

Newsletter Spring 2007



The AGM – Is it Broken - Can we Fix it?

Ten Questions with Alan Green

A Miracle at Kelham Island

The Unconvention of the Illustrious Order of Fools and Beasts



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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

To all Secretaries, Squires, Bag people, etc.

NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter is the quarterly publication of the Morris Federation. The aim is to provide a platform for news, views and announcements relating to the world of traditional dance and associated activities. The Newsletter goes out to each member group and individual member of the Morris Federation. Additional copies can be ordered by group members at an additional cost per copy of £10 for one year's issues. To be a living publication the Newsletter must be read so PLEASE PLEASE make sure that your copy gets circulated as widely as possible.

MEMBERS' MANUAL

All members of the MF should have a copy of the 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 £6.50 (inc.p&p) each. Please make cheques payable to 'The Morris Federation'.

ADVERTISING

The MF 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 MF should be addressed to the Newsletter Editor.

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EDITORIAL

I make no apologies for the heavy emphasis on the AGM in this issue. I know that for many out there reading this, the AGM is just something that happens and is not really relevant to you. And I can sympathise. Many years ago as a newly appointed squire of my side I made the effort to attend an AGM. Several hours driving to listen to what felt like longer hours of discussion about the position of a comma in a sub-clause of the constitution seemed pointless. When the discussion moved on to whether the comma should not in fact be a semicolon I took the view that AGM's were not for simple folk like me.

So when the AGM invite arrives each year we decide that it's too far to travel for what is actually one day of dance or maybe it's local but a final massed stand with thirty teams participating is too awful to contemplate. So we never go.

In the last issue Ron Day gave an insight into the problems with the current format of the AGM. In this issue we have suggestions on how to change that format from several viewpoints. What is needed now are your thoughts. Discuss this within your team, discuss it with other teams. If you have an opinion or an idea lets hear from you.

The constitution of the Federation requires an AGM in 2007. With no host team in site the committee has a "cunning plan" to meet this requirement. But for 2008 we need your views and we need them now!

Doug

Printing
Next Issue
Front Cover Photograph

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Black Swan Rapper at Towersey 2006 in mid tumble.
Photo :Contributed by Tony Penneck (Hammersmith Morris)

President's Prologue

Well a new season beckons and all your new recruits will be desperate to get out there in public. There are all sorts of events and festivals for you to go to in the year. A good start would be the Joint Morris Organisations bash in Birmingham on April 14th. This is the third in a series of Joint Events with The Morris Ring, Open Morris and ourselves taking turns to “host” it – we did the last one, in Newcastle upon Tyne.

This year the Ring takes on the management and scheduling, and has had great support from Birmingham Council. Some 50 teams, displaying in a compact pedestrian area, with plenty of refreshment facilities at hand. Even if your team hasn't managed to be there dancing, come along and support the do, it's a great showcase for dance to the public.

Many thanks to all who responded to the broadcasts and mail shot. Those teams attending have had their details passed on to the Ring and by the time this gets to print will probably have had the schedule. The next in this series is likely to be hosted by Open Morris and could be in the Cambridgeshire region.

The cost of putting a team out in public has been a discussion point of late with commentary from some elder states persons of the Morris World quoting up to £1000 to field a performance standard side. Time, fuel, child-care all came into the calculation and that raised the hoary old question of whether festivals value the dancers and what they put into the event. What is a fair remuneration for the work involved; free tickets? For dancers **and partners**? A half price ticket? How

do you place a value on what you do as you aren't in it for the money, surely?

It's not just us who consider these matters. Dance (including Ceilidh) was to be a topic at the Folk Industries Conference in March, and though this conference has now been postponed till the autumn, it does show how much improved the profile of dance is currently. The Federation has been sending reps to such conferences for a few years now, and the benefits are plain to see, after all it was at an AFO Conference we first learned about the Licensing Law changes! It's more than just raising the profile!

Communications in a modern age should be swift and efficient and it does help that so many teams now provide an e-mail contact. This is the quickest and by far the cheapest method we have to disseminate information to the membership. So much so we are even considering an email or web version of the Newsletter itself. So if you haven't done so yet, please do consider letting us have an email contact, and if you have given us one (or even two) please ensure we have the correct address if and when your officers change! This change of officers does not always happen at the Federations Annual Membership Renewal date; many contacts had changed in even the space of time between renewal and the Joint Organisations broadcasts!

Trefor

Editors Note:

In the last edition lacking a prologue I supplied an update on the Presidential progress over the Christmas period.2006. The verb form “moving” as used by Trefor was to describe a short break / convalescence in Wales. Not as I interpreted it a permanent re-location to the principality. I apologise for any confusion caused

COMMITTEE NEWS

FINANCE – Jenny

Hello from your new treasurer! The more astute of you will realise that I have been on the committee before – different job, different name and different hair colour. I would like to thank everyone for sending back their renewal forms so promptly. Rather a shock to the system to get so many envelopes through the letterbox, but I feel as though I've got the hang of it now. Hopefully, next year you should get a rather more joined up service.

Despite advancing age and waistline, and failing Achilles tendons, I am still dancing, many dances being the same as those that I learnt as a beginner in 1980. Over the years I have danced most of the different forms of 'morris' with various teams and am now concentrating on Cotswold and sword.

It is interesting coming back to the committee after 16 years or so, many issues are the same that beset us back then – getting positive publicity and how to encourage younger dancers whilst others are new – using the Internet and the many joint initiatives with the Ring and Open Morris.

Royal Mail are increasing their rates in April so I will be reviewing the postage on all the goods in the shop. Please bear with me if you place an order and I need to add a surcharge to the published rates.

NEWSLETTER – Doug

Once again I find an embarrassment of riches with material for the Newsletter. So once again I'm carrying forward some material to the next issue. This might seem to be a case of always leave them wanting more – and having more to give.

In one case this is true, Janet Dowling has supplied a long and well informed

item on the history of Women in the Morris "I Didn't Know Women Danced". Rather than publish this as one monster article I'm going to edit it into a series and publish it as a part work. Who knows, as with Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes in the Strand magazine, perhaps Janet's work might one day become a Federation publication to go alongside the History of the Federation which is currently a work in progress.

One item I'm having to carry forward is down to a technical problem. Most of the material I get comes via the Internet. For preference I need pictures in .jpg format and text ideally as Word format. But I can cope with almost anything – given time. If I hit a technical problem with copy received exactly on the deadline that's what it is – dead. Until I can sort it out.

Having said that I can still deal with hard copy that comes through the letterbox, words or pictures. Though for preference I'd like the words typed, my copy typing is less than speedy. So if you have something to say, something to tell or even something to sell get in touch, but please make it before the deadline!

