



**THE MORRIS FEDERATION**

**MINUTES OF THE 48th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Held on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

**In person in Bishops Castle, Shropshire, and on the Zoom Platform**

<https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/agm>

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## 1 INTRODUCTION, ATTENDEES AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

**Pauline Woods-Wilson** (President) opened the meeting at 16:30 and welcomed everyone, having conducted good housekeeping and explaining that the results of any votes are to be embargoed until 20:00, and confirmed that the meeting is quorate (there being more than 15 group members). Any technical outages would result in the in-person meeting deciding whether to continue or adjourn until another time. All speakers to confirm their names and membership designation.

She welcomed **Jen Cox**, Chair of Open Morris and **Peter Austin**, Bagman of the Morris Ring in person. **Jen Cox** and **Peter Austin** were acting as tellers for votes (both in the room and on Zoom). To facilitate the entering of votes in the room to the new voting system ‘Cast Round’ for those without a device to use the system, introductions were made to Voting Clerks **Jess Searle** (Member Communications Officer) and **Emma Laister**.

*(The role of the Voting Clerk is to enter proxy, paper votes in the room and votes made by instruction by email in advance that were not added to ‘Cast Round’ either in advance or on the day by electronic means – these voting instructions were all handed to the clerks as the votes took place for them to action, these votes are counted in the totals of votes where shown; the role included checking for duplicate votes; a vote made at the meeting by the member representative themselves was taken in precedence to any advance vote, thus any alterations of vote due to the discussions were accounted for).*

The Committee were invited to introduce themselves to those on Zoom and assembled in the room which they did.

### ATTENDEES

#### Group Members:

**Andrew Knight** (Secretary) read out those teams attending in person:

#### In the room were

Beverley Garland Dancers	Martha Rhoden’s Tuppenny Dish
Black Gate Morris	Mendip Morris
Cogs and Wheels Ladies Morris	New Esperance Morris
Downes on Tour Morris	Ripley Green Garters
Dr Turberville’s Morris	Rivington Morris
Enigma Border Morris	Shrewsbury Morris
Frome Valley Morris	Shropshire Bedlams
Invictus Mugisticus Equinus (I.M.E.)	The Outside Capering Crew
Jackstraws Morris	Trentside Holmes Morris
Knights of King Ina	Windsor Morris
Mad Jack’s Morris	Winkleigh Morris
Maltby Sword	Worthing Larks

#### Morris Federation Committee:

Pauline Woods-Wilson, President, The Morris Federation  
Andrew Knight, Secretary, The Morris Federation  
Jenny Everett, Treasurer, The Morris Federation  
Mike Everett, Archive Officer, The Morris Federation  
Jerry West, Notation Officer, The Morris Federation  
Jess Searle, Member Communications Officer, The Morris Federation

**Morris Federation Co-opted Committee:**

Fee Lock, JMO Secretary, The Morris Federation  
Dan Watford, IT Administrator, The Morris Federation  
Lin Steel, Keeper of the Bells, The Morris Federation  
Brian Kelly, Communications IT – apologized

**Invited Guests:**

Jen Cox, Chair, Open Morris  
Peter Austin, Bagman, The Morris Ring  
Emma Laister, Voting Clerk  
Sam Ross, Technical Support – on Zoom

**On Zoom were**

**Group Members:**

Harlequin North West Morris  
Mockbeggar Morris  
Nonesuch Morris  
Persephone Morris  
Phoenix Morris  
RattleJag Morris  
Wild Moon Morris

**Individual Members:**

Nickie Dailly  
Marie Graham

**Honorary Members:**

Sally Wearing

## **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

### **Group Members:**

Aldbrickham Clog and Step Dancers	Kinfauns Step Dancers
Armaleggan	Knareborough Mummers
Aurora	Knowle Morris
Barfront Guizers	Lymm Morris Dancers
Beetlecrushers Clog and Step Dance Group	Mabel Gubbins Rapper
Betty Lupton's Ladle Laikers	Mersey Morris
Bideford Phoenix Morris	Mish Mash Morris
Black Adder Clog Morris	Mortimer's Morris
Black Bess Border Morris	Mythago Morris
Black Diamond Mixed Cotswold Morris	Nancy Butterfly
Blue Anchor Morris	Persephone Women's Northwest Morris
Boughton Monchelsea Morris	Pigsty Morris
Box Hill Bedlam	Pretty Grim
Chinewrde Morris	Pump House Clog Morris
Chingford Morris Men	Rackaback Morris
Clogarhythm	Red Stags Morris
Cricket on the Hearth	Rights and Lefts Running set
Customs And Exiles	Ripon City Morris Dancers
Downes on Tour	Rockhopper Morris
Dukes Dandy	Sarum Morris
Ebor Morris	Sharp And Blunt
Feet First	Sheffield City Morris
Five Rivers Morris	Somerset Morris
Garston Gallopers	Spirimawgus
Glorishears of Brummagem	Strictly Clog
Great Western Morris	Temporary Measured
Green Dragon Morris	The Flag and Bone Gang
Hastings Jack in the Green	The Knots of May
Haughley Hoofers	The Wild Hunt
Illustrious Order of Fools and Beasts	Treacle Eater Clog
Invicta Morris	Weald of Kent Morris
Isambard's Gasket Rats	Westminster Morris Dancers
Jerusalem Jammers	

