES AND BEYOND

16-17 NOVEMBER 2019, CECIL SHARP HOUSE, LONDON

### About the conference

The British Isles have a rich history of step dancing of many forms and in many contexts some of which are relatively well known and others largely lost. It is a history which goes back many centuries and links with traditions in other parts of the world. The aim of the conference is to further our knowledge and understanding, and to stimulate debate. The conference will be of interest to practitioners, researchers and all who are interested in the diversity of traditional dance in the British Isles.

We intend to present a mixture of papers, demonstrations, workshops, round table discussions and posters.

Find out more at [www.vvml.org/steppingconference](http://www.vvml.org/steppingconference)

### Potential topics include:

- Local/regional step dance traditions
- Stepping in social dances
- Stepping in other dances such as sword, rapper and morris
- Stepping on the stage
- The twentieth century clog revival
- Music and stepping
- Competitions
- Contemporary issues in step dance revival
- Histories of stepping in dance
- The role of the dancing masters International links e.g. through migration
- Experience from traditions in other countries which can illuminate the experience in the British Isles



SIMON BROCK

# The journey to becoming a clog maker

Episode 4: an anniversary of sorts

THE FOURTH IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES ABOUT CLOG MAKING, MY PROGRESS IN WHICH HAS BEEN GENEROUSLY ASSISTED BY A GRANT FROM THE MORRIS FEDERATION.

By the end of the last episode, I'd documented most of my journey from Clueless to Clogger. Or, rather, with tremendous help and support from clog making mentors and people within the folk world, I'd gone from making (pretty awful) clogs two days a week in my friend's workshop, to being fully installed in my own place.

Whilst in the early days I picked up orders that were probably largely motivated by curiosity, pity or an altruistic sense of 'here's a new clog maker, let's support him', I flatter myself that I'm now receiving orders because people genuinely like my clogs and appreciate that I try to make them beautiful too: believing they should not only be robust and comfy, but also withstand the unforgiving scrutiny of arty close-up photos for Instagram.

2019 promises to be a cloggy cocktail of black lace-ups for morris and many step dancers; a smattering of turquoise, purple

or red clogs for those who like to step dance solo or in privacy; and bonkers T-bar clogs for the Welsh, who evidently appreciate a bit more 'bling'. One day maybe an English step dancing side will see the merit in kitting out the whole team in hot pink patent leather...

In March, I marked something of an anniversary by once again heading to Cecil Sharp House for Camden Clog's day of workshops. When I went there in 2018, it was my first trading event as a clog maker, complete with prosecco in paper cups to celebrate the auspicious occasion. Going back this year was a chance to reflect, and to think about 'what next'.

The biggest news in the intervening year was undoubtedly my winning two of the Heritage Crafts Association (HCA) Awards at their conference in March (also at Cecil Sharp House, so I felt quite at home). The HCA conference was a good day out, and I think my winning the awards helped to

raise the profile of clogs and clog making, which can't be a bad thing!

For anyone not familiar with the HCA, they promote and support such niche crafts as vanishing fore-edge painting, watch dial enamelling and Devon maund making, listing the most vulnerable in the Red List of Endangered Crafts. Cutting clog soles by hand is on the 'Critically Endangered' list, and clog making overall is now recognised as 'Endangered'.

Remember how in the first of these articles I described the rather brutal clog knives (aka stock knives) that were traditionally used to cut clog soles? Truth is, I only routinely use these tools for a proportion of the shaping work – I don't yet have the skills to carve clog soles entirely by hand using clog knives – and Herefordshire-based Jeremy Atkinson is the best person to learn from. Jeremy is not well-known in the folk world, but I've mentioned him before. Starting in the autumn, funded by the HCA awards, I will be training with him. Watch this space.

Looking ahead, hoping it doesn't sound too pretentious, I've also started to think

CLOG SOLES IN PROGRESS, WITH THE HOLLOWING KNIFE

a little about legacy. Firstly, I've developed a system for marking and cataloguing clogs. Maybe this is a consequence of being married to an auditor, but I do like the paperwork to be in order. Every pair has a serial number so, in theory, an exact fit should be replicable 5, 10 or 20 years from now. It also means that when I retire, I can see exactly how many clogs I've made. But I'm not sure what a medical practitioner would make of this obsessive behaviour.