Whilst we're on matters technical I'll update you on where we are with the Newsletter on the web. I've now had a version of the autumn newsletter up on the web as a link off my own side's web site for a month or two just to prove that works. From an administration angle it's been agreed that the route to take is to set up a domain name for the Newsletter as a entity rather than try and integrate it with the Federation web page. We can link between the two so this should not be a problem. Finally we believe the Newsletter on the web should be freely accessible to all so there will be no need to register or use passwords. That's the

SUMMER DEADLINE
Saturday 19th May 2007

plan now to get it done!

Dear Doug

This is a letter in response to the article by Paul White in last year's summer newsletter. It was written by our local rector, Anthony Geering in Chagford, Devon. Anthony did actually have a spell of dancing with a side in Rugby, as a young curate, some years ago!



Best Wishes

Shelagh Palmer

The Church and Morris dancing, whether Paul White likes it or not, are inextricably linked. It is true that they have sometimes been uneasy bedfellows. When King David danced before the Lord his wife Micah despised him(2 Samuel 6-16)

But they are ancient bedfellows. The word tragedy comes from two Greek words meaning ' goat dance', which relates to the rites of the God Dionysius.

So far from the Church (or religion) "rampaging through our festivals" as Paul forcibly puts it, the Church has taken the initiative in preserving and promoting things the Morris shares. Ancient agricultural festivals, moments of life crises such as birth, marriage and death, are celebrated by both.

Music and dancing are part of ritual that express in ways beyond words, our joys, sorrows love, longings.

Paul's notion of buff Morris is not really new. Plenty of religion is good basic stuff about fertility and fecundity!

Instead of knocking the Church (and I detect some tongue in cheek) Paul White should accept it as a stalwart ally in the preservation of the quaint and the whacky,

If it be true that the origins of Morris lie in the aftermath of the crusades and Morris = moorish, we are co-religionists anyway.

Sometimes I invite the Morris into the Church, sometimes they're just naturally wanting to be part of what we are doing.

Sad old people having fun together.

Anthony Geering

Editors Note: Given a right to reply Paul commented:

I am pleased there has been a reaction to the article. Indeed, Shelagh and I have spoken on the issue on a couple of occasions. All I can say is that this is not the church I know.

Paul White

Dear All,

I'm afraid my piece on Sword Spectacular 2008 contained one error: under the contact details, Stuart Higson has moved house and now lives at 8, The Close, Romanby, Northallerton, North Yorkshire. (post code unavailable). Telephone and e-mail are unchanged. If you've already gone to press then I'm sure that any communications will get through.

I do apologise,

Andrew

The Editor - Morris Federation Newsletter



Hello to all The Morris Federation, My name is Paul Grundy I am the Community Fund-raising Executive for Save the Children in the North of England.

This year from the 29th April - 5th May is Save the Children Week 2007. I am aware that this is a very busy time for yourselves but was wondering whether you might be able to help us with some fund-raising?

Would it be possible for you to have Save the Children Collection buckets at your events around the country during this week? The theme this year is our Rewrite the Future Campaign you can find out more about this at www.savethechildren.org.uk.

Save the Children fights for children in the UK and around the world who suffer from poverty, disease, injustice and violence. Save the Children works with them to find lifelong answers to the problems they face.

If you can help give me a call and I will send you a collecting bucket! Thanks for all your support - Can't wait to hear from you!

Paul Grundy
Community Fund-raising Executive - North
Save the Children
07768 385 585
0161 434 8337

Editors Note: I know that many teams out there actively support many charities in one way or another. Whilst it would be unfair to endorse any single charity I will generally try to publish any reasonable request for support and leave it for individual sides to decide whether or not to respond.

Hi,

We hire the room for our practice sessions from Leeds City Council. They are imposing a great number of conditions on us including insisting we have a health and safety policy and a child protection policy. Do you have a suggested format for either of these policies that are suitable in the context of Morris Dancing that we could have for guidance?

I understand our team is a member of the Morris Federation. If there are any charges for documents please let me know beforehand.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards
Susan Wright
Deputy Squire - Buttercross Belles

Editors Note - This letter was to Fee Lock, our hardworking secretary, who sent out copies of "standard" policies and advice and guidance. Remember the Federation is not just about insurance!

THE AGM – TIME TO CHANGE?

The winter 2006 edition of the Newsletter carried an item on the trials and tribulations of hosting the Federation AGM in its “traditional” format. The views of Ron Day of the host side Triskele Sword were echoed by views expressed by others who attended the AGM. Most attention is focused on the current format of a Weekend of Dance with an AGM tacked on as part of the proceedings.

It is a fact that with each passing year the effort to organise an event of any nature in any walk of life becomes more burdensome. Yet as our President points out the constitution requires an AGM but not a dance event built round it.

Let’s look at some views from incoming treasurer Jenny Slade.

It has always been an issue that not enough people come to the business meeting. There have been more in the past, but it is always rather dependent on the numbers of teams dancing that weekend and whether there are any contentious issues. Since this has not changed in the 20 years since I was first on the committee, perhaps we need to approach the issue from another angle.

I suggest that we separate the business meeting from the dancing part. We hire a conference room, say at a Travel Lodge, for 1 or 2 hours somewhere fairly central. We allow for the cost of this within the subscriptions.

Back in the old days we had an independent chairman for the business meeting. This worked really well as he knew exactly about amending motions and voting and all the rest of the procedure. More to the point people believed that he knew and took his advice! Maybe we should consider paying someone a small retainer to do this for us.

If we had area reps, they could visit local sides and canvas views for an AGM, and indeed other matters, and either drum up

support to attend, or bring views/votes to the meeting. This would help in getting a wider representation.

My personal feeling has always been that if my team aren’t dancing then I don’t want to be hanging around on Saturday watching other teams, but coming up just on Sunday makes me feel that I have somehow missed out.

The AGM weekend has always suffered from the fact that it was only really one day of dance as the AGM took up Sunday. As it was open to all members it could end up being a very big event. The hosting team may have no experience of doing this sort of thing (although a large tome was produced to assist). The experience gained in one year is then not used in the following year as its someone else’s turn.

Many teams don’t book until the last minute because they close down over the summer holidays. It can be expensive, especially for local teams.

Why do people come to an AGM weekend? To dance; to meet up with old friends; to see new teams that aren’t on their usual ‘circuit’; to have an opportunity to dance in a more high profile event than normally open to them

It was also thought that this was a good publicity event to show the public what the Federation was and to collect money (somewhere along the years, the box of 20 collecting tins has disappeared!)

I believe that these issues could be better addressed by having a Morris Federation Festival. Possibly held over a weekend in November or March, at a fixed venue every year (the Derby Assembly rooms?). This would be free to members but with a charge for the public to come in to watch a quality show

The aim would be to put on a whole day show, each day, inside, with allocated twenty-minute display spots. Teams would book into a slot in advance. A glossy programme with pictures of the

teams and other details about the Federation would help support the event.

Several display spots outside, which teams could opt into, with an MC at each spot. Maybe a pub rapper/clog tour organised. Teams would book their display spot(s) perhaps 4 months in advance

Everyone attending would need to make their own food arrangements. Camping and B&B information would be provided but booked by teams themselves. Indoor camping would be arranged at a basic cost.

