

The Morris Federation



NEWSLETTER

Spring 1999

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Presidents' Prologue

Somewhere else in this newsletter, you'll find an advertisement for the President of the Morris Federation. After four years, I have decided to stand down. I had said that I wanted to continue until the year 2000. However, due to work commitments, and health problems, I have decided to stand down this year.

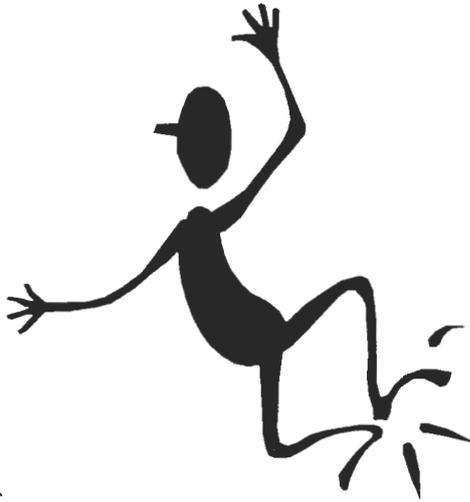
Being President can be as much or as little as you want it to be. The bottom line is that it involves chairing the AGM and the four committee meetings each year and handling the calls from other organisations and the media. Now I could do that, even given the constraints that I have. However I feel that there is a lot more that could be done than that.

Over the past four years I have tried to address two areas- the public image of the Morris and the issue of younger people in the Morris. I did have a meeting of people across the three Morris organisations, which came up with some good ideas on both areas but there was not sufficient interest to take a working group forward. However, I took the work we did on that day as my blueprint and strategy for approaching both the public image issue, and younger people in the Morris.

On the former, (with Kevin Taylor's expertise), we have established a Web Site presence on the World Wide Web, have collated and distributed information on world wide May Day dancing, as well as responding to requests for interviews on the media and finding teams for the BBC video. Currently I am working with Open Morris and the Ring to plan Millennium events, particularly in getting a Morris presence in the Dome. Things that I didn't manage to get off the ground include the Morris dance post-cards and getting Michael Palin to "Dance around England" including the five different regional varieties of Morris dance. (I'll keep trying on that one!)

With the younger people in the Morris, I started off with the survey that looked at the age range in the Morris in the Federation- to realise that the average age was 39.5, and that the average team size was 20 people. It also meant that for the first time we had some means of identifying how many people were involved in the Morris dance in total, and were surprised to realise that were

talking of about 14,000 people. My next step was to get feedback on teams who could field a team of younger people - both to act as role models for others, and to be a resource for people arranging tours or festivals to have a younger team in their numbers. Unfortunately having typed in the lists, I lost it all on a reformatting of the PC, and I haven't had time to redo it.



I didn't manage to do all I wanted to- I had ideas and a strategy about what I felt needed to be done but I haven't had all the time or energy that I would have needed to complete it. Changing job twice during this time probably didn't help. So may be that's one lesson - set yourself realistic goals- or don't change your job twice whilst you are trying to implement it.

What does this all mean. I am trying to convey that I feel that the job as President can be an exciting one, with lots of scope, that can be as wide or as narrow as you want it to be, but at the end of the day what it needs is someone who cares about the Morris, is prepared to be proactive about developments, and can lead to Morris into the next Millennium, and not just to be content on being a figurehead..

Are YOU up for the job?

Janet Dowling

Editorial



Many apologies for the late arrival of this quarters newsletter. It would appear that on the learning curve regarding computers, I am slipping slowly backwards,

Yes, the new computer has arrived, and it and I are struggling to make friends, and co-operate with each other. In a moment of lack of communication and co-operation I managed to wipe the entire Spring Newsletter, in completed, form from the computer before I had printed it! How? Not sure, and it is of no consequence now, all you need to know is that the necessity to start from scratch when the due date was already upon me, is the reason for the delay in publication.....

Committee Vacancies: There will be several positions available on the committee next year, and requests for volunteers and job descriptions are contained in this issue. For the posts of President, Secretary and Archive Officers.

Presidents' Prologue : Following her decision to stand down next year Janet brings us up to date with her aims and achievements during her tenure as President of the Federation. The job description is to be found on page 17.

General: Beth has also decided to stand down as secretary, and includes in her article the job description for this post. There is also an update on the Nine Daies Morris 14-20 April 2000.

Financial: Rachel has a reminder about the Public Liability Insurance for those who have not yet returned their paperwork, and updates on stock levels in the shop.

Notation: Rhian investigates the Molly Trials, and the many varied forms of Molly dancing, together with an update on the progress of the Hinton Book.

Archive : Lynn reviews a book recently purchased for the archive, "An overview of English Folk Dance," by Frank Kidson & Mary Neal (1915)

Events: Further information will be available in the next issue, in the meantime any queries should be directed to Jethro, his contact numbers can be found on the back cover. Reminders however, for the Raglan Workshop to be held on 20th March, and Westmorland Step & Garland will be 17th or 24th April, please check with Jethro for current information.