I've also begun, slowly, to record some history: starting with my mentor Trefor Owen, recording his memories of the clog trade of old, how he got into it, who he learned from, etc. Currently this exists as nearly six hours of unedited audio, but I hope eventually to distil it down into a more user-friendly format; and likewise, with the reminiscences of other clog makers.

I fear that knowledge of how things used to be is too easily lost. Writing this series of articles for FedExtra has hopefully entertained you and provided a little insight

BIG CLOGS FOR NORTHWEST MORRIS



CLOGS WITH PYROGRAPHED SOLES AND TOOLED TURQUOISE UPPERS



HOT PINK PATENT LEATHER T-BARS



BROWN CLASP CLOGS, A VERY TRADITIONAL STYLE







# TEMPORARY MEASURED A NEW LADIES NORTH WEST CLOG TEAM

*Temporary Measured performing Carr Lodge at Lewes, Oct 2017. Photograph by Clive Funnell*

**Temporary Measured celebrated their second year as a fully-fledged NW Clog team in Washington, West Sussex.**

The team started in autumn of 2014 with a single Sunday morning workshop run by *Chanctonbury Ring Morris Men* (CRMM) open to both men and women. The main objective was to recruit more men for their NW side but over two thirds of people attending were women.

Nothing more happened until October 2015 when they tried again with another one-off workshop. Again, the women outnumbered the men. Eventually Ed Lyons and Brian Cooper from CRMM were persuaded to start up a Sunday morning practice in February 2016, with a view to start a new women's team with support from Ed as Foreman and Brian as musician.

Six months on and spurred on by an invitation to dance at the Lewes Folk Festival a

very simple kit of black trousers, white shirt and red waistcoat was put together along with the name chosen for that first event, *Temporary Measures*.

The elation of that first performance in October was shattered just weeks later with the sudden death of our mentor Ed Lyons. The team swiftly voted to change the name to *Temporary Measured* in memory of Ed.

Our next performance was at Ed's funeral. This was a sad and curiously momentous occasion. We were invited to dance outside the church with CRMM and to process into the church in kit with them. We were genuinely welcomed and felt encouraged to continue despite this very sad set-back and over the last two years have evolved into a strong team with a healthy balance between performing to high standards and having fun.

One of the challenges of any new team is that many of our members dance with other sides and are not available on May Day or Boxing Day. So we have been creative about making our own landmarks in the morris calendar with three key events. The first is our own Wassail on a Sunday lunchtime in January complete with a Lord of Misrule, mulled cider and guest teams, the second is our mid-summer 'Ed Lyons Barn Dance' in June and the third our end of season celebration lunch in October.

*Temporary Measured* have performed at many events. Our musicians have sat patiently through many a cold Sunday practice and gallantly played for us come rain or shine. We had snow when we danced at the Sompting Day of Dance at Amberley Museum in March and torrential rain on Good Friday,

when we joined *The Knots of May* for their Long Rope Skipping event. Fortunately, we had better weather over the summer and many lovely evenings dancing at one of the many local pubs and days of dance in Sussex, Surrey and Kent.

We are looking forward to a busy and enjoyable 2019. Further details on Facebook or [www.temporarymeasured.com](http://www.temporarymeasured.com)



*Our first mid-winter "Wassail" celebration, January 2018 with Ragged Phoenix and Chanctonbury Ring as guest teams, Martin Frost as the "Lord of Misrule" and Victoria as his lady  
Photograph by Judith Snelling*



*Our Mentor Ed Lyons, "Nowt much wrong with that!"  
Photograph by Clive Funnell*



*Team photo at our first performance at Lewes, October 2016  
Photograph by Barry Dewdney*

# OUR AGM DAY OF DANCE

Morris Federation teams from around the UK took to the streets of London, in advance of our AGM at Cecil Sharp House, on Saturday 22 September 2018. With thanks to New Esperance Morris for hosting the event.

*Photographs by Sam Ross*



*Chiltern Hundreds' Musicians*



*Pecsatan Morris*



*Chiltern Hundreds*



*Cockleshell Clog*



*Phoenix Clog*



*Clausentum Morris*



*Berkshire Bedlam*



*Windsor Morris*





# DANEGELD MORRIS' 30<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

When we first moved up to Ipswich from London in the 1980s, my husband soon joined a well-established local men's Cotswold side, the *East Suffolk Morris Men*, but I couldn't find a side that suited me. Contacts on the folk scene indicated that there were several local couples who were looking for a mixed morris side, so in 1988, *Danegeld Morris* was born – we think we were the first mixed side in the area.