In addition to the 'show' two or three workshops to be arranged – free to members with a charge to the public. One or two discussion groups on set topics, or a conference style presentation, archive displays and talks. A lounging area for people to meet informally, maybe with some display/craft stalls.

A ceilidh and a concert provided on the Saturday night for which everyone would buy tickets (discounted for members).

A separate festival committee could be formed, maybe headed up by someone like Gordon Newton or Phil Heaton, who would know the venues and have the experience year on year.

Jenny has addressed in her comments possible ways to separate the dance and business elements of what we have always known as the "AGM". Elsewhere in this issue the President points out that our constitution requires an AGM but not necessarily an associated dance event. Unsurprisingly, the very small attendance at the AGM proper, if I may use that term means that there is little feedback. But consider these comments from Adrian Williams on the "business" element of the AGM.

I came away from the AGM feeling rather frustrated and confused. After a while, I found the arguments from the floor of the meeting too arcane to follow.

It seemed bizarre that there was apparent opposition to changing words that reflect

the de facto activities of the MF while at the end of a cracking weekend that was hosted by a "non-Morris" team! Churlish comes to mind.

Just what is Adrian frustrated and confused about? Let me try and illuminate. The constitution currently allows for AGM motions to be voted on only by those attending the AGM. This means that at the Sheffield AGM a group of less than thirty people can make decisions that affect the whole membership of the Federation. If that small group includes a vociferous element with a set view of the world then that view can become the apparent view of the Federation as a whole.

The apparently simple motion put forward at the AGM to bring one sub clause in the constitution in line with the PEL legislation wording fell foul of the view of some that "Morris dancing and associated dance forms and traditions" was too broad a church. Their view that "Morris dancing" as a term covered all dance forms was equally unacceptable to others present. Once the discussion moved to rules of procedure relating to amendments to motions then confusion and frustration ensued.

There is I feel a way out of this tangled web. Many other organisations use postal and proxy voting on AGM motions. The motions are published with the AGM notification and a ballot slip is included allowing members to vote for or against or to defer their vote the chair of the meeting. This will be familiar to many of you out there and offers the chance for more inclusion in decision making.

So there it is then. We have yet to decide on where and how we, as a Federation are to meet the constitutional requirement to hold an AGM. It seems that the status quo of thirty years standing is no longer workable. So how do we move forward? Think about it, discuss it and let us have your views either to the President and the committee or through the Newsletter.

Doug Bradshaw - Editor

Hosts for a Day of Dance?

No not for the AGM, well OK, sort of...

There's been an amount of discussion re the format of our AGM, especially after last years in Sheffield.

Our Constitution says we have to have the AGM (business meeting) side of things but it doesn't actually say we have to have a Day of Dance as well as or on the same weekend as the business meeting.

One of the alternative models that has been suggested is aimed at reducing the organisational burden on the "host" side.

Under the present format, they have had to sort out accommodation, an incredibly expensive item nowadays, catering for all sundry and varied tastes, coaching for often unknown and endlessly varying numbers and evening entertainment... a massive job, especially when teams seem to be shrinking in membership numbers.

What if the Day of Dance and the 'business' meeting, the AGM proper, were to be separated?

A Day of Dance, a chance for Federation teams to get out en masse and see other teams not seen before – just as we do currently.

All the host team would need to do, would be to arrange the appropriate permits to dance in various spots in a local town. Also provide a list indicating food and refreshment outlets and add a list of local campsites and B&B's for those who wanted to stay over to self-book. Often these lists are already available from Tourist Information Centres.

The visiting teams would need only to confirm they were attending, with the host team and the Federation Events Officer for scheduling purposes, turn up and dance. In effect the same as our current Saturday, but having their own choice of food and accommodation etc.

This should be far less work for a host team, but with minimal change to the day in respect of the dancing.

For the business meeting, all we need is an accessible, reasonably central venue from mid morning on a Sunday till mid afternoon. A conference suite in a motel, a church hall, though this might possibly be difficult on a Sunday, or maybe even a pub room...would suit.

If it happened to be close to the local town used for the Day of Dance, it would be convenient for any team reps that stayed over locally. But not all teams from the Day of Dance send reps to the AGM, and some reps come for the AGM only. Assistance and advice from a host team would help but is not essential in this scenario, again much less of a trial for a host to organise.

This is just a sketch, one of a number of scenarios for future AGM/Days of Dance. Nothing is set in stone...

Now, in case the above "Concept" seems less work to run, could we have a volunteer team to 'Trial' it this year, and a team in the North West to use the tweaked format in '08 to coincide with Liverpool City of Culture?

The Morris Ring are planning a meeting in Liverpool in '08 as are Open Morris, shouldn't we be there too?

Trefor Owen – MF President

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STONY STRATFORD CELEBRATE WITH DANCE - AND MUSIC

Stony Stratford is an historic, beautiful market town on the North West corner of Milton Keynes. It is beautiful because of the variety of architecture in the buildings and the old world charm of the High Street and hidden treasures down the many passages. It is historic as it contains the two pubs that gave birth to the phrase 'A Cock and Bull Story' and it was 'A Cock Horse' from Stony in the nursery rhyme, 'Ride a cock horse to Banbury Cross'. Stony Stratford is also the place where the two young princes were abducted from before being murdered so their Uncle Richard could be King of England. All of these things you can find out on the town tour, which you can collect a guide for in the local Ironmongers, 'Odells'. But that's not all, Stony is a lively town with many festivals including 'Folk on the Green' the 2nd Sunday in June, a Town Fete, the Christmas Lights Festival, a literary festival in January and a music and dance festival in June.

Are you as excited about Stony as I and the folk who live here are yet? Come and see for yourselves especially if you are thinking of moving or have recently moved to the area.

Stony Stratford is also blessed with three traditional British dance sides. There is 'Old Mother Redcaps', 'Stony Steppers', and 'Shore Tars', and all took part in the 'Day of Dance' at 'Stony Live' last summer, and plan to take part again in 2007. Here is a little bit about all the sides with their contact details. We look forward to seeing you, young and not so young, male and female, boy, and girl, all of you.

Old Mother Redcaps is a ladies side and their dance style is from the Isle of Man. You are unlikely to see this dance style anywhere else on the mainland. They also have some very pretty dances with garlands. They meet on a Monday night at 8pm in the Hall behind the Catholic Church on the High Street; call Adele on 01908 615558 for details.

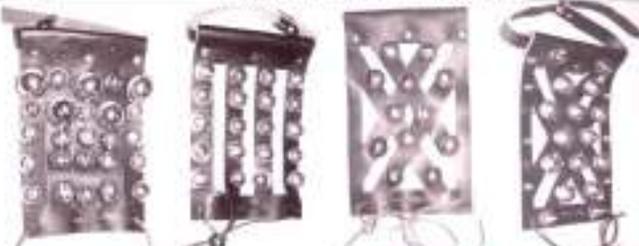
Stony Steppers are a mixed side and their style is clog stepping. It is mesmerising to watch and the sound is beautiful as the clogs tap out various rhythms. They meet on a Wednesday night at 7.30pm in the Hall behind the Catholic Church. Call Yvonne on 01908 265902 for details of their workshops.