My thanks to our other contributors this issue, namely, **Ted Dodsworth** for his article, Pacific Party in which he gives an account of Betty Luptons Ladle Laikers trip to Vancouver, Seattle and Victoria in 1998. **Sarah Crofts** for her review of the International Encyclopaedia of Dance, **Christina Pritchard** for her request for help with her sides history, and for a lovely poem which I promise to include in the next issue (sorry Christina!).

We do, of course have the regular articles, many sightings of Morris in the Media, and update of progress with Millennium celebrations., dancing in the Dome etc. Sadly we have to report the cancellation of Morris 99 in Scarborough, but the expansion of the annual Scarborough Fayre. On a literary note, **Janet Dowling** has been delving deep into the pages of Shakespear to find many interesting and varied references to Morris, prepare to be amazed.

The next Committee meeting will take place on 17th April, should you have any issues which you want raised, please contact the relevant committee member.

Copy date for the next issue is 5th May, date of publication 1st June.

Once again, my apologies for the lateness of this issue, it shouldn't be a matter beyond my control, but on this occasion, it was..... Some orientation of the new technology coming up!

Don't forget to send photos and stories of your May Day exploits,

Wishing you all a good season,

Jude Nancarrow

General

Happy New(ish) Year. Please take a look at your newsletter labels and details as written in directory before you pass the newsletter on and/or file everything. I find that sometimes I have made a small error on details and if you don't tell me - I don't know!

Position

Description:

- ◆ As I said at the AGM, I feel it is time for me to stand down from post and a new Secretary to take over.

I gave a fairly hefty description of what I do then, so glance over your AGM minutes (first test - are you organised?!!!) and see if you think you would like an opportunity to put back into Morris something of what you have got out of it. That was my rationale for taking on the job.

I won't pretend it is a little post - it takes up a lot of time. I spend roughly five or six hours a week on MF business - that's not counting the odd phone calls.

- ◆ Phone calls - most requests are for contacts from Morris dancers for other Morris teams but also several from media and event organisers. People often want the impossible in terms of timing. You have to break it to them gently that we are not professionals; tactfully explain that the majority of dancers and musicians are in full time employment and unavailable for mid week daytime bookings at two or three days notice!
- ◆ The work has peaks and troughs - particularly around January when I compile the directory from all your registration forms; also both leading up to and following the AGM. For the quarterly committee meetings I attempt to produce minutes as soon as possible after the event. This helps all committee members to complete actions agreed at the meeting!
- ◆ You need to be able to make four Saturdays or Sundays (roughly towards the end of January, April, July and October) - and a whole weekend in September - available.
- ◆ You should have a phone and access to a computer!
If you would like to chat over the idea - feel free to ring and ask about it. I was very lucky in my predecessor, Val Parker. She not only wrote it all down but was always very helpful if I needed advice or explanation. I will endeavour to do the same.

Update on Nine Daies Morris (14 to 20 April 2000)

Some time ago we were approached by the organisers of this event to see if MF would offer support (including a start up loan - the event is planned to be self financing). I asked them what was happening and this is an extract of details from their most recent letter:

About a dozen sides belonging to MF have approached the organisers - some of whom are helping with the entire event and others with sections - the greater number of these are based in Norfolk and Suffolk.

National publicity should be starting up soon - they will be looking for people wishing (!) to dance the whole route (for the uninitiated - London to Norwich, as danced by Will Kemp four hundred years ago). Most stretches of the route have been planned and transport arrangements are being settled. They are still actively seeking sponsorship on such items as vehicle hire. Keep your eyes open - get involved if you can!

Beth Neill

Financial

Thanks to all members who completed their registration forms correctly, if you have requested another form, and still haven't returned it, please do so as soon as possible as your Public Liability Insurance only becomes valid when all paperwork is completed.

The sum given to charity this year, taken from our forms is £21806.

I have sold out of colouring books and the Morris Conference titles, with the exception of one copy of "Influences on the Morris."

We are having some Morris Fed. Titles re-printed and should be able to meet all orders of other publications.

Cheers,

Rachel Pinkney

Notation

The Molly Trials

At some point in the last six months I read a fascinating snippet in the paper about the seventeenth century "Molly Trials". Or was it on the Internet? If you have not heard of them dear reader I leave it to you to do your own research (Yahoo will take you there if you enter 'Molly Trials'). Suffice it to say that those convicted were pilloried for two hours, enduring the contempt of the crowd. Many died. It opened up a new possibility for the derivation of the name Molly for the character in the dances of the same name.

But where is this leading you may well ask. It leads to the recent meeting of the Morris Federation Notation Group. Half the meeting was devoted to helping Tony Forster plan out a book on Molly. The book will include an historical perspective as well as information about modern teams and their dances. Those of you who have only seen Seven Champions may be surprised by the variety of different approaches that teams have taken, considering that there is very little source material. Those of us who went to the October Wantage weekend with Roy Dommett spent much of the Sunday morning doing three very different Molly dances. One in 5/4 time from the Champs, one from Jon Hooton of Golden Star and one containing every conceivable kind of hey from Tony Forster's Pig Dyke Molly.