We started practising North-West dances at Butley, not far from Woodbridge, so decided to take the Sutton Hoo ship burial mask as our emblem. Each dancer makes their own version for the back of their waistcoat, and our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary t-shirt proudly shows the current crop.

We loved taking our name from an early protection racket, and we still sometimes offer to go away if you pay us well! During the year, we collected for four birthday charities chosen by our members: WaterAid, Macmillan Cancer Support, St.Elizabeth Hospice and the East Anglian Air Ambulance, and raised £1000 through street performances, a birthday ceilidh (we have a brilliant band) and selling merchandise.

Some of our original couples are still with us, but we have also been lucky enough to gain new members through the years (although the baby buggies have come and gone!) We have danced in France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany and are currently researching an East European trip. We also enjoy taking part in folk festivals around the UK; most recently the StrawBear Festival, Ely Folk Festival, FolkEast, and of course, The Morris

Federation's annual day of dance. We are proud regulars at the Lobster Potties' weekend at Sheringham too, which celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> this year with a Guinness World Record-breaking massed morris dance (369 dancers!) Anyone for Tinner's Rabbit?

**SANDY JOHNSON**



So, if you are in the south Suffolk area and are looking for an inclusive, fun morris side to join (dancers and musicians), look us up on [www.danegeld.org.uk](http://www.danegeld.org.uk), or come and see us dancing in Woodbridge for Children in Need on the morning of Saturday 17 November, 2018, or at the Plough & Sail, Snape Maltings on New Year's Day, 2019.

The fantastic photographs are from this August's Normandy Tour, organized every three years by our friends Richard and Sue Davis, who arranged a superb week's dancing for visiting sides from England, plus a local French side. C'était merveilleux!

Danegeld practise on Tuesday evenings from 8-10pm at Bredfield Village Hall, near Woodbridge, Suffolk, IP13 6AX.



# CHIP OFF THE OLD'S 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

*Chip Off The Old at Cromford Mill*  
Photograph by Peter Posner

Founded in 1978 *Chip Off The Old* wanted to dance morris in the traditional Cotswold style. The kit of cream skirt with blouse, tights and trimmings in individual colours has changed little over the 40 years. The side decided to celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with friends, holding a day of dance in the beautiful and historical Derbyshire Peak District.

The only thing gloomy on the morning of 16 June 2018 was the weather as *Bare Bones*, *Ripley Green Garters* and a representative from *Ripley Morris Men* gathered with *Chip Off The Old* at Carsington Water. The audience was appreciative and some joined in with *Ripley Green Garters* leading everyone in a community dance.

After an excellent lunch at Carsington, during which the sun decided to shine, everyone relocated to Cromford, within the Derwent Mills UNESCO World Heritage Site, dancing first by Cromford Wharf and then to Cromford Mill. The Mill's square was bustling with people who enjoyed the range of dances from the Border, North West and Cotswold traditions. Past members of *Chip* also came along and joined in playing or dancing some dances.

Proceedings adjourned to the marquee at 4.30pm for the excellent cake made by *Chip* member, Rebecca Liverman, and Cava. *Chip* was then delighted to present tankards as a mark of their great appreciation of two people, Lesley Marshall and

Richard Pykett who are the anchors for the side. Lesley has been with the side from the start and led the dancing for almost all the 40 years and Richard has led the music for over 25 years.

**MELANIE ARUNDELL**



*Bare Bones dancing beside Carsington Water*

The day of dance coincided with the 'Celebrating Cromford Weekend' event and it was great that the morris dancing was included between other live music sessions at our final location within the village.

Many thanks to *Bare Bones*, *Ripley Green Garters*, *Ripley Morris Man* and past members of *Chip* for coming along to help us celebrate our ruby anniversary and make it so enjoyable and successful.

We are always welcoming to new members of any age. We practise between 8.00pm and 10.00pm, normally at St Mary's Church Hall near the centre of Derby.

Visit [www.chipofftheold.org.uk](http://www.chipofftheold.org.uk) for more details.



