



The Morris Federation

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President's Prologue

Another year, another AGM.

It was good to get further north to see teams that I wouldn't get to see otherwise - it made me realise how it can be easy to become complacent with seeing teams without appreciating the geographical distances between them. Certainly when there was the last few vacancies on the Committee, we had tried to encourage a wider spread so that Northern teams had some representation. Although it might feel to some that there is a distinct southern bias (6 out of 7 committee members), we are spread quite widely- from Canterbury in the East to Bristol in the West, a small cluster of us around M25 in the South, up to Colne in the North. And whilst to me travelling to Grassington, for the AGM was a long way, for some teams in Scotland and further north in England, it is still only half way to London!

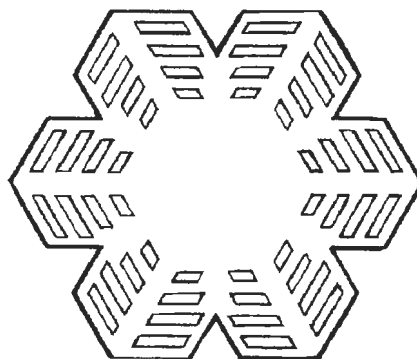
Our interest in the morris is what draws us together, and although each side is autonomous, we can still work together for the common good. In the year 2000, there will be extra opportunities to get media attention on the Morris, which we will need to use to best effect to improve our public image. See the article on plans for the Millenium, as well as possibilities for funding. We are trying to arrange the AGM weekend of dance in the Midlands for both 1999 and 2000, so that we can maximise the number of teams attending. So put the dates in your diary now! In 1999 Sunday 26th September, in 2000, Sunday 24th September.

But most of all, it is important that we aim to maintain and raise the standards of dancing, be that through the music, the kit or the actual dancing. From my position at

the massed stand at the AGM, I was able to watch both dance stands, and hear what people were saying. There were comments on the standard of dance, how that related to their own teams, views expressed at how other teams were performing, and how different styles and approaches could be incorporated and developed from one team to another. All in all, it felt very healthy - apart from the team that told me I should be telling off another team for their poor dancing and presentation. It was interesting that they felt that I as President, and the rest of the Morris Federation Committee, should be policing the standard. Membership of the Morris Federation does not require a standard to be met, but does require members to sign up to the aims of the Federation, which includes improving standards. At the end of the day, the best way for members to improve standards is to give feedback to each other on what is good about their dancing, and make constructive comments about what could be different rather a bald "thats wrong", or "thats bad."

Dance well and prosper

Janet Dowling



Editorial

Well, another bumper edition this time, including photos and a write up of the AGM. (Thanks go to Christina Pritchard of Red Stags for this, indeed, a long way to travel, glad it was worth it.)

In fact we were blessed with the best weather to have been enjoyed in these parts for some time. And it was good to see so many sides, some of whom had indeed travelled a long way. As will be mentioned later, it was sad that so few sides from the North attended, inspite of being given every encouragement to do so, in particular more local sides in Lancashire and Yorkshire..... however, it was a very good, if very tiring weekend!!

There has been a massive response to our constant requests for articles for the newsletter. Consequently, I am forced to say for the first time, SORRY if your article does not appear in this issue, it has not been ignored or put to one side, but held over for another issue due to lack of space! But, don't stop sending them in... there will no doubt be many interesting and fun activities taking place over the festive season, so don't forget to write up what you do, invite others to something, or advertise your workshop, day of dance etc here!!

In this issue:

Presidents Prologue: Janet reviews the AGM, and our aims and ethos into the next century.

General: Beth reviews the AGM, and Newsletter subscription.

Financial Services: Personal Accident Insurance renewals will be issued by Rachel, T shirts, what colours would you like?? Please let Rachel know.

Archive: Information about MAGNet. Federation Archive Group is to meet in the New year, and the outcome of the injuries survey.

Notation: Rhian provides the notation for the Raglan dance Mountain Ash, originally danced by the Bantamcocks.

Events: Jethro has information and booking forms for two workshops to be held in the New

Year, also the diary of events.

Additional articles have been supplied by, Christina Pritchard, (mentioned previously) Nicola Boualt, of Mortimers Morris, on the subject of the next A GM, amongst other things, Festival funding and Morris 2000 are detailed by Janet Dowling, together with more Morris in the Media.

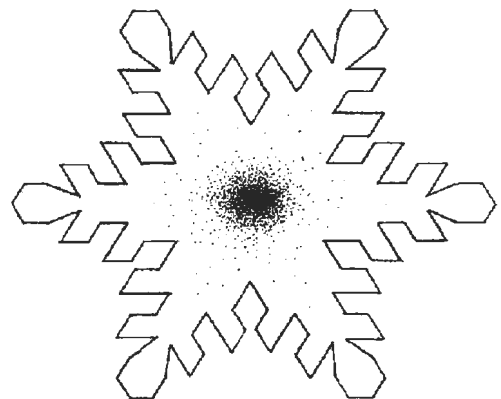
Focus on Youth this time takes us to Leamington Spa, and Whitenash Primry School, courtesy of Maureen Darby. Bob Crosby tells of a great Rapper Workshop, and of sponsorship obtained by his side, which has many names!! An unusual ritual is brought to our attention by Val Day, from Elephant-up-a-Pole...it certainly does sound more entertaining than a trip to Tesco. And Finally information about when to see again the BBC Video about Morris Dancing which has already been broadcast to schools this year, together with further information about the video.

So, thank you to those mentioned above whose articles have been included this time, and thanks again to those of you whose articles I am still hanging on to, your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Copy date for the next issue is 1st February.

In the meantime, wrap up warm, but keep dancing!