The rest of the meeting was spent looking at the later part of the Hinton book. While the beginning of the book came to me with hand-drawn diagrams and music with stepping and arm movements mapped out, the rest was just raw text. It has been quite a feat to knock it into shape. I have now done all the diagrams, photos and music. Members of the Notation Group have been very helpful in providing music notation, proof-reading, trying to do the movements described in the words and suggesting changes. When I get the latest round of corrections back from Sally Wearing I expect to have to spend some time working on them. I feel that the end is in sight.

And now, back to the vexed question of how to choreograph a good Rapper dance; but that is another story.

Rhian Collinson

Archive

An Overview of "English Folk Song and Dance" by Frank Kidson and Mary-Neal (1915)

I recently purchased this book for the archive. Here is a brief outline to whet your appetite.

The book is divided into two parts, both roughly equal in length. The first, written by Frank Kidson, concerns English folk song, the second is written by Mary Neal and looks at English folk dance. It is this section on which I will concentrate.

The introduction discusses the origins of Morris and where the name was thought to have come from. The usual links with "Moorish" and "Morisco" are mentioned together with a more unusual definition which Mary Neal thought to be the true one "...the word 'Morris' is probably of Keltic (sic) origin, and comes from 'Mor', great and 'usal', noble and dignified. The final syllable was dropped in the course of ages, when Mor-usal and Mor-uisseil became Moruis, great, noble, stately, dignified, solemn."

Chapter I "The Morris Dance To-Day" outlines the steps and figures commonly found in Cotswold Morris and provides what the author believed to be a full list of all dances collected and published since the 1905 revival - 73 in all. Chapter II deals with "Tunes" and makes the interesting observation that, "The musicians took any tune which was popular at the time and adapted it to the dances, so that the tunes are not by any means all traditional." Chapter III looks at the musical instruments and some of the songs used in the Morris.

In chapter IV the dress of the dancer is considered observing that, "The Morris dancers' dress has fallen upon somewhat evil days of late years. The best they can do is a white suit of duck or flannel with trousers, short knee breeches, or



even ordinary dark cloth trousers with a white shirt. The shirt is decorated with ribbons and rosettes, and sometimes a double baldric is worn crossed at the chest and hanging down at the sides." Does this sound familiar? Remember that it was written in 1915 - maybe Morris has become stuck in a time warp!

"Extra characters" are the subject of chapter V. These include the fool, hobby horse, treasurer and sword bearer as well as some characters more usually associated with the Mummers' play. The remaining chapters look briefly at sword dancing, the Furry dance, country dance and the folk dance revival.

In her conclusion Mary Neal notes her regret that that books of instruction for dance should have become a necessity. On the subject of dance collection she says, "... even if every known dance is already collected and published, nothing but good will come of this being done again and again by different people at different times. This will keep the traditional dances from becoming set and rigid, and will give a delightful air of spontaneity if at any folk festival, while all dance correctly, each dances a little differently from the others".

Lynn Rogers.



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Millennium Celebrations

First of all, after a lot of perseverance, we have finally made contact with someone at the Dome who is interested in what the Morris has to offer. Paul "Monty" Montague, (from the Ring), and I have been working in collaboration to track down the contacts we need to make. Paul has now put together a compilation tape of different Morris styles (including Ring, Fed and Open) and has sent it off to "the Dome committee" to show them what we can do. Basically we are hoping to arrange access for Morris teams to dance at the Dome at weekends, and as soon as there is any further information we will pass it on.

Secondly. have you sent off for your information on funding for lottery monies? if not RING NOW to get registered! By the time you are reading this, the application forms should be coming through .

Thirdly- how are you getting on in arranging the county events that we suggested in the last newsletter. This is something that you could apply for funding for, and will depend on your local situation as to what you want and can do. In Yorkshire, Dick Taylor of Flag Crackers, together with Paul Sanderson of Ebor, York International Festival of Dance. Steve Fairholme of Flag Crackers and Otley Folk Festival, and The City of York Council, are planning an event in York on 8/9/10 September 1999. Camping is to be provided courtesy of City of York Council, on the Racecourse, where there will be bars, food, sessions, concerts and ceilidhs on Saturday night.

Dancing will take place in York on Saturday in the form of a procession, various dance spots around the City centre, culminating with a massed stand at the end of the day.

On Sunday it is planned to have a massed stand at the Eye of York, with the possibility of a licence for an open air bar.

The Yorkshire Brewery have expressed an interest in providing the bar facilities, and various other sponsorship is being sought, and it is planned for the event to be open to the general public as well as the participating sides. There are 74 sides registered in Yorkshire, either with the Ring, Open Morris The Fed, and EFDSS, many of whom have already expressed interest in taking part.