*Chip Off The Old with a little help from Ripley Morris, dancing at Carsington Water*



*Ripley Green Garters dancing at Cromford Mill*



# 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary for White Rose Garland Dancers



Scarborough's White Rose Garland Dancers celebrated their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in September 2018 by holding a day of dance in the town centre. They were joined by The Yorkshire Chandeliers from Sheffield, Clogaire and Roll Back the Carpet from Saltaire. Even the weather was kind to us!

MAUREEN CROFT



## BEING THE MAYOR - WITH BELLS ON

2018 year was a strange and exciting one for me. Strange because I found myself doing some things that weren't part of my life plan (not that I really had a life plan to be honest, I'm far too 'last-minute'), and exciting because I learned something new every day.

By way of explanation, last year I joined *Malmesbury Morris*.

Being a Town Councillor means I'd seen them dancing out on all sorts of occasions and liked the look of it, and of course in a town with a population of under 6000 I was bound to know some of the dancers, but it wasn't until I participated in a short taster workshop in the town hall that I realised just how enjoyable morris dancing is.

After the taster workshop I was invited to join the side, but I hesitated. I worried that I couldn't commit enough time - the committee I chaired regularly met on practice night and I work full-time in a job that involves a lot of travel.

The group were understanding and reassured me that they could work around my limitations, so I jumped right in and started learning. I danced out for the first time on St George's Day 2018 and had a fabulous time.

Fortunately you couldn't see my knees knocking and the smiling made me look confident. I couldn't help the smiling - it's just how morris makes me feel.

The other thing that wasn't part of my life plan, but that I learned last year, was how to be a mayor. I became mayor in May 2018 and it's given me a lot of work to do and a lot to learn about statesmanship and how to get the most out of the role.

The first thing I learned about being a mayor

FRAN  
VANDELLI

is that I can do it my own way. When my first civic duty was to open the annual town fair at which *Malmesbury Morris* always dance out, I was ready for both.

I opened the fair in full regalia, but with striped tights and dancing shoes underneath. As soon as the fair was open, I got ready to dance and put my bells on. I have to say that I'm immensely proud to be a morris dancer and the mayor with bells on.



Simon Brock  
Clog maker & Leatherworker

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# ISLAND-HOPPING OYSTERS

JANE  
COOKE

Enthusiastic island dancers hot-footed it to the Channel Islands this month for a weekend of traditional dance and music in Guernsey.

Oyster Girls Morris were invited to take part with six other morris sides from around the UK by the Guernsey side *Belles and Broomsticks*. The dancing took place in several venues around the island, including Cobo Bay, and on the Sunday all the sides processed through Guernsey's capital, St Peter Port, and danced in the town, finishing the day with a boat trip to the nearby island of Herm.

The different styles of morris were well represented, including North West Clog, Cotswold, Border, and Step Clog.

The Oyster Girls Squire said, "This was a fantastic weekend with the chance to dance at different venues on Guernsey and make new morris friends and catch up with some old friends too. It was so

well organised with a full itinerary of dance, venues and hospitality provided by the *Belles and Broomsticks* and their families.

"The weekend highlighted that the Oyster Girls is a very small side in numbers compared to some of the other sides we met and we would welcome more dancers and musicians so we can continue to dance and promote the tradition of North West Clog morris on the Isle of Wight."

The Oyster Girls meet for practice every Wednesday evening from October to March and dance out every Wednesday evening at different venues around the island during the summer. They also take part in local events and morris festivals on the mainland and abroad.



Anyone interested in joining as either a dancer or musician can contact the Oyster Girls through the website: [www.oystergirls.org.uk](http://www.oystergirls.org.uk) or our Facebook page, or join us at the next practice, at St John's Community Hall, Newport, on a Wednesday evening at 8pm, where they can be sure of a warm welcome.

Dancing Black Joker at Towersey Festival, 2018  
Photograph by Catherine Gregson-Bourke



# BRIGHTON MORRIS MEN 50 YEARS OF DANCING



ANDREW  
PARTINGTON,  
MALCOLM  
SMALE & ROSS  
ADAMSON

We are into our 51<sup>st</sup> season and a healthy side with over 50 active members, a repertoire of 50 dances and jigs, and a reputation for being entertaining. We finished our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary season with a flourish as a guest side at Towersey Festival. We think we are one of the largest Cotswold teams in the country.

It began in autumn 1967 when *Chanctonbury Ring Morris Men* started a junior team in the new University of Sussex, just outside Brighton. We first danced out as the *University of Sussex Morris Men* in 1968 and for the next decade were a feeder team for *Chanctonbury* with several men belonging to both sides.