Jude Nancarrow



General

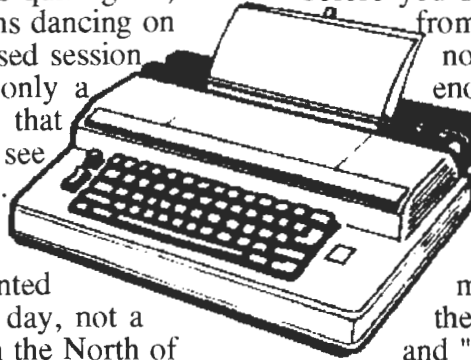
At this time of year the main part of my report is always what happened at the AGM. Well, the weather was quite good, there were almost twenty teams dancing on the Saturday and the final massed session where the two stands were only a matter of yards apart meant that many of us were able to see almost all the teams dance. Plenty of variety from Rapper to Border; plenty of North West teams - but as was pointed out at the AGM the following day, not a high proportion of teams from the North of the country. We had teams from the South East, the South West and all the bits in between - but not many from "north of Leicester". So, where were you all? There has been feedback over the years that the AGM tends to take place in the South. - this time it wasn't. Obviously the venue depends to some extent on what offers we get from host teams and we were fortunate to find an offer from a northern based team.

On a slightly depressing note, one of the "dormitories" was broken into by kids who stole some petty cash from a bag belonging to [the worst person for it to happen to!] our hard working treasurer - who was manning the shop when it happened. So it was just a reminder as always that maybe within our tours we can feel secure about belongings, be aware when on tour that not only we are on display; so may be our goods!

As to the AGM itself - firstly, the committee is unchanged from last year.

Discussion at the AGM was fairly low key. No momentous decisions were taken. One motion about voting and proxy papers was deferred (again!) since there was some ambiguity in the wording.

We did agree that on topics such as borrowing dancers or musicians (and playing along with other bands), by all means arrange to "import" a dancer or



musician from another team but get the appropriate kit and repertoire sorted out before you start! The AGM is no different from any other event - you would normally ensure that you have enough dancers and musicians before accepting the invitation! Emergencies may occur - then fall back on borrowing. Since there have been no formal proposals from the membership to alter the nature of the resolutions of 1980, they stand and "let good sense prevail."

The general feeling about how to acknowledge the Millennium was to have a combination of one big event and several smaller ones.

For those of you who chuckled at the "falling photos", I contacted the suppliers of the sticky tape on my return and was told that they were aware of a faulty batch but couldn't trace everyone! So they have replaced the not-so-sticky rolls of tape and we hope to do better next year. To those members of Red Stags and friends in whose "dormitory" the photo display took place, our thanks to them for patiently sticking the lost photos back up again throughout the night.

Finally, to remind you that it was agreed at last years AGM for the committee to look into a newsletter subscription. This has now been set at 10 per year - subscribers would receive four issues each year with all the enclosures but would have no membership benefits. This may appeal to those who just want to keep in touch with what is going on - non dancing individuals etc. Individual members should receive a copy with their renewal papers. Anyone else interested should request it from the treasurer.

Beth Neill

Financial Services

The time has come once again to let you know that the renewal registration form and Personal Accident Insurance will be winging its way to you at the beginning of December. Please remember that your Public Liability Insurance runs out at the end of December and will only be valid again from the date I receive your form and subscription. A new Insurance cover note will be sent to you and even though the expiry date states 30th August 1999, do not be alarmed, as we ensure it is renewed for you to get cover for the whole year.

I made an error in the shop goods list- the item referring to a natural colour leather badge should have read KEY RING. Sorry for any inconvenience caused. I completely sold out of the black leather badges at the AGM, but will be ordering replacements shortly.

Some folk have expressed an interest in a different colour T-shirt, i.e. purple, if you have any notions on this, drop me a line, or on any other matter concerning the shop.

I will take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy Christmas, and all the best for the New Year.

Sincerely,
Rachel Pinkney.



Upton-upon-Severn 10th Anniversary

RIVERSIDE FOLK FESTIVAL 30 April - 3 May 1999

Guests Booked

Huw & Tony Williams

Ian Bruce

North Sea Gas

Les Barker

Jez Lowe

Alan Bell Band

Eddie Murphy & John Morris

Mike Raven & Joan Mills

Colin Pitts

Robin Laing

Garva II (tbc)

Bill Caddick

Pete & Stevie Geoghegan

+ Dick Churchley

Marie Little

Frank & Jon Regester

Rod Pedlington

Loc Tup Together

Jon Prentice

Russ Franklin

Pete Grassby

Hodges Dump

Full House

Quartz

Martyn Harvey

Aardvark



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Archive

MAGNet Database

Over recent years we have been anxiously awaiting the arrival of the MAGNet indexing system so that we could start to enter details of the archive onto a database. The aim of this was to make it much easier for interested parties to find out what material we have and to make use of it. It was hoped that the system would be up and running during this year.

Unfortunately this was not to be. During testing we identified a number of problems with the system and the person who had been carrying out the programming work no longer has the time to do any more work on it. The Morris Ring archivist, Chris Metherell, who was one of the main forces behind MAGNet, has now written his own basic database in order to be able to continue indexing the Morris Ring archive.

Although it is a shame to see a project end like this I must emphasize that the time and effort spent developing MAGNet has not been in vain. One of the most valuable things to come out of the exercise has been the list of indexing keywords and the indexing guidelines. These have been developed and agreed between the Federation, the Ring and

several individual collectors. They can still be used whatever type of indexing system we end up with.

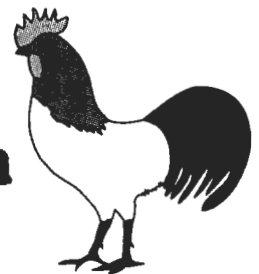
I now need to decide where we should go from here. I plan to hold a meeting of the Federation Archive Group in the new year to discuss the way forward. If anyone reading this is interested in being involved, particularly if you have database programming skills or experience of using computerised indexing systems please contact me.

Injuries Survey

You may remember filling in a questionnaire regarding Morris injuries a few years ago. Unfortunately, due to technical problems with the database created (it got deleted accidentally during a computer upgrade) and work commitments of the person who was carrying out the survey, it seems unlikely that any further progress will be made on this project. I would like to thank once again all those people who returned the survey and apologise for this outcome. The original forms will be stored in the archive.

Lynn Rogers

Notation Bantamcocks Morrismen Raglan



The Morris Federation's latest publication is a reproduction of the booklet given to the Notation Archive by Bantamcocks. I was fortunate enough to know them as a team for a number of years and to see them dance several times.