Janet Dowling

Morris 99

Morris 99 has been cancelled. A statement from the Trustees was sent to Scarborough Borough Council (our only financial supporters) on Tuesday 19th January. Information is being sent to Booked Sides today Sunday 24th January, following meetings at Scarborough Borough Council and at Yorkshire Coast Morris to ascertain what would be happening as a result of the cancellation. The Trustees are very sorry to cancel Morris 99 and apologise to our friends who had already booked. Organisational plans were all in hand, everything was booked, programme, artists, tours, camping, transport and facilities were either booked or in the process of being finalised. The complication came from two sources.

a) There was a complete lack of financial backing from ALL grant sources - including European Union. Flagcrackers of Craven had exactly the same problem and have had to cancel their 2000 "Bash". Even the local Arts Council refused a grant on the grounds that the dance content was not "innovative or contemporary". How they judged that is beyond me. We did receive a small donation promise from two local firms - a pleasure after some thirty letters and follow up phone calls and visits. It is not through lack of work - the Trustees have files and files full of completed work

b) Morris 99 could have continued if sufficient early bookings suggested a successful level of response to cover financial outlay i.e. we could pay our bills to artists, firms etc and not become heavily indebted ourselves. Unfortunately sufficient levels of bookings were not forthcoming - so as a result we could not continue with the responsibility of over 100,000 pounds of debt on our shoulders. We timed the cancellation of Morris 99 to cause the least possible effect on International Sides.

So what happens now?

1. Everyone will receive full repayment of monies.
2. We (the Trustees) have negotiated funding from Scarborough Borough Council to support Yorkshire Coast Morris who are arranging an alternative Morris Festival - also called Scarborough Fayre.
3. We have delayed issuing a statement to give Yorkshire Coast Morris a chance to get their organisational heads in gear and have two meetings (which have involved the Morris 99 Trustees and Scarborough Bor-

ough Council). Yorkshire Coast Morris extend an invitation to you for their Festival on the second of the two weekends. I have written a copy of their letter below.

4 Those in England during the period of the first weekend of the original Morris 99 can take advantage of Bampton etc but you will also receive a very friendly welcome from Chippenham Festival - Dave Bainbridge can be contacted at dbai@INFORMATE. BE

I am truly very sorry that Morris 99 will not go ahead, it was a great line up and promised a great deal. I am sorry to inconvenience you and for the slight delay in informing you - but I hope you take the point that I was trying to provide information in your best interests and that the visit to Scarborough will still be extremely worthwhile - in addition, I would still like to see my friends again (assuming that is that you are still my friends!!)

Jenny Clarke

A letter from Yorkshire Coast Morris Scarborough Fayre Morris Dance Festival Thursday 3rd June to Sunday 6th June

Dear friends - our Weekend of Dance lives on!! 'This year it is longer, bigger and better. Not only will International Sides be present but a special programme of events is planned to celebrate 10 years of Scragenz in Scarborough (Note Scragenz is the ONLY regular scratch Side with over sixty active members that I know of)

As you may be aware, sadly Morris 99 is cancelled but we would like to ensure that you can still have a good time in Scarborough. We are planning to include the following:-

- 1 New dance venues and excursions.
- 2 Torchlight Procession
- 3 Workshops (National and International)
- 4 Ceilidhs every night
- 5 Real Ale

AND ALL THIS FOR ONLY 20 POUNDS - ALSO Children under 14 years are free (This price does not include food!) We would like to invite all teams. First options will be given to those that booked into Morris 99 but we need to know by St Valentine's Day.

On behalf of Yorkshire Coast Morris

Howard Marsh (Squire)

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1999 Morris Federation AGM



*Bramcote Hills Comprehensive School, Nottingham
24 – 26 September 1999*

dancing

music

RBB Band

craft stalls

entertainment

An event not to be missed!

**Further details will be sent to each side during March but if you can't wait 'til then contact:
Nicola on 01332-882857 or nicola.bouault@broomfield.ac.uk**

(see the Winter 1998 copy of the newsletter for more info. on Mortimer's)

Morris in the Media

I thought that we were going to be short of sightings this quarter, but four came flooding in within days of each other, just in time for the deadline.

First off, you may have seen advertisement on TV for a new late night series called "UK Raw". I am not sure what it will exactly entail, but leather, rubber and piercing seem to be high on the agenda. And in program 7, transmitted on Wednesday 31st March at 23.30 they will feature Prince Albert Morris. Complete with leather, rubber and piercing. Don't ask. Particularly don't ask "why Prince Albert" because you may not want to know the answer.

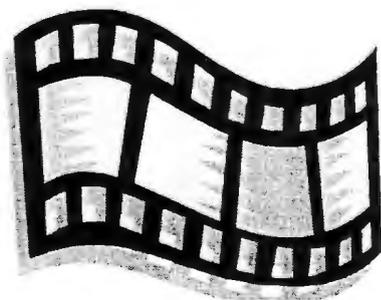
Secondly the "Food and Drink" programme in mid February featured Ripley Morris Men on catering for their Ale - more details when I get to see the video.

