

*"And the ladies go dancing..."*



*...to celebrate 40 years of  
The Women's Morris Federation  
and The Morris Federation*





# The Morris Federation

The **Women's Morris Federation** was formed in 1975 with just thirteen sides attending its first AGM in Bath, co-hosted by Bath City Women and Somerset Maids (now Somerset Morris). From this modest beginning The Morris Federation has grown to become the largest of the three morris organisations with a membership of 60% of the morris sides in the UK. Initially only women's sides were members; mixed sides were allowed from 1980 and in 1982 the first men's side joined. The name changed to The Morris Federation in 1983 and there have been more than 900 member dance sides during the first 40 years.

**The Morris Federation** aims to encourage and maintain interest in the practice of morris dancing, to provide a channel of communication between member sides, and to encourage the improvements of standards of dancing among its members.

On behalf of all our morris dancers, this album is dedicated, with thanks, to our musicians who enable us to dance:

*"You the music – I the dancer"*

(from *The Call and the Answer* by Phil Colclough).

# The album

The album's title is taken from John Austin Marshall's poem from the 1960s which ends with, "and the ladies go **Dancing at Whitsun**" and which forms the opening track, performed by Crucible (Jess & Richard Arrowsmith, Helena Reynolds and Gavin Davenport). This is followed by the Cotswold morris dance tune, **The Valentine**. Jess dances with and Richard plays for Pecsætan



Morris [issued under licence from Fellside Recordings Ltd, originally released on the album 'Love & Money' Fellside FECD212].

Haddo (Nicky Grant and Will Pound) provide four tracks on the album. The first is *The Old Wife of Coverdill*, the tune for the **Ampleforth** longsword dance. Nicky dances with and plays for Chinewrde



Morris and Whip the Cat Rapper [used by kind permission and taken from



Haddo's album 'Borderlands', issued on Lulubug Records].

**Medlock** is a North West morris dance devised for Manchester Morris Men.

Chelmsford Morris dances it to a version of The Kempshott Hunt and Colne Royal [used by kind permission of Chelmsford Morris from their CD 'A Right Old Song & Dance'].

**Dearest Dickie** is a long Fieldtown dance and tune,



performed here by Richard Arrowsmith and Jo Maher of Pecsætan and can be danced by four (as here), six or eight dancers [taken from Pecsætan's 2011 CD



'At One With The Bells' on Seville House Records and used by kind permission].

Datchet Morris issued a wonderful CD 'Surfing

the Scrapbooks' to celebrate fifty years of dancing in 2011. They have danced mostly Border morris since 1991 and the **Redesdale Hornpipe** and **Humours**



of California are featured here [used by kind permission].

The wonderful Richard Thompson song, **New St**

**George**, is given the full vocal treatment of The Wilson Family and may be the only contemporary song to have given its name to a morris side! [originally issued on 'A Grey Lock or Two' BITCD311 and used by kind permission].



Dave Eyre has been **Calling On** for Sheffield City Morris for forty years and this is followed by a tune set, **Black Joke/ Rusty Gulley**. Sheffield City is another



side celebrating a significant anniversary by issuing a CD, 'All Mouth and Green Trousers' [used by kind permission]. **Orange in Bloom**, a Cotswold dance tune from the Sherbourne tradition and is Haddo's second contribution from their 'Borderlands' album.

John Kirkpatrick dances with The Shropshire Bedlams and plays for Martha Rhoden's Tuppenny Dish. **The Gazebo Trot** and **Brivitting In The Cauliflowers** are two tunes written by the late Sally Kirkpatrick and used for the dances The Sleazy Reel and Strip



the Cauliflower [issued under licence from Fledg'ling Recordings Ltd, originally released on the album 'The Duck Race' FLED 3043].

May Day is an important date in the annual morris calendar with many sides rising very early to **Dance Up The Sun** and welcome the summer. This song by John Thompson of the Australian duo cloudstreet (John Thompson and Nicole



Murray) celebrates this turning of the seasons. Westrefelda Morris danced while cloudstreet performed this song at



Chippenham Folk Festival in 2007 [used by kind permission; originally released on 'Dance up the Sun', [www.cloudstreet.org](http://www.cloudstreet.org)].

Dead Horse Morris is made up of Dead Horse Morris Men and The Broomdashers. **Old Hobb** is one of their



favourite dance tunes, written by Holly Cook and forming the opening, title track of the side's album [used by kind permission].

Rapper sword dancing from the pit villages of Northumberland and Durham has grown rapidly in popularity in recent years and holds an annual competition, DERT (Dancing England Rapper Tournament). These tunes by Sarah Matthews formed the **Stone Monkey**



**Rapper Sword Dance Set** for DERT 2011. The tunes are *Amber's Great Adventure*, *The Lizard at the Bar* and *Sweetness in the Cheeks*

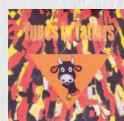


[taken from Sarah's solo album, 'As I Was Walking' on Cothrecords COTHCD008, and used by kind permission].