The third side in Stony is Shore Tars who are great fun to watch (the author is female and biased). A male side, all over 6 foot tall, they look very smart in their silver waistcoats over black shirt and trousers. Their style of dancing is Rapper and if you want to know more contact either of the other two sides.

Music is also part of celebration and all sides welcome would be musicians as well as the accomplished so whether it is an accordion, the spoons, or a violin you have in your attic, dust it off and come celebrate with any or all of us in 2007.

*Katrina Desborough –
Old Mother Redcaps*

Bells and Drums
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New Address!

Something's Afoot

Well it was too hard to resist after all.

Below is the text of a broadcast sent round a few weeks ago to clarify the situation regarding Clog production by Trefor Owen.

"Page 4 of the Current Winter Newsletter has an item written to cover the lack of a Presidential Prologue. It implies that Trefor and Rhiannon Owen have moved from Canterbury to Wales. This is not correct. While it is true we intend to relocate in very late Autumn, this news of our Departure is a little premature! WE HAVENT GONE YET!

We continue to be President and Notation Officer of the Federation, and Trefor certainly continues to produce Clogs for Dance etc. Even when relocated Trefor WILL still be producing clogs and indeed will be closer to many of our customers than where we are currently based. Thus our present Canterbury address details are still valid and will remain so till probably the end of October. Our new home and work addresses will both be in Cricieth, North Wales, where we already have a home and workshop premises to move into: Trefor and Rhiannon Owen,

*'Bryn Haul'
48 Mount Rd,
Canterbury.
CT1 1YE
Tel/Fax: 01227 452 107 "*

As you will gather, I have neither gone out of business nor moved, though the move is coming in the late Autumn, after the Festival season. Our new address in North Wales will be advertised thoroughly! (I will be at all my normal festivals and events this year, as I have been for the last 30 years, oh and currently delivery is 4 to 5 weeks)

Last time I wrote anything on clogs there was basically only bad news, but just occasionally the sun does rise over a dark horizon to spread warmth and light on us all, so indeed there have been a

number of developments in the last couple of years.

Sandra Turton closed her business and the Turton family equipment got sold off to various people.

One of these was Phil Howard (Stockport) who then was "part-time" as a clog maker. He has now gone full time, making his own uppers -which he always did I think- and now making his own soles -he used to use Turtons for a long time - and is appearing at a number of festivals this year.

Another person who took some of Sandra's equipment was John Fox (Bolton), and I'm informed he is now doing more now beyond the basic repair work he's been at for a while- but I'm not quite sure what!

Another development in the Lancashire area is The Clog Factory; no, not Walkleys who still produce, but an individual apparently taught by Bill Turton who has set up in Oswaldtwistle Mills. From information received from a local step dance teacher, he has a machine making his own soles but from pictures on his web site, his uppers look bought in, probably from Walkleys.

There has also been a report of a chap in Leigh, Lancashire "doing some"! I have no further information about that though.

Over in Yorkshire, is Mike Cahill (Glasshoughton, Castleford) who has dabbled for a while but is now producing more, making his own soles and uppers. I'm not sure, but I think he is part-time.

All of the above (apart from John Fox as far as I can ascertain) have a web presence stating what they do, and in some cases what they don't do!

Ahh the spin, I find it difficult not to comment but the number of people who are "*The Only...*" whatever it is, "making it all on one site", "doing repair work at festivals", and "doing it traditionally"... "the list goes on and on, makes your own mind up over web site claims and statements, especially on what the

definition is of handmade... does this really include powered machinery as some seem to think!!

The bottom line is that there are now more people producing clogs, by whatever means, than there was a few years ago. I still am and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future..

And my claims?

Well I make all my own soles, uppers (both hand and machine stitched) and rubbers (two grades of durability), most of my own brass work, in my own workshop, from raw materials (i.e. lumps of tree and sides of hide and sheets of brass/rubber).

On some soles I use woodworking equipment to get the basic shape then hand finish, this is what I call my standard range. On my 'best' range it's all done with hand tools, using the traditional clog maker's stock knives and tools. My own set dating from the late 1800's ... that's why I've got a knackered back!

I don't make the nails, clog irons or laces. I hasten to add, whilst I have sawn up trees, I don't slaughter cattle to get the leather, well not yet anyway!

And by the way, I am teaching two people down here, Lesley - a dancer with Marlings Morris, and Terry - our local mole catcher (got to be a folk song in that somewhere!). They have been coming to 'classes' for a couple of years now and have each *completely* handmade a number of clogs.

The futures bright, the futures clogs..... and these are not just any old clogs but

Trefor Owen

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

Please send any contributions for the Summer Newsletter to the Newsletter editor by

Saturday 19th May 2007

newsletter@morrisfed.org.uk



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The Unconvention of the Illustrious Order of Fools and Beasts

The 2006 Fools' & Beasts' Unconvention got off to an excellent start for me personally, because Letchworth Morris Men had thoughtfully arranged it to be at Old Warden, about 15 minutes away from where I live. The other Fools and the Beast-keepers as they arrived turned out to be mostly people I'd met once or twice before, but who were already old friends, and the rest soon became new ones - as a Fed Fool who rarely meets another, it's the social side of Fools & Beasts occasions that I value most of all. There's a camaraderie between people who're used to being the odd-one-out when they do manage to get together; I felt as if I was among my own kind for once, even though I was, for most of the weekend, the only woman present. (And they were mostly very funny, too).

The Friday evening was informal socialising. After a short workshop from 'Trigger' on "How Not To Frighten Small Children", Saturday was the main fun day, when we all got into our kit or Beasts and headed off to wow the market place in Biggleswade. Letchworth were bravely acting as foils to a whole menagerie - mainly tourney horses in fact, but some pole beasts including Bilge the rat from Plymouth and Beaky the Bedford eagle - and fools of all kinds.

Some of us danced in among the dancers whilst some worked the crowd. Others wandered in and out of the shops, and others of us amused ourselves by playing on the bicycle-shaped bike racks; the people of Biggleswade were surprised, but pleased, and Barbara Sunderland, widow of the well-known Morris Sunderland, came out to watch. We then visited a couple of village pubs before heading back for tea and cakes at Old Warden.

Dinner was formal, a Feast in the Ring tradition, though the men were still in their Day kit. The occasion was oiled by the extremely generous spirituous cont-

ributions of some members, and enlivened by some scratch dancing, after which singers retired to the kitchen with the bottles and sang again till around 3 am.



Roger Comley (Letchworth MM) and the author attempting to ride a bike rack

On Sunday there were more workshops, on "Beastly Body Language" and "Dancing Descant"; Henning from Utrecht told us about his portable maypole, and a local freelance Cake Bearer spoke about his costume and instruments. Then there was a bit of business discussion and lunch, before we all lurched off home.