By the early 1980s the formal link with *Chanctonbury* had dissolved, we had many non-student members and the university tag was no longer appropriate. So after considerable heart-searching we re-named ourselves *Brighton Morris Men* from the 1982 practice season onwards.

Since 1977 our sister team in Brighton, *Cuckoos Nest Women's Morris*, has been very important to us and we perform together at key stands each season.

For several years numbers in *Brighton Morris* were low, but slowly the rate of new recruits has increased. Today we regularly put out two or three sets and, without recruitment campaigns, usually get new members joining each season. Looking back over 50 years, here's what worked for us:

- Entertainment. Our approach is as much street theatre as preserving tradition. We grab attention by being energetic and exciting to watch.
- Inclusivity. We take in anyone who wants to dance with us and is prepared to learn our style. New recruits can dance out as soon as they feel confident.
- Innovation. We believe morris is a living dance form; we develop our own interpretations and one of our members has created a set of

new dances with tunes, in the 'Lewes Tradition' - some of these have been adopted by other sides.

- Music. Usually two or three of our musicians play at any one time. Guided by master concertina player John Watcham they concentrate on responding to the changing rhythms of Cotswold dances and dancers, helping to create the overall experience.
- Standards. Not everyone can become an expert dancer. But by developing people within the side, and encouraging excellence, we can perform show dances and jigs at festivals and on stage. Our jig team at Sidmouth 2018 won best veteran dancer, best veteran musician and were 2<sup>nd</sup> overall for our double jig.
- Songs. Being a strong singing side brings us together socially, forges links with other sides, and broadens our entertainment value.

It's this approach that won us our greatest celebrity fan, the folk singer



Brighton's award-winning jig team at Sidmouth, 2018  
L-R: Saskia Heriz, musician, Ben Schwausch and Chris Rudd  
Photograph by Charlotte Dover

Shirley Collins, MBE. She saw us dancing in her home town of Lewes and liked us so much she invited us to perform guest spots at her London concerts and on the tour to launch her 'Lodestar' album in 2017 (her first recording for 38 years).

Since 1968, 172 men and seven women have contributed to the *Brighton Morris* ethos. We have:

- danced across the UK from Aberdeen to Exeter, Norwich to Manchester, Guernsey and Jersey, France, Germany and Belgium.
- graced the stages of the Brighton Dome, and the South Bank and Barbican in London.
- established an annual day of dance.
- helped promote a new green walking and cycle path in France.
- joined in twinning events between Lewes and the French city of Blois.
- spent a weekend in Drumshanbo, Eire, as guests at their An Tostal festival.
- twice visited Germany at the invitation of the local male voice choir in Oberturkheim, Stuttgart.
- danced at over 160 different pubs in Brighton and Sussex.
- brought smiles to thousands of people, their children and dogs, provided photo-opportunities for tourists, modelled for a fashion shoot, sung ourselves hoarse and supported our local brewery, the famous Harvey's of Lewes.

Above all it has been, and still is, fun. In the words of one newspaper review, we start our second 50 years as we ended the first 50, as the 'improbably nimble Brighton Morris Men.'



## Traditional British Clogs Phil Howard - Clogs & Leatherwork Full-time professional Clog Maker



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# JOHN BACON

## EFDSS GOLD BADGE CITATION

BARRY GOODMAN

**John's involvement with the world of folk started in 1981, on foreign shores, as a member of *The Amazing Headbangers Morris Men* of Cyprus.**

Although he also became a member of *Brighton Morris* from 1983 to 1988, he spent most of his working life as a chartered engineer abroad and, landing in Hong Kong, soon became involved with *Hong Kong Morris*, of which he is still a member of the UK section. He is proud that when the team visited Sidmouth Folk Week in 2017 it included local Chinese dancers as well as ex-patriots.