**Jockey to the Fair**, a jig from the Adderbury Morris Men and played here by Chris Leslie, was originally issued on the cassette tape 'The Adderbury Morris Men Sing and Play the Music of the Adderbury Tradition'.



Unfortunately there wasn't enough space to include it on the CD re-issue [on *Talking Elephant* TECD304], so it makes a welcome addition to this album.



**Steamboat** is a popular traditional tune used by morris sides. It is played here by the Hobos Band for the Border morris side

Hobos Morris, from their first CD, 'Tunes in Tatters' [used by kind permission].

**The Captain's Song** is the calling on song for Grenoside Sword Dancers and is performed by Crucible. Rich and Gav both dance with Grenoside. This is another track from Crucible's 'Love & Money' album.

**Bluff King Hal** is a Cotswold morris tune from Bidford on Avon and is the second track from John Kirkpatrick's 'The Duck Race' album.

Chelmsford Morris perform Border morris dances in the winter months.

**Borderline** is a dance written for Chelmsford Morris by Kieran Fitzgerald with a tune composed by Martyn White. Also taken from 'A Right Old Song and Dance'.

Richard Arrowsmith (melodeon) and Jo Maher (oboe) perform **Trunkles**, a traditional tune for the Bledington dance tradition, for Pecsætanand is taken from 'At One with the Bells'.

The **Upton upon Severn Stick Dance** is a second helping from 'Surfing the Scrapbooks' by Datchet Border Morris. In 1981 The Shrewsbury Lasses were invited to run the Women's Ritual Dance Workshops at Sidmouth International





Folk Festival in Devon. Their leader, Bev Langton, decided to write a dance specifically for the workshop that would suit all styles of dancers whatever traditional style they danced in. The intention was that teams could learn the dance during the week and were encouraged to then dance it out. There are now a number of teams spread all over the country who dance The Shrewsbury Flourish as part of their repertoire. The dance involved traditional dance figures and used short sticks with bells and ribbons on the end. Ray Langton wrote the tune to go with the dance and taught the team's musicians the all important 'breaks' in the music which encourage the dancers to flick the sticks at the appropriate moment. These

breaks are included in this recording. Notation for this dance is available from The Shrewsbury Lasses for any team who are interested in learning the dance. As the dance and the tune were written together they both have the same title – **The Shrewsbury Flourish**

which is taken from Shrewsbury's motto 'Floreat Salopia'.

**Old Bones** is a dance to the tune *Barrack Hill* performed by The Witchmen as only they can and do [taken from 'The Magic of Morris 2' album on Talking Elephant Records TECD096].



Colin Cater wrote **The Dance of England** for the 40th anniversary of Chelmsford Morris so it's appropriate to include it for the Morris Federation's 40th

birthday. The track is also included on 'A Right Old Song and Dance'.

The Teacups open the second CD with their wonderful a capella performance of two traditional tunes, *Drummond Castle* and *Seven Stars*. **The Rapper Set** begins with a Calling On Song before moving



on to the dancing [issued under licence from Haystack Records, originally released on The Teacups' second album 'Of Labour and Love' HAYCD008].

Chelmsford Morris, being very talented, also performs Cotswold morris. **Idbury Hill** is a Bledington dance tune and is the final offering from their CD 'A Right Old Song and Dance'.

Molly dancing, judging by sales of The Morris Federation's book on molly



dancing by Tony Forster, is gaining a more widespread popularity. Hornbeam Molly performs the 'traditional' molly dance **Birds a Building**.

**Mandy Lin** is a tune written by Ian Wilson of the dance band Peeping Tom (and erstwhile musician for Mortimer's Morris and Chelmo Champs). This version is played by the Hobos Morris Band and is kindly taken from their second CD 'More Tat'.

**Willow Tree** from the Bucknell tradition



is played by Haddo and is taken, by kind permission, from their first album 'Homecoming' on Lulubug001.

**Penny For the Ploughboys** is a song written and performed by Colin Cater in praise of molly dancing. Taken from Colin's CD 'A Penny for the Ploughboys', issued by Hedingham Fair and used by kind permission.

**Four Up** was written by Barry Goodman, a past President of The Morris Federation, for The Outside Capering Crew's bacca pipe jig. The tune is now widely used by other sides for other dances, such as Humble Pie written by Pauline Wilkinson of Hornbeam Molly



and Seven Up, The Witchmen's dance telling the Northamptonshire tale of Snow White! This version features Barry Goodman, Mark Rogers, Ken Nicol, Ashley Hutchings and Neil Marshall and appears on the 'Grandson of Morris On' album from Talking Elephant Records TECD038.