I understand that they were formed as a boys' side by a teacher and so had the benefit of dancing together for a number of years before reaching physical maturity. Their final dance out together was at Oyster

Morris's 18th birthday party in June 1994.

They were the epitome of all that is best in male dancing. They had a great physical presence, displaying a huge amount of athletic energy combined with just the right amount of grace.

The dancing was complemented by the sympathetic melodeon playing of Carolyn, an excellent but little known Cotswold Morris musician.

They came to Oyster's May weekend about ten years ago. During those three days we were exposed to their wicked sense of humour and skilful clog stepping as well as Headington and their own tradition - Raglan.

Which of us will ever forget 'Laudnum Bunches' danced in the Great Hall of Broom Park, the only way to see Headington done by anyone other than Headington?

As for Raglan, it is, like the Bantams were, energetic but graceful. It has its own phrase ending, the Raglan (Break) Caper which is a smoother punctuation for a dance than the more conventional feet together jump, or step and jump. The handkerchief dances use the Raglan triple step, which cuts across the music as the figure progresses but rejoins the phrasing by the end of the eight bars.

At Wantage, in early October, I had a rare chance to dance Raglan. I found it to be a wonderful experience. The stepping works so very satisfyingly with the music. Blue-Eyed Stranger is just a dream.

If you want to know more about Raglan, you can get the book from the Federation shop (contact Rachel Pinkney) or better still come to the Raglan Workshop in January.

Below is the notation for one of the Raglan stick dances, just to whet your appetite.

Mountain Ash (8 Man)

Music: A(BAA)5

Figures: WR, FU, FD, HG, BB. Note that Figures are danced to the B music.

12 single (2) steps and Raglan Caper throughout

Chorus: | T-T- | B-T- | T-T- | T-T-
| --- | --- | --- |

In the first four bars the dancers are stationary for the stick striking sequence. In the first bar diagonally to the Right and Left, second bar with Partner, third bar diagonally to the Left and Right, fourth bar with Partner.

In the second four bars dancers move across the set and only strike sticks with Partner on the last beat of the last bar. In the fifth and sixth bar all dance across the set, sticks at the trail, (see below) with 4 (2) steps passing Partner by the right shoulder and turning clockwise into Partner's place for the seventh and eighth with a Raglan Caper.

Repeat back to place. After the last chorus finish facing up, arms held out to the side and right foot raised. Sticks are held, for the WR, FU & FD, in the right hand towards the butt end with the top resting on the right shoulder. For the HG, BB & Hey the stick is held 'at the trail', ie. in the right hand with the arm relaxed at the side holding the stick approximately in the middle with the top end pointing forwards and slightly downwards. In all figures the stick is brought vertically in front of the body for the Raglan Caper in a gather.

Raglan (Break) Caper is RlRL (Caper onto Rt, step Lt, hop Lt, Caper onto Rt, Caper onto Lt) with the free foot thrust downwards in front without touching the floor on the ll.

Rhian Collinson



The Bantam Cocks at Chippenham Folk Festival May 1993, Copyright Rhian Collinson

Events

WORKSHOP NEWS

Two Cotswold workshops have been confirmed for Spring 1999 and I think it fair to say that neither workshop will be suitable for any newcomer to morris.

The first will be on the 9th January in Bristol and will be a Sherborne day led by Anthony John Allen from the Step Back project in Brighton. Those of you who attended MF AGM 1997 in Hastings will no doubt recall the stunning performances by Shepherds Crown. I can recall my assumptions about Sherborne being knocked sideways by the elegant and crisp yet flowing style of the team. Although Anthony John is no longer with Shepherds Crown he was one of the principal architects of their style and is recognised as a talented and inspiring, if demanding teacher. Music for the day will be provided by Dan Quinn.

The second workshop will be a day devoted to the Raglan tradition on the 20th March and will be held at Ditchling in Sussex. Raglan is a tradition that was constructed by the Bantam Cocks during the eighties and has an interesting selection of stick and hanky dances of varying complexity. The tradition did not quite pass way with the demise of the Bantams as a performing team as it has been taken up by, amongst others, Ditchling Morris themselves and Belles and Broomsticks in Guernsey. Afficianados of the John Gasson solo jig competition at Sidmouth will recognise that a jig from this tradition has been the winner of the competition (danced by Lucy Cunningham from Guernsey) and it has been argued that one of Ditchlings fine young dancers, Kara Waterfield should have been placed in the top three in last years competition with her performance of a Raglan jig.

Not only can the figures and choruses be challenging, but also the more complex dances involve the Raglan three-step better shown than described and a delight to dance. The workshop will be led by Gary O'Mahoney, an ex-Bantam himself and by John Bacon from Ditchling Morris. Gary has become more familiar recently as a clog dancer with Dance AV whilst John is not only a good teacher himself but also an excellent musician.

MEANDERINGS

Some of you out there subscribe to the internet Morris Dance Discussion List. I recently, and quite innocently, started a flame war on the list by questioning the usefulness of the term Celtic Music - as this is often used to describe any music from (principally) Ireland, Scotland, Brittany etc, etc, etc. Why my irritation? Well you only have to browse the Folk/Roots shelves of our local megastore (that bears the same name as a well known railway operator) and see the number of titles bearing a title like Celtic Heart or Best of Celtic Music 57 to ask yourself what is going on here. Then you read music journalists using the same term even in specialist magazines that should know better. The term Celtic whilst most often appearing to mean Irish also seems to connote authenticity. How this can be when it is used to refer more often to the faux-fey meanderings of Clannad or Loreena Mckennit than to, say, traditional Gaelic singing from Lewis. My intention was to question the use of the term by record companies and in particular by hack journalists - but the response was intense.

A first reaction (and this was from English morris dancers) was to say Right on - lets hear it for the Saxons. In other words the music press, folk promoters and folk audiences, with honourable exceptions, are more interested in music from outside of the British mainland than from the more southern and easterly part. What soon became evident was that the Americans didnt understand this dichotomy. They appear to understand Celtic as meaning anything British in origin ... and didnt have any problem with that. Discussion then petered out leaving me less than satisfied. I believe, in common no doubt with all of our readers, that traditional music and dance is about locality, about variation between localities, about being careful to make these distinctions clear. How then can a term like Celtic have any useful meaning in any discussion about traditional music, song or culture.