### **Individual Members:**

Jane Cunio  
Alison Dunn  
Jed Dunn

### **Honorary Members:**

Val Parker  
Sue Swift

## 2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & EGM

The minutes of the previous AGM meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2022 were available in the AGM pack and also online at <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/agm/>. These were taken as read.

**Fee Lock** (Mad Jack's) proposed them as correct, with **Shirley Dixon** (Jackstraws) seconding. These were approved 33 to 0 without amendment. **Pauline Woods-Wilson** (President) signed these as correct.

The minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2022 to consider the revised Constitution were available in the AGM pack and also online at <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/agm/>. These were taken as read.

**Fee Lock** (Mad Jack's) proposed them as correct, with **Sally Wearing** (individual) seconding. These were approved 9 to 0 without amendment. **Pauline Woods-Wilson** (President) signed these as correct.

## 3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT OTHERWISE ON THE AGENDA

No matters arising were mentioned by the meeting.

## 4 ANNUAL REPORTS

These had been previously circulated and taken as read. They are reproduced in Appendix 1 below.

### 4.1 Reports from Elected Officers:

#### a) President

**Pauline** added – “Looking back, it has been a phenomenally busy year with all of our volunteers taking on extra work - our first grant from Arts Council England with exciting new videos being made (**Esther Ferry-Kennington, Sally Smith, and Jenny Everett**); new Safeguarding guidance (**Drew**), and all the guidance in the Members Manual now publicly available on the web (**Pauline**); the return of the FedExtra for reading online (**Jess**); ‘Morris Matters’ magazine and recorded videos of our zoom talks all searchable on the web site (**Brian**); launch of the ‘Rattle Up my Boys’ Longsword magazine archive online (**Brian**); two new research publications; more social media posts (**Abigail**) Throwback Thursdays and Tribute Tuesdays archive photos (**Mike**); the start of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion panel of the JMO (**Fee**); and six extra JMO regional events for the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Not to mention a completely revised Constitution (**Jerry**) and a new secure Voting system (**Dan**). And all this is on top of the ‘run-of-the-mill’ work that the Officers do.

There was a round of applause from the meeting for all the officers’ efforts.

#### b) Secretary

No comments.

#### c) Treasurer

The report was presented as in the AGM pack.

**Shirley Dixon** (Jackstraws) asked what the plan was for spending the money we have?

**Jenny Everett** (Treasurer) replied that this would be targeted to projects that were yet to be identified; match funded for further expansions of the Arts Council grant funded project (to facilitate teaching of Morris in schools) or similar. **Jerry West** (Notation) added that the new constitution has a clause that requires excess

funds to be spent rather than retained in a bank account. Thus, the committee has to find ways to fund projects that fulfill its aims and objectives.

**Diane Moody** (New Esperance) asked about reducing reserves and whether we were just reducing the number on paper or our funds overall. There is a slight overall increase in income - expenses are reducing by using online meeting platforms resulting in less travel, and no postage for the FedExtra, meaning our available funds are increasing. **Jerry West** (Notation) replied that the reserves were a buffer to allow The Morris Federation time to recover from a year with low or very low income; this is set at £13,000 in the new Constitution, but funds over and above that could be used to promote Morris and for identified projects. Jenny also explained the original reserve level was set when a generic policy was put in place and this new level reflects more accurately the needs of The Morris Federation.

### Accept the Treasurer's Report

Accepting the report was proposed by **Diane Moody** (New Esperance) and seconded by **Fee Lock** (Mad Jack's) and carried - Votes For 35; Against 0.

#### d) Archive Officer

No Comments.

#### e) Notation Officer

No comments.

#### f) Membership Communications Officer

No comments.