This was the second of the new-style Unconventions, attended by members of all three Morris Organisations. Although it was numerically dominated by Ring men there was no sense of the rest of us being less than full members and only a couple of small glitches over the gender imbalance, which were solved good-naturedly. All Cotswold sides can benefit in many ways from having a skilled Character, and events like this are a great encouragement to uncertain newcomers and jaded old-timers alike.

If you are a Fool or the keeper of a Beast, if your side has one or you think they should, do look out for the next Unconvention. This will be hosted by Wyvern Morris Men down in Somerset in October 2007; it will be educational, it will be fun and there will be friends to make.

Jenny Howard, Bedfordshire Lace

Morris at Towersey Village Festival 25th to 28th August 2006
Photos by Pete Thomas



Gog Magog Molly from Cambridge. Black and white photos do no justice to their riotous fashion sense where no one can ever be in the wrong colour kit.



Chiltern Hundreds Clog Morris process through the streets of the village prior to the arena display.



Laurel Swift and Phil Bassindale from Morris Offspring dance their own version of Princess Royal to the music of Chris Wood of the English Acoustic Collective

More images of Towersey and other Morris related events can be found at <http://richtradition.co.uk>

Towersey Village Festival is a folk festival rather than a morris event. There are booked sides who get worked hard and others who just turn up and dance outside the 3 Horseshoes Pub along with the local Towersey Morris Men.

All of the photos here are of the booked sides dancing in and around the arena.



Dog Rose Morris from Leeds danced extremely energetically all weekend and bravely taught "I'll Go Enlist" in their Sunday morning workshop .



Morris Offspring finish of their show "On English Ground" No bells, red body paint and stage filling sets. Not what you expect to see at the pub on a summer evening but good dancing and great entertainment

Ten Questions to Alan Green

Rapper Foreman of and Tommy for East Saxon Sword.

1. What first got you interested in the Morris?

When I was at school I went to a folk, mostly what we then called "contemporary folk", concert. As a bit of light relief, a team from Bristol University, who may or may not have been called The Five Nobel Heroes, danced rapper; I was, as we used to say in those days, blown away.

2. How long have you been dancing?

Since 1972! When I went to Keele there was a rapper dancer in full kit holding a lock at the Freshers' Market and I signed up. I started dancing at university where I was a member, and for a couple of years, foreman, of Keele Rapper

I joined East Saxon Sword in 1976. As with many other teams ESS's rapper is a mixture of figures taken from any source that doesn't actively discourage such behaviour. We also invent much of our rapper, one of my roles, as foreman, is to bring ideas and half-finished figures to the team for refining into danceable figures (or consigning to the depths). I am also working with Green Gate, London's newest rapper team, to help them develop their style (anything but a Saxon's clone).

3. Have you ever tried any other style or tradition?

I have dabbled with a few Cotswold sides over the years but never found anything to compare with rapper! Not with any great degree of seriousness: nothing does it like rapper!

5. What has been the high spot of your dancing life?

The highs come from the two-way interaction with the audience. It doesn't matter whether it's a rapper naive pub crowd or a knowledgeable folkie audience at a festival. We have had a fantastic time dancing a really simple

rapper for a crowded pub, but we have also had a great time dancing complex rapper at festival ceilidhs

5. And the low spot?

By contrast the lows often come when that communication is lacking. Dancing in pubs where the clientele know they don't like folk and won't look up from their (often pink) newspapers in case their preconceptions are challenged. Dancing at festivals where the audience is so far away we might as well be in the practise hall.

6. What or where do you consider the strangest dance spot/dance out you ever took part in?

In my student days Keele were booked to do a town carnival. When we got there the show ground was pretty much a ploughed field with an area taped off as the performance arena, not boarded or even flattened in any way, just taped off; this, we thought, was not quite the ideal surface for rapper.

Inspiration struck when we saw a lorry that had had a carnival float with very little in the way of superstructure. We persuaded the driver that we could strip the remaining bits of frilly pink stuff and have a mobile wooden stage. The lorry was duly prepared, we lined up on the back and, when we were announced, the driver pulled on to the middle of the arena.

All went well through the calling on song and the once-to-yourself. Then came the stamp with which we started the dance (Keele were big fans of stamping on the anacrusis); we all hit the "stage" together, it dropped a good nine inches and proceeded to bounce back as we made a gallant attempt at the first figure. Midway through the second chorus all attempts at poise and style were distant memories and we were considering a small sweepstake to guess the number of broken limbs we would be taking back to campus. There being at least three physics students in the team we soon deduced that the fundamental frequency

of the lorry's suspension was quite unrelated to the tempo of a rapper jig. There were times when the stage felt almost stable and times when a particularly high resonance was reached and it tried to buck us over the cab.

It has been said that the very acme of rapper stepping is to look as though the set is suspended in the air and reaching down to hit the floor. Suffice to say this is not made any easier when you have no idea where the floor is likely to be! As with many rapper dances the peak was defined by the back somersault. The width of the lorry being somewhat less than the ideal length for this feat, it is still not clear with which part of his anatomy the somersaultee managed to regain purchase on the stage. However with a wrench on the swords, he catapulted himself clear through the set, narrowly avoiding falling off the other side and flipping everyone else around into the nut.

Possibly not our finest performance, but one that brings new meaning to the phrase "well sprung dance floor".

7. What advice would you give to a newly formed dance team?

Respect, but do not revere, the existing "tradition".

8. Is there one aspect of the morris world today you would gladly see consigned to the scrap heap?

Dance competitions!

9. Is there one aspect you would fight to keep above all others?

Keeping the dance alive; this means dancing for modern audiences. The dance must communicate with the audience; people's expectation of entertainment comes from their experience, which mostly means television. Whatever else you might say about television it is, with a few notable exceptions, professional entertainment. The dance must move with the times.

10. What other interest do you have out side dancing – keep it legal decent and honest!

Aside from my family and my job? Walking and photography provide much needed relaxation, but much of my time is occupied in undertaking a part-time (second) doctorate (this one in Medical Ethics). *Pauses for "doctor doctor" jokes and walks off feeling smug!*

*Thanks to Alan for his thoughts,
Janet Dowling*

JOINT ORGANISATION EVENT

Birmingham City Centre on Saturday April 14th will be the venue for the third in a biennial series of joint Morris events involving The Federation, The Ring and Open Morris. This time the Event is being organised by the Ring on behalf of the three Morris organisations. The Federation ran the previous one in Newcastle. Running from 10am-3pm in a number of spots around the Central Pedestrian area (Bull Ring) if you're not dancing why not get along and watch?.

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Living with the cycle of fitness



All my life (as far back as I can remember), I have been pretty active. As a young man I played football for various teams. All

duffers, I'm pleased to say. There was one team I played for, for which I actually scored a goal.