Next issue. What do we mean by folk?

Jethro Anderson

EVENTS DIARY - December '98 - April '99

20-Dec-98	Wild Hunt	Winter Solstice	The Cock Inn, Ide Hill	12:00
26-Dec-98	Cry Havoc	Boxing Day	Fishes Public Hse, N Hinksey, Oxford	12:30
26-Dec-98	Mad Jacks Morris with Daisy Roots Mummers	Boxing Day	Winkle Island, Hastings	12:00
26-Dec-98	Maldon Greenjackets	Boxing Day	Hythe Quay maldon Essex	12:30
01-Jan-99	Hereburgh	Hangover Tour	Venues in Harbury, Warks	
01-Jan-99	Mad Jacks Morris	Infamous West Hill Tour	The Angel, West Hill, Hastings	12:00 - Midnight
01-Jan-99	Pigsty Morris	New Years Day	The Star, Pucklechurch, Bristol	12:30
08-Jan-99	English Miscellany	Plough Play	Blue Anchor St. Albans	22:00
11-Jan-99	Maldon Greenjackets	Plough Monday	Blue Boar, Maldon Essex	19:30 Molly Dancing
30-Jan-99	English Miscellany with Peeping Tom & Nick Walden	Barn Dance	St Albans Arena	19:30
05-Apr-99	Maldon Greenjackets	Easter Monday	Hythe Quay, Maldon, Essex	12:30
01-May-99	Hereburgh Morris	May Day	Chesterton Windmill	05:15
1-May-99	Maldon Greenjackets	May Day	Promenade, Maldon, Essex.	05.30

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Leigh Sinton, Nr. Malvern, Worcs WR13 5EE

Tel/Fax: 01886 832767

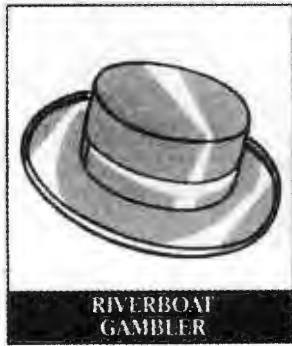
**Need something a bit different?
Ask me, I may be able to get one!**



PURITAN



CAVALIER



RIVERBOAT
GAMBLER



BEEFEATER



TRICORN

A Flagcracking Event

Having left Southampton later than intended, the car held three dancers, one musician, two teddy bears and the kitchen sink- complete with water. As we progressed up the M3 we heard a noise- no not the engine in trouble but a mobile phone. Message from the other member of the side able to make the weekend was, "don't use the A1M we've been on it for ages and are making about four miles per hour". hastily reaches for newly bought road atlas and new route planned. As we eventually approached our destination, the phone rang again to ensure that we knew where we were going - of course we did. We were involved in discussing whether we put tents up first, or got drinks in if the bar was still serving, and decided to send a runner to the bar whilst the rest battled with tents in the cold and dark. As we entered the school gates we were met by a bouncing Steve Cunio who informed us that there was indoor camping available because one group had changed their minds and didn't require it - wonderful!! Drinks and air bed pumping after a gruelling journey, as the last to arrive.

Breakfast was wonderfully organised and well set out even though it followed too short a night! If the other tours were as good as ours, and they seemed to be from exchanging stories with other sides, then Flag Crackers did us all proud - beautiful countryside and lovely villages with friendly pubs and puzzled walkers! Packed lunches were well organised catering exceedingly well for a variety of dietary requirements and providing enough choice for the "ordinary ones" to trade rolls with each other! The massed Stand was at one pub in two adjacent areas, despite the proximity there were no problems with music disturbing the other set, it also made it easier to rush around to attempt to see sides that we hadn't seen on tour. A great tour with a relaxed feel, plenty of opportunity to dance and socialise, and a choice of pubs, tea shops and gift shops - something for everyone.

Evening meal was excellent, a good choice with menus all along the wall in advance so that there was minimal dithering at the servery. Some of us retired to the bar, whilst others enjoyed the ceilidh with Peeping Tom and Martyn Harvey. The entertainment from the mime artists showed an excellent use of music to create drama and mood however, it didn't seem to go much further than

that and took far too long to do so! I also objected to the unnecessary vandalism at the end. Notwithstanding that, it was a wonderful evening made all the better for meeting friends from Diggons Breches (RIP) and rehearsing Raglan to the amusement of some people in the bar!

Sundays breakfast was as organised as Saturday's with the tables and chairs appropriately placed for the AGM so that no extra furniture shifting was needed. The meeting was fairly quiet, apart from the front row, and uncontentious, apart from an accoutrement acquired by one of Flag Crackers. ("Oh No")

Lunch was as good as the weekend's food had been previously, with plenty of it, even after seconds - "please take some home".

Our journey back was slightly less gruelling despite someone having burnt down South Mimms Services. All in all a great weekend, thanks to Flag Crackers from Red Stags.

Christina Pritchard

P.S the car is fine now!



Flag Crackers of Craven at the Massed Stand.

**T
H
E

G
A
L
L
E
R
Y**



Slubbing Billy



Pigsty



Sergent Musgroves



Gift Rapper



Wolfs Head And Vixen



Phoenix



Flag Crackers of Craven

Hastings Traditional Jack In The Green

30th April - 3rd May

Hastings Traditional Jack In The Green is the largest annual gathering of Morris dancers on the South Coast; they come to help celebrate the custom of going out with Jack in the Green on May Day, as well as, as much or as little dancing as you please. There are also ceilidhs, (this year Spot the Dog and the Woodpecker Band) and concerts. A friendly laid back atmosphere prevails. You need to provide your own food and accommodation, but this is the seaside so it is no problem. There is limited indoor camping for those who would prefer.

Many teams complain because they are not invited. This is not because we don't like you; it just does not work that way. You ask to come, and it works on a first come first served basis. It is true that many teams ask to come again when they leave, so come year on year.

We would be happy to see new teams. All you need to do is write expressing an interest, giving approximate numbers, a short sentence about yourselves and whether you need indoor camping. We will write again in March to get final numbers.

...But write sooner rather than later to guarantee your place!!