### 4.2 Reports from Co-opted Officers & Advisors:

No comments were made on the following reports:

#### a) JMO Secretary

#### b) IT Administrator

#### c) Communications & IT Officer

#### d) Social Media Officer

#### e) Health & Safety Advisor

### 4.3 Projects – reports from others working on projects or in receipt of funding:

No comments were made on the following reports:

- a) Arts Council England Grant “Old dances, new People, new Age”
- b) Book: “You’ll never stop it!” The Morris Federation: The First 25 years (1975-1999)
- c) Book: 25<sup>th</sup> -50th Anniversary (2000-2025)
- d) Morris Dance Database (MDDDB)
- e) Voices of Morris

## 5 MOTIONS

### 5.1 MOTION 1 - Include Personal Accident Insurance with the Public Liability Insurance

The proposal is to include Personal Accident Insurance as a benefit to membership, within the current membership subscription rates at no extra cost to members for 2024.

Proposed by **Jenny Everett** (Treasurer) on behalf of the Committee, seconded by **Shrewsbury Morris** - Votes For 750; Against 76.

### 5.2 MOTION 2 - Adopt the revised Constitutional documents

The proposal is to replace our current Constitution and Standing Orders at <https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/about/constitution/> by those included as Appendix 2 in the AGM Pack, to take effect after the end of the meeting. This motion required 2/3 of votes cast to be in favour. **Jerry West** gave a short rundown on the rationale and consultations that had taken place in reaching these documents.

No questions asked from the floor.

Proposed by **Jerry West** (Notation Officer) on behalf of the Committee, seconded by **Sally Wearing** (individual) - Votes For 732; Against 20.

Thank you to all those who contributed to the Constitution Working Group, mostly **Jerry West**, some of the committee, and particularly: **Sally Wearing, Val Parker, Bob Dunlop, Lesley Dunlop, Roger Kennington, Gunter Clasen, Shirley Dixon**, and others.

## 6 DISCUSSIONS

No discussion items were notified by the deadline.



## 7 ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

As per clause 4 of the Constitution, committee members (officers) must stand for re-election every three years (in rotation). Officers can stand again.

### 7.1 Treasurer

**Jenny Everett**, Treasurer since 2007, is standing down this year. This is a 3-year post starting 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024. No in-advance nominations were received. Pauline asked whether anyone in person or on Zoom would be willing to take this role on. On Zoom - **Abbi Stephens (Wild Moon)** volunteered after a short run through of the role from **Jenny Everett (Treasurer)**, was proposed by **Lin Steel (Enigma)** seconded by **Jerry West (Windsor)** and was duly elected to the role - Votes For 437; Against 0.

### 7.2 Archive Officer

**Mike Everett**, Archive Officer since 2004, is standing down this year. This is a 3-year post starting 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024. Mike spoke about the role and the contents of the Archive. There were no volunteers for the role in the room or on Zoom.

It is proposed to draw together an Archive Group, as there have been some volunteers for helping with the archive, but none who felt that they could take on the full role.

**Peter Austin** (Bagman of the Morris Ring) told the meeting that the Morris Ring Archive was open to members to use if they wished to do so.

### 7.3 Membership Communications Officer

**Jess Searle**, Membership Communications Officer, is standing down at the end of the year, which is part way through her term. There are 2 years left to run. One Nomination has been received, for **Eliza Russell (Worthing Larks)** Proposer Worthing Larks and seconder Knights of King Ina.

A vote was taken – Votes For 721; Against 2.

**Eliza Russell is therefore elected as Membership Communications Officer for 2 years from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024.**

For your information on other Committee posts ...

Under the 3-year tenure rule:

- Posts of Secretary and Notation Officer will expire on 31st December 2024 so they will be elected at next year's AGM, in 2024.
- Posts of President and Membership Communications Officer will expire on 31st December 2025 so will be elected at the AGM in 2025.

Note: We have several co-opted and advisor posts which are 1-year posts appointed by the Committee and renewable annually.

We can always use more help ... there are plenty of opportunities to use your specialist skills to help out.

## 8 NOMINATIONS: HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP, OR FRIEND, OF THE MF

**Honorary Life Membership** is intended for an individual within The Morris Federation community and gives the same benefits as Individual Membership. **Friend** is intended for an individual or organisation outside The Morris Federation community. The nominations state what unique contribution they have made to Morris dancing and related activities in general, or what exceptional contribution they have made to furthering the aims of The Morris Federation.

Citations were given in the AGM pack.

Honorary Life Membership was voted on and presented to the following:

### 8.1 Honorary Life Membership – Beth Neill

**Beth Neill** for 30+years of Morris Matters - Votes For 753; Against 0.

Proposed - Sally Wearing; Seconded - Valerie Parker, Windsor Morris, Great Western Morris, Sue Swift, Seven Champions Molly Dancers.