Flag Crackers of Craven held a weekend of dance last year (as well as the AGM!). The weekend of dance celebrated their 10th Birthday and on the Sunday the High Street in Grassington was closed and it was wall to wall Morris dancing. It was filmed for a series called Adam Hart Davies on History and was shown on BBC 2 on 2nd March 13.45..

And finally The Red Cross are having a Millennium event at the London Palladium on 9th May, which I understand will be televised at a later date. The event theme is the power of dance as an international language, and as well as foreign performers they wanted enough Morris dancers to fill the stage. Rather than suggest four different teams all dancing Cotswold with differing styles, we gave them the names of sides that had enough numbers within the side to fill the stage in one style. As we go to press, it looks like it might be Knockhundred Shuttles.

Any more sightings of Morris in the Media please let me know- and if you are on TV or Radio, and can do a recording of the item for the archive, it will be welcome.

Janet Dowling



Review:

Cohen, Selma Jeanne (founding editor), International Encyclopaedia of Dance, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998, 6 vols, ISBN 019509462X (set).

This is a fairly new encyclopaedia, published in 1998, which I came across in Lewisham main reference library. It must be the most comprehensive work of its kind which I have ever seen. It has been many years in the making having first been suggested at a meeting of the Dance Critics' Association in the USA in 1974. From the beginning it was decided that its coverage would be international and that it would deal with all forms of dance and would also be 'designed to bring joy as well as enlightenment' (Foreword, volume 1), always a worthwhile aim! In the Preface (volume 1) the founding editor, Scirma Jeanne Cohen states that 'ideally we had hoped to find a single author for each country article. But this was hardly ever possible, since the recognised expert in ballet was most likely to know little about ceremonial or folk dance'. I think that it was this determination to give equal value to traditional dance which makes the encyclopaedia so useful for a general reader. The work is in six volumes with articles ranging from two to thirty or forty pages in length produced by 650 contributors. The articles mostly include bibliographies and the photographs seem to be reasonably up to date, certainly for the articles I have looked at closely. Articles most likely to be of interest to Morris people include the following: Great Britain: English traditional dance by Theresa Buckland. This is a review of English dance covering Social Dance, Step Dance, Rapper, Longsword and-Morris. High Spen Blue Diamonds and Manley Morris are pictured in the article.

Morris Dance by John Forrest

This gives a brief history starting with dances called 'Morris' or 'Moriscos' in the 15th Century and then dealing in slightly more detail from the 18th Century on-

wards. He outlines the different types of dances and explains that they fall into four main geographical areas. However, it is unfortunate that his article gives the impression that these Morris Dances are still only danced in the originating areas as he does not say much about Morris in recent times or about the massive explosion in Morris in the 1970s. The picture in the article is of Bampton Traditional Morris with Jamie Wheeler playing.

Sword Dance by John Forrest

This describes the two varieties and also puts Sword Dance in England into the context of the tradition of Sword Dance in Europe. Once again, John Forrest gives the impression that Rapper is only done in certain parts of the country as he says 'it is performed almost exclusively by coal miners from Northumbria'. My feeling is that it has probably been a very long time since this was the case. There are many other interesting articles, but unfortunately the set costs in the region of £700, so have a look in your local libraries!

Sarah Crofts

Pacific Party '98

14th August 1998 saw Betty Lupton's Ladle Laikers, Flag & Bone Gang and Carlisle Cloggies leaving soggy England (from Glasgow) for the party of a lifetime. During the following 2 weeks we were incredibly well looked after by teams from Vancouver, Seattle and Victoria.

The first Saturday saw us dancing at Granville Island in the heart of tourist Vancouver. The setting was spectacular as was the dancing from all six teams. Vancouver Morris Men danced North West in their giant flowered hats. Tiddley Cove danced Cotswold in red dresses and Britannia English Clog danced, er.. Clog. They organised a wonderful feast for us afterwards at the Billy Bishop which showed us their capacity for partying. Sunday saw us sailing to Bowen Island, another tourist trap. The scenery was as good as the weather. Two cracking dance spots, then another feast at Sarah's house .

The next three days we became tourists ourselves and explored Vancouver and the surrounding areas. Some of our hosts who were not at work became our guides, the scenery is spectacular. It is impossible to describe how big everything seems and how clean and tidy everywhere was and how friendly the Canadians are.

Thursday, and we took our hire cars to Squamish to dance for

the steam train arriving and then again as it left. Then we went to dance at Shannon Falls to a very attentive audience.