Please contact:

Keith Leach,
Hastings Traditional Jack in the Green,
205, Priory Road,
Hastings,
East Sussex,
TN34 3JB

Tel: 01424 716576

e mail: keith_leach@compuserve.com

NOTICEBOARD

Tanglefoot Step Clog from Wantage, Oxfordshire are changing their name.

The group was formed ten years ago, but as there are a number of other groups also called Tanglefoot, we now feel that it is time for a new image to take us forward into the Millennium. It's also a chance for a collective throwing away of baggy tights!

From 1st December 1998 we will be called '**ISIS**'

As we are from Oxfordshire, Isis is appropriate as it is the local name for the River Thames in Oxford. Isis in Egyptology is the Goddess of Corn & Fertility - Universal Mother Nature.

If you are keen to dance stepping & clog, contact us on 01367 820211 or 01865 761482

Constitution

I have recently had requests from some teams for advice about what should go into a constitution, I have now put together an information pack, (having personally written the constitution for 3 Morris teams) with suggestions for avoiding the pitfalls, which were the reason teams contacted me in the first place.

It is available from me in return for an A4 stamped (39p) addressed envelope.

It will at some point go onto the Internet page, but in the meantime you could look at Paul Millennas' version at:
<http://www.millennas.force9.co.uk/morrcons>.

Ditchling Morris & Calceto Morris

Collected for the BBC Children in Need appeal... 502 by dancing inside and outside all the pubs and restaurants in just one street in Brighton!



new Esperance

Any Old Esps?

1999 marks our 25th year of morris dancing in Islington and nearly 20 years of the Milk maids May Garland. We plan to have a series of events throughout the year, with a party in June to celebrate the occasion.

We are looking for former members of New Esperance to join in our celebrations - be you a dancer, musician or hanger on. If you know of any old Esps, please let them know we are looking for them.

Contact:

Diane Moody (yes she's still there)
124, Streatham Road,
Mitcham,
Surrey
CR4 2AE

0181 715 5968



Lord Pagets Morris

We will be celebrating our 25th Anniversary during 1999.

If you are an ex member, musician or friend, we would like to hear from you.

Contact:
Christine Foat
71, Thornhill Road,
Ickenham,
Middlesex.
UB10 8SH



MORTIMER'S MORRIS



MORTIMER'S MORRIS.... WHO?

OK - so we may not have been in the directory this year (a minor slip-up on behalf of Mortimer's Secretary!) but we certainly do still exist!

Before going any further, here are our contact details:

Nicola Bouault, Secretary, 46 Church Street,
Denby Village, Ripley. DE5 8PH phone:
01332 882857 e-mail:
nicola.bouault@broomfield.ac.uk

So who are Mortimer's Morris? We are a women's North West side, based in Nottingham. We are complemented by a large band who play mainly French tunes to our traditional and team-choreographed dances. The dancers in their distinctive blue/green/purple ribboned waistcoats and accomplished band, complete with hurdy-gurdy, hammered dulcimer and bazouki came together in the February of 1994 to form a new Nottingham side.

The side was formed by a group of dancers from established Nottingham sides who wanted to do something new and exciting with Morris. The musicians were influenced by the sounds of Saint Chartier, the summer French festival, and the two combined to form a blend of traditional morris dancing with a

1990's look and unique Morris sound.

The name 'Mortimer's' derives from ancient links with Sir Roger Mortimer and Nottingham Castle's secret tunnel, 'Mortimer's Hole'. The side has become one of the most respected in Nottingham, and has attracted both new and experienced dancers from the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire area.

Members of the band have formed a Ceilidh band, called the 'RBB Band', who specialise in French music with an experienced caller who caters for all kinds of Ceilidh dancers. The band already has numerous bookings for next year and is looking forward to accompanying the dancers at their forthcoming fixtures.

Mortimer's growing reputation has seen them dance at festivals such as Warwick, Bridgnorth, Upton-upon-Severn, Cleethorpes and Stainsby, along with local pub tours, fund-raising events, Ceilidhs and morris weekends. If you want to see them perform next year they have been invited to dance at Holmfirth, Warwick and Whitby folk festivals. What's more, to celebrate their 5th Anniversary, they are the hosts to the 1999 Morris Federation AGM.

The AGM takes place on the weekend of 24 - 26 September 1999, and will be based around the Nottingham area. Flagcrackers are a hard act to follow, so Mortimer's will be planning for a grand occasion at the last AGM of the millennium! Please put the date in your diary. It'll be a fun weekend and a great opportunity to meet and see Mortimer's if you haven't already.

In the words of one of our admirers : "we enjoyed the spectacle of Mortimer's immensely. You have all the ingredients - loads of energy, precision...superb music...and you convey your enjoyment infectiously".

Nicola Bouault

Millennium, Morris 2000 and applying for Festival Funds

All three Morris organisations have agreed to collaborate flexibly, in whatever way individual sides wish, to celebrate the Millennium and help to put Morris into what is promised to be the biggest international celebrations this Country will have seen for decades.

Morris 2000 is our name for the initiative we are taking to lead these celebrations across Britain.

We believe that "2000 events in 2000 places" will be more effective, have more impact, involve more dancers and dancing (and be easier to organise) than trying to get even 2000 Morris persons in one place (for possibly only minor national coverage). Millennium events however large or small can still be fairly high profile and promote the Morris. Remember, there will be opportunities to bid for funding of up to 5000 for small events like days of dance, workshops and other activities- please see separate notes below.

We propose the following:-

1. COMMON LOGO

That the three Morris organisations agree on a common logo (themed on Morris 2000). All Morris teams will be encouraged to use the logo, in addition to their own when promoting any Morris event during the year 2000. This will hopefully spread the message that "Morris is Fun" from pub tours to weekends of dance, to dramatic presentations on the Morris, to workshops, to booklets, to producing videos.

If teams abroad wish to use the common logo, then the more the merrier, emphasising the global participation in this most English of customs.

Suggestion for Morris Sides

Design a logo for use by all three Morris organisations for the year 2000! It needs to be simple, recognisable, incorporate the words Morris 2000, and not look like a advert for a motor car. Some suggestions have been Morris 2000, with all the "o"s as bells and the rest done in Ribbon. Another has been "Morris - dancing into 2000." Or even "Morris is fun -2000." If you have a suggestion, describe it or make it into a sketch, and then send to your Morris organisation representative by the end of February 1999. The three reps will then agree on one logo, which will be launched later in 1999.