### 8.2 Honorary Life Membership – Fee Lock

**Fee Lock** for 22 years as Secretary of The Morris Federation - Votes For 805; Against 0.

Proposed - MF committee; Seconded – Rockhopper, Hammersmith, New Esperance, Mad Jack's, Hannah's Cat Morris.

### 8.3 Honorary Life Membership – Frank Lee

**Frank Lee** for 25+years as a sword maker - Votes For 767; Against 0.

Proposed - Crook Morris; Seconded - Hexham, Amble Sword, Black Gate, Maltby Sword, Mabel Gubbins, Silver Flame.

### 8.4 Honorary Life Membership – Michael Stimpson

**Michael Stimpson** for 20+years as insurance officer for all the morris organizations - Votes For 762; Against 0.

Proposed - MF Committee; Seconded – OBJ, Enigma Border, Whitethorn, Hertfordshire Holly, Jackstraws.

## 9 DATE(S) OF FUTURE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING(S)

The dates for future AGMs (including a Day of Dance) are:

In 2024, our Day of Dance and AGM will be held on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2024, hosted by Cardiff Morris. *Post-meeting note: The date has been changed to Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2024.*

For 2025, we have had some interest from teams in Sheffield and Domesday from Stoke on Trent.

If you would like to host a Day of Dance and AGM or host a JMO Day of Dance, please discuss it with your team and contact us.

## 10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

In the pack it was noted that The JMO are in the middle of running 6 regional Days of Dance in September/October this year, to mark 20 years since the first JMO Day of Dance in Trafalgar Square to celebrate the exemption for Morris dancing in the Licensing Act 2003 (\*).

*\* the exemption from the Licensing Act 2003 for Morris dancing (or any dancing of a similar nature) means that we don't need an entertainment licence to dance, and people who permit us to dance in public on their premises don't need an entertainment licence to provide us with dancing facilities*

## 11 PRESENTATIONS AND VOTES OF THANKS

The first badge presented was to **Jenny Everett**, our Treasurer for 17 years, from 2007-2023. Which, in addition to her 4 years as Events Officer (1986-1989), makes a whopping 21 years. As well as her achievements noted in the AGM Pack, she:

- Sourced and stored the bells,
- Was always willing to fund worthwhile projects,
- Used to handle all renewals by hand (in the days when everyone used cheques!),
- Introduced external review of our annual accounts,
- Introduced and managed the transition to online banking,
- Found the best deals on bank interest and switched accounts long before "switching" was a thing,
- Created and ran the MF 'shop', managing all stock, taking orders by post, by email, by phone, wrapping parcels, stuffing envelopes and posting everything off,
- It's difficult to imagine just how much work all this was in the pre-internet era (and still is for the shop),
- And ... what we will miss the most ... is that she is known for her timely, pragmatic and sensible advice on many contentious, and not so contentious issues the committee has faced during her time.

The second badge presented was to **Mike Everett**, our Archive Officer for a massive 20 years, from 2004-2023. As well as his achievements noted in the AGM Pack, he:

- Stored the physical archive and library (which comes in a several very large crates of material), copying and distributing documents as requested,
- Enthusiastic and dedicated to discovering archive material,
- Arranged for a photographic record to be made of all MF AGM days of dance,
- Created new material to celebrate anniversaries and other events (e.g. the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary CD),
- Collected ephemera for the archive (such as postcards) showing Morris dancing in a historical context,
- Worked with other archivists on projects of joint interest,
- Is known for his challenging questions and willingness to address difficult issues on behalf of the committee,
- And ... what we will miss the most ... his archive photos posted on social media for Throwback Thursdays and Tribute Tuesdays during lockdown, and beyond, to educate and engage our membership.

The third badge presented was to **Jess Searle**, our Membership Communications Officer for this year, 2023. As well as her achievements noted in the AGM Pack, she:

- Has been a bundle of enthusiasm and technical know-how,
- Stewarded at several JMO regional events,
- Been a great supporter of the Committee,
- And ... what we will miss the most ... her emotional support in times of stress.

We also presented badges to our hosts, **Martha Rhoden's Tuppenny Dish and Shropshire Bedlams**, and in particular thanked **Poppy Horrocks** for doing the majority of the organizing for this event.

Some further thank you's to **Sam Ross** and **Dan Watford** for setting up and running the online part of this 'hybrid' meeting and to Dan Watford for developing our new electronic voting system 'Cast Round'.

## 12 MEETING CLOSE

A reminder that the results of votes are embargoed until 20:00.

The draft minutes will be emailed to member contacts, to be approved at next year's AGM.

The meeting was declared closed at 17:54 hours.

Note: The AGM Pack will be found in a separate document.