On their return from Cyprus, John and his wife, Ann, settled in Ditchling, East Sussex, where they were the driving force behind the founding of *Ditchling Morris*, a mixed family side dancing Cotswold Morris, of which John has been Squire, Foreman and Bagman over the years. As well as running workshops at Chippenham, Sidmouth and Broadstairs Festivals, John was keen to encourage young dancers in the Ditchling side to strive for excellence by introducing them to the John Gasson Jig Competition, held each year at Sidmouth. Together with Ann he coached and provided music for young members of the side with great success, resulting in Hattie Vail's winning solo jig in 2000, accompanied by John as musician, and Jack Worth winning in 2010. Jack says: "John encouraged me to enter the Jig Competition after less than 18 months of dancing. He was very generous with his time as a coach to prepare for entering, and the advice he gave me on dance style and

*choreography still influences my dancing now. Most of all he taught me to respect the audience: morris is street entertainment and performance, not about the dancers themselves."*

Morris is certainly street entertainment, and the Government's proposals for the 2003 Licensing Act threatened to prevent morris dancers from performing outside pubs, which would have had a serious effect not only on the morris, but also on the extent to which British people would be exposed to an important part of their own traditional culture. John had been elected as the first male President of *The Morris Federation* (formerly the *Women's Morris Federation*), and one of his most outstanding achievements was to work with the *Morris Ring*, *Open Morris* and *EFDSS* in lobbying to make the views of the folk community known to central and local government. This included meeting with Kim Howells, then Under-Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and working with Lord Redesdale to table an amendment to the Bill, which resulted in morris dancing being exempted from the licensing provision.

John's other great achievement as President of *The Morris Federation* was the formation of the *Joint Morris Organisation*, which was a result of the close relationship

between the three organisations during the campaign over the licensing laws. The JMO continues to exist, meeting together to discuss matters of mutual interest, maintaining insurance cover over the three organisations and presenting a National Day of Dance each year to showcase Morris dancing in different parts of the country. This annual event stems from the morris dancing day held in Trafalgar Square in November 2003 to recognise the exemption. John took on the role of co-ordinating the Day of Dance with Westminster City Council and the morris organisations, ensuring that the dancing reflected the breadth of English traditional dance and providing a template that is still in use today.

John was co-opted to the National Council of the *EFDSS* in 2000 and formally elected in 2001. He served as a Trustee/Director until 2005, becoming Vice Chair of the Council. John had been recruited to widen the Council's scope and experience, as at the time he was also the President of *The Morris Federation*. Characteristically he did not limit his interests to dance but used his skills and talents to further all the work of the *EFDSS*, taking a special professional interest in the structural condition and maintenance of the *EFDSS* headquarters, Cecil Sharp House. A key concern when John joined the Council was the

provision of disabled access to meet the requirements of the forthcoming disability discrimination legislation. Because of the building's listed status the problems were considerable, but the ground floor meeting rooms and the all-important Vaughan Williams Memorial Library were made accessible via an external stair lift and disabled toilets were also provided.

Not only did John take responsibility for the development of plans to secure this disabled access but he also arranged the necessary planning permission and listed building consent, supervised the work himself to minimise the costs to the Society and undertook all the fund raising. More than a dozen applications were written and followed up; most did not succeed but this did not deter John, who finally secured over £30,000 worth of funding for the project.

As Trustee/Director of *EFDSS* with a particular interest in dance John was actively involved in the "Morris Futures" project to produce film material to promote the Morris, especially to young people, using finance and resources within the Morris organisations and *EFDSS*. He took the lead in this project while on the *EFDSS* Council. John was also directly responsible for the *EFDSS* involvement in two European Communities' dance projects. The first of these was the WebDance project, completed in January 2005, which involved working with the University of Hertfordshire, universities in Cyprus, Lithuania and Switzerland and IT companies to provide web-based facilities to exchange information about traditional dance using 3-D moving images of a solo Morris dancer.

The subsequent OpenDance project built on this and applied the technology to teaching traditional dance using 3-D images of a Morris dance and an English social dance. Simple lesson plans were developed and could be explored via the Internet. It is due to John's work that both projects created a wider European exposure for *EFDSS* as well as enabling young people to use information technology in new and exciting ways.

Living in Sussex, John was keen to develop folk activities in the local area and attended the first Folk Arts Network meeting at the South East Arts offices in Royal Tunbridge Wells in 2000, as a result of which the South East Folk Arts Network (SEFAN)

was created. SEFAN evolved to become a funded, independent organisation in 2004. John attended the meetings from the early days and officially joined the board in July 2005. He remained an active member of the Board of Directors until SEFAN's closure in 2015, whereupon he joined the committee of The Stepback Consortium, which continues the three funded projects within SEFAN, namely Meltdown Ceilidhs, Stepback Higher Education and the East Sussex Schools Dance Festival.