2. REGIONAL EVENTS

That teams be encouraged to work in regional groups to put on a big event. For example - all the teams in a County could come together to put on a day of dance in association with their County Council.

Suggestion for Morris Sides

To contact other teams in your locality to see if there is sufficient interest in collaborating on either putting on a joint event, or linking in with an event planned by another organisation, e.g. local council, brewery, parks department etc. Teams will have to take the initiative here, and can use the County list of Morris teams cross referenced with the organisations list. Volunteers to coordinate things in each area would be welcome. Please let your organisation rep know if you are volunteering to take the lead, and /or what you are planning.

3. MORRIS DANCING IN THE DOME

That we explore the possibility of gaining access to the Dome, and having Morris dancing there on a regular basis - possibly every weekend - with teams being able to book participate on a particular day [or days].

The booking would need to be co-ordinated by the various organisations to ensure balanced programmes and cater for any preferences [or prejudices] of individual groups.

Suggestion for Morris Sides

We currently have some one looking into this, but if any one has any other contacts in relation to the Dome, please contact Janet Dowling 0181 393 5370 who will co-ordinate this.

4. MORRIS CALENDAR

That we collate the information about Morris events through out the country in the year 2000, in a calendar form, to be available on the Internet, and accessible by the Tourist Information Offices. If the information can be collected early enough, it can also be to published in paper form (subject to successful lottery bids) so that it can be widely distributed. The idea would be to have details of events where there is Morris dancing at least every weekend of the year. It may be county based (in which case, sections of it could be used by teams in promoting Morris in their area), or by month.

Suggestion for Morris Sides

This will need to have some forward planning, as the calendar would need to be fixed for the paper form by Sept 1999 to allow for printing and distribution, although the Internet calendar could be up dated. Basically, if your team is likely to be dancing at an event or running an event in the year 2000, it would be helpful to start thinking about dates and details sooner rather than later. Volunteers to help collect and collate the information would be welcome.

5. MOST OF ALL, ENJOY DANCING IN THE MILLENNIUM YEAR.

However, we do not wish to dictate - as usual all will be free to do whatever they wish - however, if we can assist in providing some common focus, then that will be all to the good. With so many activities in the Year 2000, we will need some cohesion to be noticed.

Janet Dowling
President of the Morris Federation
0181 393 5370
John Frearson
Bagman of the Morris Ring
01767 681057
Chris Hall
Chair of Open Morris
01980 610229

Morris Federation Winter 1998

Festival Funding for the Millennium

Whilst we get our various acts together for the Millennium, it is important that local Teams are aware of the need to register NOW for the information relating to Funding for Millennium Festivals.

"The Millennium Festival Fund" has available funds to award to local voluntary groups organising small scale local community activities and events. Grants of between 500 and 5000 will be available to those groups organising activities within a set theme and meeting the award criteria. Application forms are expected to be available from early 1999, with awards announced in the summer.

You are advised to register NOW with the Millennium Festival Fund Office to ensure that you receive a funding/application form as soon as they are available. It is anticipated that Small Grants will be considered instantly and will be awarded on a rolling system over three stages in 1999. TO REGISTER telephone 0870 600 2000 (automated system) or 0870 600 1999 (telephonist). You should ask to register your organisation to receive a Small Grant and Community Awards application form."

Several teams have been successful in getting monies from the lottery, and we are sure we can work Morris dancing into community events in different ways around the countryside. Even if you have no idea of what you might want to bid for, REGISTER NOW for the information packs.

Remember, when you decide to make a bid, look carefully at the criteria, and see how many of them can be applied to your project. The successful bids tend to be ones that have specified how their project will meet the criteria. Don't expect it to be obvious for others to draw their own conclusions- the people making the decisions have a lot of forms to get through, so make their job easier by spelling it out for them, and reflecting the words used in the criteria in your bid.

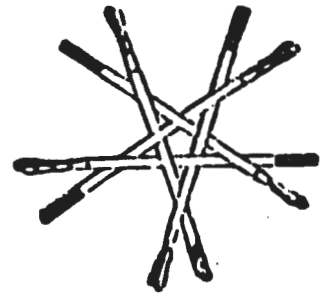
If you have any ideas about the Millennium, or wish to discuss taking the lead on one of the County events, or know the name of the person we need to talk to about the Millennium Dome, then please contact one of us.

(Contact details opposite)



Newcastle Kingsmen Sword Dancers

Founded in 1949



DETT 99

Newcastle upon Tyne

5 - 7 March 1999

The event will be co-hosted by the Kingsmen and Sallyport, celebrating a combined 80 years in the business.

Come to Newcastle for a weekend of Rapper sword dancing, drinking, music, workshops and no football.

DETT 99 will be based closely on the successful format of DETT 94, the Rapper competition itself being held in the Tyneside Irish Centre on the afternoon of Saturday 6 March, with plenty of dancing and drinking in the pubs of Newcastle beforehand.

You'd be Batty to miss it.
Make it a date in your diary now.

For more information contact:

Chris Cartridge
tel: 01207 561462
e-mail: Chris.Cartridge@Sanofi.com



Sallyport Sword Dancers

Founded in 1969



Focus on Youth

Whitenash Primary Morris



I'm a part time teacher at Whitenash Primary School in Leamington Spa. I dance with Hereburgh Morris, and four years ago started a Morris side at the school.

The children are 8-11. I tend to restart the group each school year. The numbers of dances that the children do each year are limited- we only practice one lunchtime a week, except when we are preparing to dance out. At the beginning of the year I usually have about 30 interested children, but the number tend to drop back to somewhere between 12 and 20. Several children are about to start their third year of dancing with me.

I have been inclined to teach the dances I do at Hereburgh - but simpler. We generally do Bromboro' Heath and several Ascot dances (without crossbacks). We've also tried Vandals of Hammerwich from Lichfield. last year we also tried a couple of dances written for a junior side following the North West tradition. We perform at school functions, open day, summer fair and also for the local community.