Friday we drove across the border to the Seattle Inter-Nation'Ale. After the relative calm and order of Vancouver, Seattle seems to be on overdrive, the difference in the two cities was very interesting. The Morris teams looked after us incredibly well and we had a fantastic time. The Saturday morning dancing was split into different tours (and brew pubs) and we all met up again at Gasworks Park for much mass dancing. The mass dancing seemed quite alien to most of us as it was all Cotswold and none of our three teams dance Cotswold although we did have chance to learn it on the Friday get together. Whereas we would probably do a mass dance at the end of a weekend, in America they do it at every turn about!

The feast was magnificent, what else is there to say, fantastic. The spots (er.. skits) were brilliant, even the spoof of Flag and Bone's history which can only have been written 10 minutes earlier.

Sunday saw us dancing on the sea front overlooking the Puget Sound with sea planes taking off and landing in the bay. Lunch was in a Pizza house which we seemed to take over, even dancing round the tables. In the evening we had an impromptu party at Steve Galey's (squire of Seattle Morris) house to finish off the beer, that took 'till 1.30am!

Monday, we took two ferries to end up sailing into Victoria harbour. We felt a kind of calm flow over us as we left the hubbub of America behind to the 'Englishness' of Victoria. We were met by John Carver the squire of Island Thyme and taken to Dan's house. This amazing place has a hall built on to the side for the team to practice in, complete with mirrors. As in Seattle we were billeted out to team member's houses. Next day, after sight seeing, including whale watching, we met up to dance in front of the Legislative Building. This was a perfect spot as there were steps for the huge audience to sit on. One of the things we noticed in North America was that when people watched they stayed for the whole performance, that doesn't seem to happen so much over here.

On Wednesday we had to leave Victoria to catch the ferry back to the mainland. It was our last night and the Vancouver folks had arranged for us to dance in Ladner outside a fish and chip shop owned by a lady from Bradford! It closed at 9.00pm. Good job we had the Billy Bishop to go back to for another mega session. This was followed by some very sad farewells.

Ted Dodsworth

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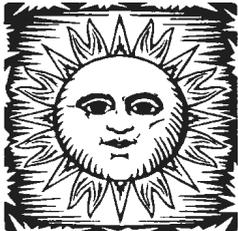
Morris Federation

Noticeboard

CLOGS FOR SALE

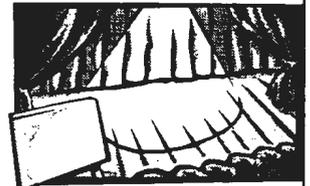
Black irons not attached. Duck toe, best leather size 6, with sun with face design. As new.

For details Please contact:
Mary Simcox,
27 Southey Street
St. Werberghs,
Bristol BS2 9RE

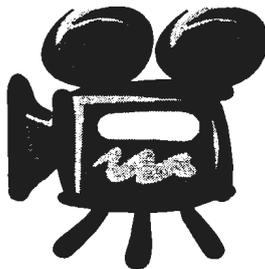


MARY NEIL: THE TRUE SPIRIT OF THE MORRIS

To be performed on Sunday 2nd May at the Stable Theatre Hastings as part of the Jack in the Green Weekend.



BBC Folk Dance Videos



These can be seen again on

Country dance 1	Wed 21 April 09.25 Repeat Fri 28 May 10.30
Country dance 2	Wed 28 April 09.25 Repeat Fri 11 June 10.30
Morris Dance	Wed 5 th May 09.25 Repeat Fri 18 June 10.30

May Day Listings

May Day listings are on the Net, any teams wishing to update their listing, please let Janet know ASAP for the Net. However, the list has already been circulated to the various tourist bodies.

Focus on Youth

More contributions are needed for this feature from teams either comprised totally of young people. Or from those who include youngsters. Please let us have more information and articles including photographs.

There is currently a problem with supplies of nails (brads) 3/4" & 1" for irons on clogs. Any information please contact Bill Pound ,
01926 888310

Shakespeare and the Morris



I mentioned previously that Shakespeare makes several references to Morris dancing in his numerous plays, and thanks to both the "Complete Works of Shakespeare" on CD Rom, and feedback from Rich Holmes, I am able to confirm the following Morris sightings in Shakespeare. These include:

Henry VI part 2. Act III.s.i.362: Richard Duke of York describes Jack Cade:

And fought so long till that his thighs with darts
Were almost like a sharp-quill'd porpentine
And in the end being rescu'd, I have seen
Him caper upright like a wild Morisco
Shaking the bloody darts as he his bells.

In All's Well that Ends Well Act II.ii.21:

Countess: Will your answer serve fit to all questions?

Clown: As fit as ten groats is for the hand of an attorney, as your French crown for your taffeta punk, as Tib's rush for Tom's forefinger, as a pancake for Shrove Tuesday, a morris for May-day, as the nail to his hole.... (etc.)

In Henry V Act II.iv.18, the Dauphin says that:

... defences, musters, preparations,
Should be maintain'd, assembled and collected...
And let us do it with no show of fear;
No, with no more than if we heard that England
Were busied with a Whitsun morris-dance

There are also references to "a morris -pike" in "Comedy of Errors", and to "nine man's morris is filled up with mud" in "Midsummers night dream." (Any ideas on what these might be?)