During post-meeting networking after the first SEFAN meeting, John was one of a group that decided to investigate setting up a new English Ceilidh series in Sussex. Meltdown English Ceilidhs held the first three pilot dances in Haywards Heath in Autumn 2001 and still continues to run five or six dances each year in the winter months. John has been part of the Meltdown Committee from the start and, according to fellow-organiser Fee Lock, has kept the idea of "best band, best caller, best time" steadily on track. Fee adds that... "John never hesitates to make sure that anyone looking a little unsure of themselves knows that it's perfectly acceptable to come along unaccompanied and make new dancing partners. Sometimes he will do this by asking people to dance; sometimes simply by starting the dancing off with Ann"

Another SEFAN project that John has been very closely associated with is the East Sussex Schools Dance Festival. Indeed, the project was instigated by John, who did the fund-raising, found the tutors and brought the local schools on board to learn a variety of dance styles, which they perform at a much-anticipated, joyful gathering each year. Themes have included "Hobby Horses", "Green Men", "Well Dressing" ... and "Folk Song", in which *EFDSS* President and SEFAN Patron Shirley Collins was involved, choosing and teaching some of the songs. The children are given

opportunities to perform at events beyond the Festival, including dancing out with Ditchling Morris. Shirley had this to say about the Festival and John's part in it:

"With nine schools taking part it's truly one of the most cheering (and sometimes moving) sights - so many children enjoying dancing the Morris in a huge marquee at Plumpton Race Course. And the children are really involved, except perhaps when their attention wanders to see if Mum and Dad are in the audience!"

Watching this, in John's benign and smiling presence, is a truly heart-warming experience, and you know that Morris dancing is in safe and caring hands. I feel very proud to know John and Ann and proud of them, too."

The *EFDSS* Gold Badge is awarded to those who have made unique or outstanding contributions to the art or science of folk dance, music or song, or have given exceptional support in furthering the aims of the Society. John has clearly met all of these criteria in his tireless involvement in, and promotion of, so many aspects of folk music and dance, his vision and expertise in the transformation of Cecil Sharp House and his enthusiasm for the education of young people in the folk arts. There can be no doubt that the award of this Gold Badge to John Bacon is long overdue and thoroughly deserved.

*Barry Goodman is a past President of The Morris Federation and sometime Chair of Bedfordshire District of the EFDSS. He is a singer, musician, caller and folk arts educator and a long-time member of Redbornstoke Morris.*







# SLUBBING BILLY'S OPEN WORKSHOPS

2018 was another wonderful summer of dancing, including one of our favourite festivals at Southwell with fabulous weather, great dancing, lots of laughs with friends old and new, and fabulous scarecrow creations, the Billy's then looked forward to the second of their biannual open workshops.

The first *Slubbing Billy's* workshop in February 2018 was a great success, bringing the side three new dancers and the promise of more later in the year, and we were excited to host the second in October.

Dancers and musicians, old and new, young or less so, are always very welcome. We currently have

a very healthy demographic ranging from pre-teen to 'quite a bit more than teen' and musical accompaniment including the usual boxes and fiddles, several drums and a banjo!

For more information email:  
[info@slubbingbillys.co.uk](mailto:info@slubbingbillys.co.uk)


Jo  
SQUIRE



'Billy the Scarecrow' at  
The Gate to Southwell Festival 2018



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## Paul White's DIARY

Calling all Daves, and  
when is a greenhouse not a greenhouse?

greenhouse will once again come back into its own.

**P**orch. Vestibule. Hallway. Lobby. Verandah. They differ in varying degrees. But any one of them would do.

Our cottage door opens straight out onto the garden. The elements have no trouble gaining entrance. Leaves and grass cuttings carpet the floor. And where to put muddy boots, dripping raincoats and wet doggies?

A vestibule would be my choice. I don't know how it differs from some of the others but it is such a lovely word and it sounds the business.

As a stop gap we erected a greenhouse just outside the door. This was going to be a repository for welly boots, soggy garments and winter coats, as well as a towel to rub down the dog. And it worked! But gradually, it filled up with other stuff, too. Hammers, saws, screws, electric drills, chisels; indeed, all manner of tools and implements as well as large lumps of wood.