Some of the children

experience learning difficulties and I have found it can be a great boost to their self confidence when they perform successfully for the school. other members of staff are supportive, and quite suprised when they see how well the children manage quite complex dances. At the end of the school year we have a party, and those moving on to secondary school get a leather Hereburgh badge as a memento.

I must say, I love teaching dance to the children, despite the headache and sore throat that go with it sometimes. It would be interesting to know how many other schools have their own Morris side. I know that two other members of Hereburgh have taught Morris at their schools, although not so regularly, and most of us have worked with brownies and Cubs at different times.

The photographs are from the past two years - both times we were at the local church festival.

Maureen Darby

01926 613330

Leamington Spa . . .



Mr. Bean goes Rapper Dancing (and he is sponsored for it)

"We are the old Anstey mashers, we always go out on the mash", is the first line of our theme song.

So when the Green Velvet Outlaws invited us to their rapper workshop we thought, that could be a good bit of a crack, (our old bagmans naval vernacular for a jolly good outing). Which indeed it certainly was. None of us had done any rapper dancing and plan (A) was to do the one day workshop and then (B) to dance out in public in the evening.

The High Spen Blue Diamonds demonstrated the whole dance forst, finishing with an impossible set called Bulldog when all the swords are twisted together like a wicker basket and then the number three dives under and knots the swords, which results in the whole shooting match, chaps and swords being held together by dynamic tension. The unknotting of this lot, as with the rest of the dance, was smooth and right on time to the music, a fine demonstration by what turned out to be a fine set of Geordie lads.

("That must be just a demonstration, we could never dance like that without a seasons practice"). But it slowly dawned on me that we were expected to do all the figures which made up the one dance. If I can still remember - intro with song, coach and horses, around the set, reef knot, figure of eight, numbers through, breast plate and finishing with the dreaded bulldog. We all did get through the dance to whatever standard and in fact danced a set out in a packed pub at night, giving me one of the greatest buzzes I have ever had. We even danced the intro with Ricky Forster of High Spen singing. It was like leading a climb without runners, we slipped a few times but we didn't fall off!

I must do the standard response to a good day and thank all the organisers, The Green Velevet Outlaws. But on behalf of Ansty

morrismen and all others who were there, it really was a great day in the company of people on the same wavelength as me. To name names - Linda who sorted out all the paperwork for us and Pat who put up four Ansty men and provided a splendid breakfast in a relaxed atmosphere, to see us all off the next day.

During the evening around the three pubs I got chatting to the youngster of The High Spen Blue Diamonds, a 20 year old teddy boy. I felt a twinge of nostalgia as he chatted about rock and roll, although he had to admit he can dance rock and roll, but I was part of the living tradition as I used to jive when it came out with Bill Hayley and the Comets, and still do jive when I get the chance. I said "you couldn't criticise my dancing if I came to one of your do's. He said " no, its great when you old boys jive!"

Paul Goodfellow, one of our lot, likes to accompany himself on anything he can find in a pub when he sings, but when we finished up at the pub for the final session, all the impediments around the pub were tie wrapped to screws on the walls, (did anyone warn the landlord?) so Goodie had to sing unaccompanied. Joking aside, Paul is a fine traditional singer.

The prompt for me to write this article was no lesser person than Janet Dowling, who was at the workshop. She asked me to do an article about sponsorship as we are sponsored by Everards Brewery.

Pete Scrivens our old bagman, made the approach to the brewery, although I was not involved in the original negotiations I have since been to an annual renewal meeting at Everards. The first thing to do is ask, if you don't you won't. It has to be shown to the person responsible for sponsorship that their company will benefit from the investment in

some way. In the case of a Brewery, Morrismen dancing at a pub can attract customers. It is important to develop a relationship with that person. I think I almost blew it last year whilst negotiating for this year. Pete is talking it through with Everards again, it looks as though we will be O.K. for the next season. Pete has a knack of remembering the response we had in the pubs during the season. If we have a good night we ask the landlord to write to the Brewery. I think we give the Brewery an insight into the atmosphere of their houses, and the personalities of the landlords/ladies.

We were asked to dance at a tenants training seminar. It was interesting to watch potential landlords joining in with us and the old timers keeping out of the way, while brewery directors watched discreetly. One young woman impressed me whilst we were performing. Some of the others were making fools of themselves, she joined in but kept control of the situation. I would have given her a job.

We are having a tours meeting next week. It takes a bit of sorting out to find two pubs per night where we think the Morris would go down well, and one of them has to be an Everards pub as part of the sponsorship deal. Last year I invited several other sides to dance out with us, which we all agreed went down very well and made a better attraction as far as the Brewery was concerned. I am looking forward to inviting several sides again this season.

Incidentally, we aren't called Ansty Morrismen, we are called Everards Old Original Ansty Morrismen. We're not old or original, that's the name of one of their beers. A landlord at Melton Mowbray was so pleased to have us dance last year, that he put on a barbecue. When we arrived I noticed he had written, "spit roast pork sandwiches", in large letters above our name on the posters. After that we started to call ourselves Spit Roast Pork Everards Old Original Ansty Morrismen!

Bob Crosby
Everards Old Original Ansty Morrismen

Editors note: If you run a workshop or attend one, why not write it up for the newsletter, or if you receive sponsorship, why not tell other sides how you got it & what is involved.



Elephant-up-a-Pole border Morris will be performing their annual Wassail ritual at Ryton Gardens, the home of the Henry Doubleday Research Foundation, on Twelfth Night, 17th January (it all depends on when you start counting)

During the weekend leading up to Twelfth Night the Elephants and their guests will be eating (of necessity), drinking (grudgingly), dancing (in their own inimitable, noisy fashion) and....shooting an apple tree.

The apple tree in question will not be some poor randomly selected, innocent passer-by sort of a tree, but a prime and carefully chosen specimen in the nurturing care of the Ryton Gardens staff. It remains a mystery even to the Elephants themselves as to why, year upon year, they allow the Elephants to dance around it, festoon it with toast (yes toast) soaked in cider made from its own apples (a sort of vegetable cannibalism) and then shoot it with a blunderbuss, or some such ancient firearm!