My favourite position was left half. Any youngsters reading this column will be confused straight away. The left half doesn't seem to exist any more. These days, football teams are full of sweepers and centre backs, whatever they are.

And when will a football manager, coaches these days, come up with a revolutionary new line-up of five forwards, three half backs, two full backs and the goal keeper? That's how we used to play and in my day it was all about attacking; indeed, all the teams I played for were attacked mercilessly. By far the best fun was that had by Codpiece Trotters, the football team of Reading Folk Club that took its name from the club's newsletter. When things got too tough, Phil would sit on the ball!

Mind you, United Press was another splendid team which did other teams the honour of losing to them week after week. A drill sergeant at Fulford Barracks in York trained us. It was such a tough routine that at the end of one particularly gruelling gym session we realised we had lost Don who had twirled off in a daze and landed in a semi-conscious heap amongst the piles of coconut matting. He came round OK in the pub afterwards.

There was a village team I played for in Gloucestershire, most members of which emerged from the pub ten minutes before kick off and many's the time we had to clear the bigger piles of sheep dung from the field before play began. Don't talk to me about slide tackles! And in Edinburgh,

where the wind blows fast and frequent, most games were played at head height.

When my football career came to an end I took to jogging. And then half marathons. Hard work, but once you are fit enough to do one, they provide a perverse sort of pleasure. Running in the heat gives me a particular kind of buzz. I'm not one for lying sunbathing for hours on end but I have run miles and miles in the sweltering heat of Africa and enjoyed every step of the experience.

By far the coldest and one of the toughest half marathons I have run was centred on Liskeard in Cornwall. "An undulating course" it said. Well, it might have undulated a bit but that was in between the mountainous rises the course planners also popped in for good measure.

The day was so cold, the rain so fierce and the wind so horizontal that there were bits of my anatomy I thought would never recover. Indeed, there were bits I couldn't find for a long while afterwards. Still, I got a medal and a T-shirt and a sense of achievement.

Alongside running I also took up morris dancing. Something I had long wanted to do and I've enjoyed every minute of it. I get as much, if not more, from the practice as from a performance, and that has a lot to do with the exercise.

On a hot summer's day, dressed in heavy tatters, you can lose pounds, which is an added bonus. When we moved to our current home, Sally and I thought cycling would be a good idea to keep us toned and gleeful.

On the first outing (to the pub), I looked behind to find that Sally had wobbled across the road and fallen in the gutter. That didn't bode well for our future cycling careers and when it dawned on us (too late) that we lived half way up an enormous Cornish hill, the cycles got pushed gradually to the back of the garage.

And there they stayed for a year or more. It irked me though. The lack of cycling action was constantly at the back of my mind so one day last summer, needing three pipe clips, the sun shining, I emptied the garage, withdrew the bike, pumped up the tyres, tested the brakes and set off on an eight-mile ride to the DIY shop. I went the long way so as to avoid the very biggest hills.

Proud but tired, I arrived and prepared to place my purchase in my saddlebag. But they didn't sell pipe clips. So I cycled home again (mostly uphill). Not only was I clip-less on my return, but my right knee had swollen up and turned bright red.

The doctor advised heat and cold. A hot water bottle then a packet of frozen peas. Not available on prescription; a treatment still undergoing tests by NICE I shouldn't wonder. So, for now, my dancing days are done.

And my point - well, having this injury has made me wonder which of the activities described I would miss most if I could never do it again.

The answer has to be morris dancing.

There's the tradition; the camaraderie; the travel; the music and song; the festivals and the beer. Getting out on to the street and giving it welly along with seven or more like-minded friends is a great way to get the action you need to counter the sedentary style of an office job.

Then you drink some beer, eat some chips or a pie (or both), have an ice cream and do it all again - wonderful fun. An exploratory operation is now planned. Will it lead to the resumption of my morris meanderings?

I certainly hope so. There's life in the old dog yet. Not only dancing, but there are hills to walk, waterways to canoe and deserts to trek.

P.S. Anyone want to buy a bike?

Paul White

After thoughts :

Couptrain Morris, reported on in this column in the winter 2006 edition of the newsletter, are heading for the Cornwall Festival of Dance in June. I have trawled the web and even asked the Morris Federation for information on other morris sides in France but have so far come up with blanks all round.

If anyone knows of others please let me have contact details. I have this notion lurking at the back of my mind that a bit of a festival might be drawn together. If you can throw any light please email me on:

rally.bango@virgin.net

Paul White

Editors Note:

Details for the Cornwall Festival of Dance can be found at :

www.cornwalldancefest.co.uk



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A WEB OF CONFUSION?

Nearly every morris side in the country and beyond has their own web-site, very commendable in our hyperspace based society, but the question has to be asked, are they what they should be?

Most web-sites are created by a member of the side who knows, or thinks they know what they are doing, and no doubt having a site is a beneficial exercise, it is the place to be. But the question is do they work?

I organise a dance festival at the Royal Cornwall Show and use the web to find sides to invite. I am limited to the number of groups I can take, but need a good amount of bodies to make the event a success. When sending out an invite I really do need some kind of response so that I know who is able to come and if not then I need to invite a replacement side.

So begins the frustration.

So many web-sites are dreadful to look at, I could give examples but perhaps I had better not. Either, they shout at you with dreadful colours, text two feet high and pictures take hours to download, even on broadband. Or else there are the sites with pages of script, uninterrupted with any graphics, which are just mind numbingly dull. The world really doesn't want to know the size of squire Jeremy's left toe nail, we just want to know who you are, what you do and how to contact you thank you very much!

Ah, the contacts page, hurrah. So an email sent with confidence I await a reply. Now, either the email bounces straight back, or worse, disappears into the ether, either to be ignored completely by the receiver or to never arrive at all.

My point being that your web-sites, folks, just don't work! And I am sure I am not alone in my findings.

Not all of course, some sites are really good and obviously well maintained, but they are in the minority. I feel, there is just no point in having a web-site unless you:

- Have it well designed so that it is easy to use, looks good, and is fast to load. The on-line community can't wait and no-one wants to read pages of text!
- Make sure the links work.
- Make sure the email addresses are all up to date and work.
- Answer your emails!
- Keep it updated. We are not interested in where the side danced in June 2003; we want to know where you are going to be this year.

Your web-site is important, people do look at them, and it is as important to your image as a side as your kit is.

Okay, now the plug! For the last couple of years I have been designing web-sites, not perfect ones, but should you wish to look at them and see what you think, please do. If you like what you see and would like any help with your sites do contact me.

Visit; www.hey42.co.uk

Email: sally.hamlyn@virgin.net

PS. The Cornwall Festival of dance this year is on 7th- 9th of June at the Royal Cornwall Show. We have our own marquee and stage and have dance demonstrations on all three days. On the Saturday we have around ten dance sides, mainly morris, but Cornish dancers as well, dancing around the show ground during the day and a grand processional at midday. We are sponsored by Skinners Brewery who provide us with free beer; Ginsters who give us as many pasties as we can eat; Hobgoblin Music, who provide technical and moral support and of course the Royal Cornwall Show who give us our marquee and stage and free entry to the show for all performers.