A greenhouse is not the ideal building in which to be manipulating lengths of 4 x 2 and sheets of plasterboard. But needs must. For not only do we lack vestibule but we are also without any kind of workshop. So far, amazingly, no broken glass. My next big project is to build myself a workshop and then the

Despite its relative success as a sunny workshop, there is the odd event that serves to frustrate. There was a case in point earlier this week. Two members of our fledgling morris side have

These obstacles I overcame but I lost a complete day looking for the wood glue and panel pins. Not in the greenhouse. Not in the car. Not in the place where I keep the lawnmower. They had clearly been nicked! They eventually turned up, of course, but I only found them by accident. In the kitchen! Don't ask me why, I have no idea.

But we now have two boards, two eager dancers and once they hop aboard and strut their stuff, all the frustrations of the construction phase will be instantly eased.

For they will be part of our performance, which will be a good thing from many perspectives. It will instantly increase our range of dance, it will give two musicians a chance to get up and boogie like the rest of

us and it will be something very different for the audience.

Our side is small but, of course, perfectly formed. Eleven people altogether. Four musicians and seven regular dancers. The dancing element is made up of four women and three blokes (including yours truly).

Recruitment is an ongoing process. People come and people

go. Those who come sometimes can't hack it. Others look for challenges elsewhere.

We have tried posters, which have had limited response. Stories and pictures in the local press have gained us recognition but thus far no newcomers. A Facebook page (*Common Morris*) gets people talking.

Perhaps the best results so far have come as a result of our performances. That gets the word about as well as anything.

One night when the hall wasn't available because the local gardening club was staging its annual show, we all headed for the pub, invited friends along and had a really enjoyable music night. We repeated that the following month and there is another one coming up. These sessions also help to spread the morris message.

There is another recruitment method I am about to try. My middle name is David. One of the other blokes in the side is called David. And so is the other. Two weeks ago, we were aware of a bloke hanging about outside the hall. He was there to try out this morris thing. His name is David.

The David factor is strong in this side. Problem solved. A quick email to everyone in the parish with a David moniker should boost numbers handsomely.



Sally's board in action

discovered that they both have a talent and penchant for Appalachian dancing. They've got the energy, the desire, the shoes: now all they wanted were boards to dance on.

I had the materials lurking in the depths of the greenhouse and while the construction is ostensibly a simple task, finding the bits and cutting them to size in the confines of the greenhouse/workshop/welly store proved just the opposite. Finding space to chop plywood into the right shape was not easy. I had to be careful with lengths of batten in order to leave the glass walls intact.

Journalist, editor, ukulele player, and singer, Paul White has been dancing the morris since the year 2000. He is a founding member of both *Wreckers* and *Cat's Eye* in Cornwall, helped form *Couptrain Morris* (France) and *Turncoat*, and has also danced with *Lodestone*. Paul can occasionally be found in Europe introducing fellow campers to the joys of morris, using baguettes, umbrellas, or tent poles for sticks. contact: [pwhite420@btinternet.com](mailto:pwhite420@btinternet.com) twitter: @morrisbells or Facebook





## *Kinfauns Step Dancers*

**The Morris Federation and Kinfauns Step Dancers** extend a warm welcome to all members of the Morris Federation to join us in a day of dance in Perth, Scotland on **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2019**, followed by the Morris Federation AGM at 4.30pm at the Salutation Hotel.

Perth is a beautiful and historic city on the banks of the River Tay. Come and view the stunning scenery of the Perthshire hills and explore the intriguing royal history of this ancient capital of Scotland as you are guided around the city by our stewards. Why not visit <https://www.perthcity.co.uk> to find out more?

All dance spots are within easy walking distance of the centrally positioned Salutation Hotel which is our base for the day. There will be a Scottish ceilidh in the hotel in the evening with the popular Cragganmore Ceilidh Band. And on Sunday there will be dance and music workshops led by guests from across the Federation.



We look forward to welcoming you for the weekend. If you have any queries or require any further information, and to book, please contact [morag.johnston762@gmail.com](mailto:morag.johnston762@gmail.com)

The fair city of Perth is also the home of the Perth Glovers' Sword Dance. Their 17<sup>th</sup> century dance costume is on display at the Perth Museum & Art Gallery. This is an ink and wash drawing of the Ancient Morrice dancers' dress in possession of the Incorporation of Glovers of Perth by J G Howie c.1840.

*Reproduced courtesy of Perth Museum & Art Gallery, Perth & Kinross Council.*