If this sounds more interesting (or weird) than shopping at Tesco, or the bumper edition of eastenders, then look out for the Elephants in Coventry on the nearest Saturday to Twelfth Night (if you are still using a pre Gregorian calendar), or at Ryton Gardens, (confusingly not at Ryton) on January 17th 1999; we will be delighted to see you.

Val Day
Elephant-up-a-Pole



Morris in the Media

Firstly some reports of Morris on the TV. Pete Ashby of Motley Morris in Kent reports that they have been quite busy.

"The Molly has made numerous television appearances over the years. Particular recent highlights have been, "You Bet" with Adam Woodyatt (Ian Beale of Eastenders) dancing with us as a forfeit. A creditable performer too - we did try to persuade him to join!

"Crazyhowbadattack"- a special programme to celebrate the 40th anniversary of childrens ITV. We were sprung on the presenters, including Carol Vorderman, Jenny Powell and Andy Crane, as a suprise at the end of filming. We performed a short dance which they had to copy.

"Summer Festivals" on Meridian. A whole programme was devoted to the Rochester Sweeps Festival.

"The Midsomer Murders"- a day was spent filming a country fair scene with John Nettles, for an episode called "Blood will Out", to be shown around May next year.

There are rumours that Channel 5 have been filming SoMe (sic) Morris team- due to be out in the new year for a late night spot- details to be confirmed.

We have also had more feedback from Anne Bailey of CottonMill Clog, Hemil Hempstead, about their appearance on Blue Peter - mentioned a couple of issues ago.

"So what are the majic words to get every single member of CottonMill Clog to turn up and dance on time? - "Blue Peter"

While dancing around St Albans on 10th January, our day of dance, we were spotted by Richard Marson, the producer of Blue Peter who lives in St Albans. He was very impressed with our dancing, and persuaded us to come to the BBC- did we need any persuading - I ask you! Blue Peter wanted to show their viewers true English traditional dancing. They emphasised the clogs that were worn by so many people in days gone by. At 1.30pm on the 17th February we were shown into the Blue Peter Studio, hired at 15,000 an hour for the first rehearsal. The studio was very impressive, all

those lights, all those cameras but just as amazing, was Massie Peett our foreman who managed to get everyone of CottonMill up in front of the cameras, either dancing or playing a musical instrument.

Katy Hill, Konnie Hug and Richard Bacon, the Blue Peter team, were all on top form. The difficult job of dealing with thirty six Morris dancers was made to look so easy by true professionals.

We would all admit that it was a long day, for what amounted to one minute and 15 seconds of viewing, which was shown the next day - 18th February.

However we were all caught up in the razzmatazz of showbiz, and after a walk around the Blue Peter garden, we went home clutching our Blue Peter Badges.

Something to tell the grandchildren.!

Now Morris on the radio!

BBC World Service are celebrating 50 years, and as part of it they were looking at the different ways that their theme tune Lilibullero. They came down to New Esperance, Central London, and recorded us dancing in mufti and bells. They asked about other Morris teams, and I put the call out on the Internet link - were there any other takers? It should have gone out on November 21st.

As if Morris on the Radio wasnt enough (at least you can hear the bells) - how about Rapper on the Radio- Green Velvet Rapper, of Nottingham, were featured on their local radio station- I suppose they could hear the clash of the steel!!

And finally - Rumours abound of a radio play that went out in October- supposedly about two rival clog troupes? Did anyone hear it? If you did- please let me know what it was like.

Please send any more feedback on Morris and the media to me by end of January.

Janet Dowling - -

BBC Video Transmission Dates 1999

BBC School Television: "FOLK DANCE"

3 programmes for teachers working with 9 - 12 year old children

TRANSMISSION DATES

BBC2, 1999

Wednesdays 09.25 - 09.45

Country Dance 1 21st April

Country Dance 2 28th April

Morris Dance 3 5th May

Repeat: Fridays 10.30 - 10.50

Country Dance 1 28th May

Country Dance 2 11th June

Morris Dance 3 18th June

(Re-transmission dates in year **2000** to be announced)

Purchase of programmes

The Folk Dance Video Pack, containing a VHS of all three programmes, an audio tape of the music, (plus music for four extra dances), and Teachers' Notes, can be obtained from BBC Educational Publishing price, £29.99, (Reference no 376414)

The audio tape can be purchased separately for £7.50
(Reference no. 46089X)

Ring BBC School Information Service on 0181 746 1111 for further information or order direct from BBC Educational Publishing, (Freepost LS2811, Wetherby, West Yorkshire, LS23 6YY) by credit card (9am - 4pm) on 01937 541 001.

THE MORRIS FEDERATION
DIARY FIXTURES FORM

Enc/MF/Winter 1998

Use this form to tell the world (or at least the rest of the Morris Federation) about your team's activities, by having your events included in the Diary in the next issue of the MF Newsletter.

... But what if a side already publishes a programme of events?

Great! If your team produces a programme or any other publicity MF would appreciate a copy, even if the events mentioned are too early for the next newsletter. After being used to compile the Diary, the programmes go into a publicity folder, which travels around with the scrapbooks and the MF shop.

They are often useful to new sides looking for ideas on presentation of publicity material. But, we'd still like you to complete this form...!

... So, what sort of thing should be included on it?

Obviously, we cannot include everything in every Diary - but MF does get the odd enquiry from tourists, media people or the general public, asking where and when they can see morris dancing. Often we can only provide a string of phone numbers of likely sides - tedious!

So, we need to know about any significant events your team is involved in - not necessarily large, but maybe interesting for some special reason. We would like to know about regular events, such as a Boxing day or May morning dance out, and about other traditional events occurring in your part of the world in the next six months or so. Don't worry if plans are not finalised - just tell us what you can. [If this is the case please emphasise that it is in draft and that details will be confirmed (or cancelled!) later]. If in doubt, tell us about everything, and we will choose the Diary entries.

NAME OF SIDE

Events (in September or later) to include in the next MF Newsletter Diary are:-

(1) Date

Event

Other details

(2) Date

Event

Other details

(3) Date

Event

Other details

Please continue on the back of the sheet if you have more to include.

Copy date : 30th January 1999

Return to : Jethro Anderson 51, Bishops Road Bishopston Bristol BS11 8LS