If any of you would be interested in joining in 2008 please contact me. or better still, answer your emails, please!

Visit: www.cornwalldancefest.co.uk

Sally Hamlyn

BLACKHORSE GO TO TOWN



On Sunday 8th October 2006 Blackhorse and Standard Womens morris dancers from Walthamstow held a Day of Dance to celebrate the formation of the side twenty five years ago.

Blackhorse and Standard were joined by dancers from 'Hands Around' from Basildon, 'Alive and Kicking' from Maldon, 'Royal Liberty' from Romford', Greenwich Morris Men and ex Blackhorse dancers. The day

started at Hay's Galleria on the South Bank in London. Soon a large audience had gathered, the noise of the music echoing around this large converted dock.

The courtyard at Southwark Cathedral was the next destination. The day was warm and sunny and there were plenty of customers sitting outside the refectory. They were entertained by a variety of morris traditions from the 5 groups. We then walked over the Millennium Bridge to St Paul's Cathedral and commenced dancing in front of the impressive steps leading up to the Cathedral. Everyone associates Morris dancing with bells but on this occasion the bells that were heard were that of the Cathedral. We had only just started dancing when the bells of St Paul's swung into action nearly drowning the sound of the musicians. This did not



spoil the spectacle of dancing in such an impressive place and the tourists were very pleased to be sitting on the steps watching the dancers. When we had booked the spot they said it would be prior to the Evensong



Service, but did not mention the bells! The day finished in true Blackhorse style with tea and cakes in the St Paul's tea rooms. A great day enjoyed by all. If you would like to see any more photographs of the day see the Blackhorse and Standard Womens Morris dancer's website : www.blackhorseandstandard.org.uk

Wendy Wright

Sustainability of the Morris

Off-Spring Morris, which is a mixed Cotswold dance team, based in the Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey, will join with other local teams, Spring Grove Morris Men and Thames Valley Morris Men, to celebrate 500 years of Morris in the town on Sunday 3 June 2007. They plan to travel by boat down the River Thames from Hampton Court, previously the favourite country residence of Tudor King Henry VIII, to Kingston town centre with its ancient links back to the last Saxon Kings of England.

The teams will dance at various locations and hostelries around the town including the North Door of Kingston Parish Church to invoke the benevolent "luck of the Morris". The North Door was traditionally considered to be the most likely place for the unwelcome access of evil influences in 1507 when the Morris Dance was first recorded in the town. There are references in the Kingston Parish Churchwardens' Accounts that were maintained during the latter part of the reign of King Henry VII and then King Henry VIII (up to the time of the Reformation). These show that the Morris played a key role in the various festivities in the town and surrounding villages. More detailed references and images of the original 500-year-old manuscript are available via the Spring Grove Morris website (search via Google).

In conjunction with Kingston Borough Council Leisure & Culture, the Morris celebrations will be part of a preview for the wider London Sustainability Weeks 3 – 17 June 2007 ("Love London"). The preview events in Kingston start with the 20th Anniversary of the Kingston-upon-Thames "Green Fair" on Bank Holiday Monday 28 May 2007 and continue through to 5 June, which is World Environment Day. The key objective is to raise awareness of threats to the environment, particularly climate change and encourage sustainability where

possible through a broad range of community events and activities.

Robin Aitken, Bagman, Off-Spring Morris, commented "Our researches in Kingston clearly show that the Morris has a fully authenticated certification which conclusively demonstrates that it has been a sustainable activity for more than 500 years. We shall travel by environmentally friendly riverboat and our entire dance team's carbon emissions are far lower than the majority of 4x4s and family runabouts, they may even be as low as the Toyota Prius Hybrid or the Honda Civic GX....".

Robin Aitken

Kennet Morris Men 50th Birthday Celebrations

The Kennet Morris Men were formed 49 years ago and have been dancing in places such as Reading, Newbury, Hungerford and Henley on Thames ever since. To celebrate our 50th year we thought we ought to do something enjoyable, memorable and challenging that might gain us a few new members and attract the public's attention.

We have therefore hired two narrow boats with the intention of sailing along the Kennet (and Avon) Canal from Bath to Reading dancing at 50 pubs en route.

We plan to be seen off by the mayor of Bath on Saturday 12th May 2007 and be greeted by the mayor of Reading on arrival there the following Saturday, 19th May 2007. We hope the event will be covered in local papers, on local radio stations and possibly regional TV as well.

We would be grateful for any help that you might be able to give in publicising this event. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Chris Hutchinson

Ed: I have contact details for anyone who wants to get involved. Sadly their web site was last updated in Jan 2006!

Locos in Motion Midsummer Morris Festival June 23rd 2007



In June 2006, Locos in Motion Morris held their first Midsummer Morris Festival in Sadberge Village (County Durham). The event attracted various other morris dancing sides including Kern Morris from Durham, Black Sheep from Barnard Castle and Pengwyn Rapper from Darlington (complete with pengwin). We had a fine, sunny day, lots of people taking part and watching and a good time was had by all.

The morning was taken up mainly with dance workshops in the village hall. The church had a wonderful flower festival and food and drink were provided throughout the day by the ladies of the village and by both village pubs. During the afternoon there was a procession through the village, dancing on the village green and at the village hall, competitions for children, a tug of war competition, charity and local produce stalls and much more. In the evening there was a ceilidh in the village hall which was well-attended and great fun.

2007 is the tenth anniversary of the founding of Locos in Motion so this year's festival, on June 23rd, is going to be even better. The village community is keen to get even more involved and make the event a day to remember and Locos in Motion would love you all to come along and help them celebrate their tenth anniversary.

So, come on, join us at Sadberge Village Hall at 10.00 a.m. on Saturday June 23rd 2007 for a really fun day.

For up to date info and contact details, visit our website at :

www.locosinmotion.co.uk

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**The First SDU Longsword
Tournament.
October 22 2006.
*Miracle at Kelham Island.***

When the misleading adverts sending dancers first to Sheffield, then to Derby on a different day and eventually back to the original venue, had gone away, the first **SDU Longsword Competition** trundled into action appropriately in Sheffield.

Hosts of the Event, were Ron and Jenny Day and the management and staff of Kelham Island Museum. The Museum celebrates many of Britain's major developments in steel making and shaping and accurately reflects Sheffield's prime importance in the Industrial Revolution.

The competition, roundly denounced by many and treated with great suspicion by some, was the latest in a long line of Traditional tournaments and competitions held wherever there were sword dancers.

It was an excellent if fairly brief encounter with first and third places being taken by a Morris Ring side.

Third were

- Redcar Sword performing their invented Eston California dance complete with four different locks and a spate of excellent tunes.

In second place were

- Stone Monkey, hoop legged southern devils with their version of the Coxbench/Codnor dance, the only complete Derbyshire longsword.