Finally, Rich Holmes writes "there's Two Noble Kinsmen, published with an attribution to Shakespeare and

John Fletcher; as far as I know, they're still arguing over whether Shakespeare or Fletcher or both or neither was the true author(s).

Act III, scene v concerns itself entirely with a troupe of morris dancers: eleven of them, six men and five women. Gerrold is the foreman, as you can tell immediately by his entrance speech:

Fie, fie!

What tediousity and disensanity

Is here among ye! Have my rudiments

Been labour'd so long with ye, milk'd unto ye,

And, by a figure, even the very plum-broth

And marrow of my understanding laid upon ye,

And do you still cry "Where," and "How," and "Wherefore?"

You most coarse frieze Capacities, ye jane Judgments,

Have I said "Thus let be," and "There let be,"

And "Then let be," and no man understand me?

Proh Deum, medius fidius, ye are all dunces!

Foremen haven't changed much, have they? They're here to surprise the Duke with a Morris dance. Trouble is, they're short a dancer:

Ger.: Quo usque tandem? here's a woman wanting.

Fourth countryman: We may go whistle; all the fat's i' the fire.

Ger.: We have,

As learned authors utter, wash'd a tile;

We have been fatuus, and labour'd vainly.

Second coun.: This is that scornful piece, that scurvy hilding,

That gave her promise faithfully she would

Be here, Cicely the sempster's daughter:

The next gloves that I give her shall be

dog-skin;

Nay, an she fail me once. You can tell, Arcas,
She swore, by wine and bread, she would not break.

Ger.: ... Our business is become a nullity,
Yea, and a woeful and a piteous nullity.

Morris dancers haven't changed much, have they? Fortunately the Gaoler's Daughter turns up right then, and (for reasons we need not go into) she's stark raving mad, so without further ado she's drafted as a substitute Morris dancer. The Duke arrives, Gerrold gives a one-page speech introducing the dancers (Morris speeches haven't changed much, have they?) and they do their dance. The Duke and his party reward them with a tree for a Maypole and money to paint it with; end of scene. By the way, I believe all this is supposed to take place in ancient Thebes..."

So brush up your Shakespeare when you next jingle those bells, clash those sticks or stamp those feet. !

Janet Dowling



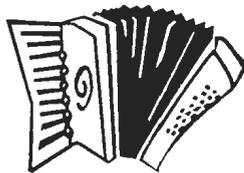
...STOP PRESS

John Kirkpatrick Melodeon Video Tutor
"How to play the English Melodeon
Vols 1 & 2..."

Mrs Casey Records working with John Kirkpatrick, is just about to complete production of a two volume video tutor for Melodeon players. Covering both beginners and the more experienced there are plenty of tips and ideas here from the master of the buttons.

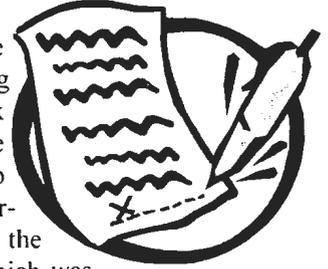
It is hoped to release the videos in April, with a launch at the Barbican Centre in London on 1st May.

Steve Heap



Side History- Help Requested

Red Stags Morris is somewhere around 30 years old and is trying to discover its roots, its trunk and to where the branches have expanded. Can you help please? Do you have any information about when and why the side was founded; when Harwhich was formed and why; when the two sides merged and why; other significant organisational changes; events organised and attended, with dates, names of participants, subject studied or job employed in; kit changes, repertoire danced at various times, animals and fools kits; amusing anecdotes, photographs, dated, with notes and identifying participants if possible; any written or typed material.



Any or all of the above may be sent to Christina Pritchard, 4, Westridge Road, Southampton SO17 2 HQ, where they will be received with gratitude, and an attempt will be made to turn the findings into a side history.

Christina Pritchard

◆ MUSICIANS ◆

Enjoy playing a wide range of music?

Need to practice?

Then come and play in our band. Old Palace Clog is a very successful dance team. We perform at lots of events (local & away) and have loads of fun.

Any instruments are welcome, for both traditional and up to date music (sheet music supplied).

We practice Thursday evenings at South Norwood United Reformed Church Hall, Cobden Road, SE25.

Music-only practice sessions are also held pretty regularly.

For more information call: Angela or Sue Bartell on

0181 654 5276

Don't be shy, give it a try!

Wanted - President to lead the Morris Federation into the next Millennium

The constitution describes the Presidents role as

- 1) To be responsible for the overall liaison between the other officers
- 2) To act as Public relations officer

But being President can be as much or as little as you want it to be. The bottom line is that it involves chairing the AGM and the four committee meetings each year and handling the calls from the public, other organisations and the media. However I feel that there is a lot more that could be done than that and I have indicated the sorts of things that I have tried to take a lead on in the Presidents Prologue.