**Barnyard Slide** is an Appalachian dance performed by Feet First, which was formed in 1985 and is the longest running Appalachian dance team in Britain. The tune is *Old Joe Clarke*.

**Old Tom of Oxford** completes Haddo's contribution to this CD with Nicky and Will giving this Headington tune the Glenn Miller treatment! This is also available on 'Borderlands'.



**Come, See the Boys Go Round** was written by Paul Davenport, now playing and dancing with Maltby Phoenix Sword, to describe the longsword dance



rather than the more usual calling on songs. It is taken, with grateful thanks, from Paul & Liz Davenport's album 'Wait for No Man'

on Hallamshire Traditions HATRC09. Many years ago in the 1980s The Shrewsbury Bull and Pump Morris Men had a musician called Margaret Morris. She was an accomplished melodeon player and a valued member of the team. However her husband's commitments meant that she had to move to Kuwait and leave the team. The team's squire and lead musician Ray Langton wrote a dance and a tune before she left which the team danced out during her final season with the team. The tune is called *The Kuwaiti Hornpipe* and the dance is appropriately named **Margaret's Morris**. The dance is, unusually for The Shrewsbury Bull and Pump Morris Men who mainly dance vigorous stick dances, a fairly graceful handkerchief dance! The dance is still danced by The Shrewsbury Bull and Pump Morris Men and is also danced as a

joint dance with one side of the set being Shrewsbury Bull and Pump Men and the other side being Shrewsbury Lasses. They have not taught this dance at any workshops and so it remains within The Shrewsbury Morris repertoire. Like The Shrewsbury Flourish, this tune is played by its composer, Ray Langton.

**Queen's Delight** from the Bucknell tradition is one of Pecsætan's favourite



dances from the first tradition they learnt. The track closes Pecsætan's CD 'At One With The Bells' and is played by Richard Arrowsmith and Jo Maher.

**Shreds and Patches** is another tune from 'The Duck Race' and written and performed by John Kirkpatrick for the dance 'The Triumph'.

Adlington Morris Men, including the Adlington Mummers, have been performing the **Alderley Mummers Play** since 1978. This is a recording of the start and end of the play i.e. knocking on



the door, first word by Enterer In, fading into the final song which itself fades out as the mummers leave the room and shut the door behind them. This is a private recording of the song from 2000



by three of the mummers side, Dave Houghton, Dave Cook & Ian Ball aka Flash Company. It is included here by kind permission.

**Foul Mouthed Cat** is a dance by Mythago to the tune *Theme Vannetais*, thought to have been composed by the Breton band Tri Yann. It is now also known in Border morris as *Twiglet*, the



name of the dance for which it is used. This version is from Mythago's CD 'Myth and Legend in Dance' and is used by

kind permission.

**The Hammersmith Flyover** (in the style of Longborough) is a leapfrog dance from John Kirkpatrick, dating from his time with the (self-styled) World Famous Hammersmith Morris Men [originally issued on the CD 'Plain Capers' and used under licence from Free Reed Records].



**Wooden Swords and May Queens**

was inspired when Gavin Davenport was working with a group of year 5 children in a community project that captured memories of



sword dancing in the 1930s [issued under licence from Haystack Records, originally released on Gavin's album 'The Bone Orchard' HAYCD004].

**White Ladies**

Aston was one of the dances found in the repertoire of many of the women's sides at around the time the Federation began. This version of **Whiteladies** is performed by Babylon, a Border morris dance team, based in the small Dorset village of Corscombe.

**Midnight on the Water** is used by Greenwood Step Clog Dancers for a Durham Waltz for three. The tune is



played by their musician, Eric Foxley. Many more of their tunes can be heard on their website.

**Glorishears / All the World / The Willow Tree / Banks of the Dee** is a set by Laurel Swift & Saul Rose from the album 'beam' by Laurel Swift and Friends issued by NECTA Arts on NECTACD001. *Glorishears, The Willow Tree and Banks*



*of the Dee* are Cotswold morris tunes. The song tune is by Laurel and the words are 'Young and Old' by Charles Kingsley

[used by kind permission].

By special request from Melanie Barber, The Morris Federation President, the album closes with Sheffield City Morris singing John Tams' **Rolling Home**. It is also the closing track on their 40th anniversary CD 'All Mouth and Green Trousers'.



## Thanks

are due to so many people, particularly Barry and Malcolm at Talking Elephant for the idea of this album – and for making it a reality, to all the musicians and dance sides who got in touch and offered their music, and to all the dancers and musicians, past, present and future, who keep our wonderful traditions alive.

Go and search out the source CDs and support your local morris sides; there's some wonderful music and dance out there.

Mike Everett

*The Morris Federation Archive Officer*



SOMERSET MAIDS

*Co-hosts of The Women's Morris Federation  
first AGM in Bath, 1975.*



BATH CITY WOMEN

[www.morrisfed.org.uk](http://www.morrisfed.org.uk)