The President needs to be able to take a proactive role in identifying issues that will affect the Morris, and the Morris Federation, anticipating events and looking for opportunities to promote the Morris (I am still not sure about "Morris Barbie"), and then linking and liaising with other Morris organisations and EFDSS, the media, and other agencies (including the Prime Minister!)

Within the Federation the President needs to liaise with other committee members between meetings, and to deal with queries which arise from Fed members or members of the public wanting to know about Morris Teams for bookings or even to join!

The process is that nominations have to be proposed and seconded by two different members of the Federation, with a closing date in July /August so that the information can be discussed in teams prior to the AGM in September where the vote will be taken. The successful candidate will be invited to the Federation Committee meeting on 23 October, and can shadow the meeting process then as well as arrange a convenient time for hand over. I will be available for support and advice during the next year should it be needed.

If you would like to express an interest (but not feel that you are committing yourself), please feel free to contact me and discuss it with me on 0181 393 5370.

Oh, and I forgot- it really can be great fun!!

Janet Dowling

Important Information

TO ALL BAG(WOMEN), SECRETARIES AND SUCHLIKE

One of the common complaints we get from the average Morris dancer in the street is that they know nothing about the Federation and what it is doing. Some don't even know if their side belongs. This usually turns out to be because the person in their club who received the MF communication doesn't pass any of it on.

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE don't be guilty of this. There is no excuse now that we have included a SUMMARY SHEET. You can photocopy this and distribute it to all your members. This can save you the time and hassle of verbally telling everyone what is in the Newsletter. However it is not a substitute for handing the Newsletter around or making it available during practice. Remember DON'T KEEP THE INFORMATION TO YOURSELF.

MEMBERS' MANUAL

All members of the Federation should have a copy of the MF Members' Manual. This contains a lot of material that members may need to refer to from time to time. If you have misplaced the free copy sent to you when you joined, a replacement (or additional copies) can be purchased from the MF Secretary at the cost of 3.50 (+ 50p p&p) each.

Cheques payable to The Morris Federation, please.

ADVERTISING

The Morris Federation will distribute enclosures with the Newsletter or other circulars and items of advertising relevant to commercial products. A fee is charged to the advertiser for this service. However, this should not be taken to mean that The Morris Federation necessarily endorses the product.

Enquiries concerning any form of advertising through the Morris Federation should be addressed to the MF Publicity Officer.

Who To Contact

WHO TO CONTACT

ADDRESS - CHANGE OF BETH NEILL
ADDRESSES - NOT IN MFBETH NEILL
AGM - HOSTING JETHRO ANDERSON
AGM - ORGANISATION JETHRO ANDERSON
AGM BETH NEILL
ARCHIVE GROUP LYNN ROGERS
BOOK LOANS LYNN ROGERS
CIOFF LYNN ROGERS
(Dancing at overseas folk festivals)
EVENTS DEREK SCHOFIELD
INTERNET JETHRO ANDERSON
INSURANCE KEVIN TAYLOR
MORRIS ARCHIVE GROUP RACHEL PINKNEY
MORRIS CONFERENCE LYNN ROGERS
MORRIS PUBLICATION GROUP JUDI
NANCARROW
NEW ADDRESS - YOURS BETH NEILL
NEWSLETTER JUDI NANCARROW
NOTATION GROUP RHIAN COLLINSON
NOTATION RHIAN COLLINSON
PHOTOGRAPHS JANET DOWLING
PUBLICITY JANET DOWLING
PUBLICITY IDEAS JANET DOWLING
PUBLIC RELATIONS JANET DOWLING
SHOP RACHEL PINKNEY
SCRAP BOOKS JANET DOWLING
SUBSCRIPTIONS RACHEL PINKNEY
VIDEOS - SALE OR HIRE SALLY WEARING
WORKSHOPS JETHRO ANDERSON

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Sally Wearing TEL:01203-712548

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EMail mf@krt.clara.net

Contributions to the Newsletter are always welcome. To help these are some guidelines to make your contribution easier to produce and the Editors life easier.

Contributions on disk or in hard copy are welcome. Hand-written **MUST** be legible. **ALL CONTRIBUTIONS MUST REACH THE EDITOR BY THE COPY DATE**

DISK 3.5 or 5.25 - any density OPERATING

SYSTEM DOS format

FORMAT Textfile / ASCII, WordPerfect5.1

STYLE Times Roman 12
No indents to paragraphs
No tabs or indents if possible
Headings in capitals and bold
Sub headings in lower case,
underlined 2 spaces after a full
stop Morris and Morris styles
with a capital letter

BOOK/MAGAZINE TITLE Italics, Times
Roman 12

If in doubt please just send the text. It is much easier for me to put the house style onto your text than have to undo your style before doing this.

HARD COPY Double spaced (its easier to read)

ADVERTS Camera ready copy is ideal (ie.how you want it to appear) or we can set it up for you

INSERTS A4 size, camera ready copy

The Morris Federation 1999

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