In first place were

- Redcar Sword with their own adopted Tradition of Greatham in County Durham.

The judges; Chris Cartridge, Jeff Lawson and Frank Lee, were mightily impressed with all of the performances and were quick to praise the Salton and Escrick performances of Sullivan Sword from Nottingham.

Especially impressive were the students from Maltby School who performed their own dance with a slick set of figures and an excellent finish with a dancer raised on the lock.

Longsword Guru, Ivor Allsop was on hand offering sotto voce advice and performing his David Puttnam role with cameras and technical paraphernalia.*

The winners, veterans of many competitions in the North East and Yorkshire received the Snark Trophy ~ a Sheffield Pewter Tankard donated to reflect skill, precision and entertainment.

The Sheffield competition was a direct offshoot of the Whitby, Darlington and Newcastle tournaments, which no longer exist. There are venerable awards collecting grime and dust in hidden cupboards. Trophy hunters across the North are avidly seeking the old ones out.

Engraved on the dulled and hopefully temporarily hidden trophies, are written names of some of the Finest Longsword teams ~ Loftus, Lingdale Primrose, North Skelton, Sullivans, Kings College, Spen Valley, Goathland, East Saxon and Grenoside to mention a few.

Sword teams have ever been keen to compete and strut their steps for a bit of kudos. Loftus and Redcar were regular competitors in the biannual Teesside Eisteddfod in the seventies and early eighties. Honours went to Loftus more often but were pushed hard by Redcar who snatched victory a couple of times.

Loftus formed a joint team with Manley Morris and were successful at the International Eisteddfod at Llangollen.

The next SDU Longsword Tournament will be held in Derby on October 13 2007 and will feature some of the Old Trophies from past Whitby competitions, the Snark Trophy and a newly awarded EFDSS cup for youth teams

Phil Heaton.

* Copies of the DVD are available from Ivor Allsop

What's That All About Then?



In the winter edition Paul White offer a modest prize for anyone who could work out what the marks on his face signified. There were no takers for the prize of a morris stick cut from genuine French hazel. But for those of a curious disposition here's the answer.

It's a visual and bilingual pun. The chevrons are the Citroen motor car insignia. The two characters below are Chinese (Cantonese pronunciation). The first character is the word for 'big', pronounced 'di', or 'die'. The second

character is the word for 'man' pronounced 'yan'.

Put all three words together and you have Citroen Dyanne!

International Pipe and Tabor Festival

The 2007 International Pipe and Tabor Festival will take place in St Albans, Herts, on Friday 20th - Sunday 22nd July. There will be workshops, Dances & Concerts covering the following topics

Morris Taboring
Pipe & Tabor in Early Dance
Folk Taboring
Care and Maintenance
Iconography
Symposium

We have invited musicians from Spain and Eastern Europe. More details will be posted on the web site <http://www.pipeandtabor.org/> as they become available.

ANAGRAM ANSWERS

For those who hopefully found some innocent amusement from the anagrams in the last issue here are the answers:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 New Mitch = Witchmen | 2 Pitch Wheat = Whip the Cat |
| 3 Aw Use Shoes = Ousewashes | 4 In Words = Windsor |
| 5 Wern't Gas Tree = Great Western | 6 Mal Kerb Side Herb = Berkshire Bedlam |
| 7 Leaf Strewed = Westrefelda | 8 Bang Leaf = Belfagan |
| 9 Ye Ark Rabble = Barley Break | 10 Lo His Rages = Glorishears |
| 11 Hot Words Sprout = Southport Swords | 12 Last Proly = Sallyport |
| 13 Wow So Dark = Woad Works | 14 Pen PE Horse = Persephone |
| 15 Do Lewd Strikes = Triskele Sword | 16 Rams A Glee = Argameles |
| 17 Stunt Bet Ploy = Betty Luptons | 18 We Cider Hen = Chinewerde |
| 19 Me Sham Mirth = Hammersmith | 20 Back Brew – Joy = Jabberwocky |
| 21 Paper 'N Crab Walks = Black Swan Rapper | 22 EG Slack Men Win Nest = Newcastle Kingsmen |
| 23 Mire Storm = Mortimers | 24 An Goggle Band Fan = Flag And Bone Gang |
| 25 Our BR Cheese = Board Herbaceous Border | 26 Third Lunches Nerd = Chiltern Hundreds |
| 27 Ate Past Pump = Taepapas Tump | |

No prizes but possibly a warm smug glow for anyone who got them all correct!



Like many other sides these days, Redbornstoke Morris has had problems recruiting new members. Foreman Brian Mander took the opportunity presented by a Scarecrow Festival in his home village to seek new dancers. The photograph shows him trying out one hopeful newcomer. Sadly, the enthusiastic apprentice proved rather limited in his movements and by the end of the day he disappeared without trace.

Eds Note: Maybe he's headed off for to join Barley Break or possibly Belles and Broomsticks or even Jackstraws.

ANOTHER STRAND IN THE WEB

Federation members the Knaresborough Mummers launched their new web site in January this year. Rather than attempting to make sense of the complex history of Mumming, the web site concentrates on the history of the team, how they got together and how they developed their style of performance over their 32 year existence. Team members John Burrell and Ted Dodsworth have compiled the extensive archive of plays, the origins and photographs of different versions throughout the life of the team, together

with statistics of the many performers who have been members down the years. John, a founder member of the team, is hoping this might jog a few memories and encourage people to look in their own photographic collections for pictures of the team, particularly in the early years.

The Christmas Blue Stots tours this year raised a record collection for local charities. Beneficiaries this year will be Jennyruth Workshops, Harrogate Talking newspaper for the blind, Martin House hospice, Folifoot disabled riders Charlotte Bolton appeal, St. Monica's Hospice and the English Folk Dance and Song Society in memory of Nigel Hudleston, who did an enormous amount of work with his wife, collecting folk traditions, including texts of Blue Stots performances in the area.

If you would like more information about the team, the web site is at www.knaresboroughmummers.org.uk If you have any material which you think might be of interest to the team, contact John Burrell on 01423 566112 or email: jburrell1@hotmail.co.uk

Morris Matters



The journal of all things related to Morris - tunes, pictures, notation, historical stuff, views, reviews - published twice a year. Contributions always welcomed. Subscribe now to the address shown:

Morris Matters
27 Nortoft Road
Chalfont St Peter
Bucks SL9 0LA

Annual subscription for 2 issues is £6.



Calendar

March

Sat 24th

The Fabulous Fezheads TEN YEARS AFTER Fig & Date Fayre. The Greyhound Inn, North St, Winterbourne Kingston, Blandford, Dorset DT11 9AZ –

Fri 30th – Sun 1st April

Oxford Folk Festival
Three Shires and Wakefield Morris

April

Sat 14th

Joint Morris Event, Birmingham City Centre, 10am till 3pm

May

Sun 6th

May Day of Dance - Harthill and Three Shires at Normamby Hall, Lincolnshire for their joint day of dance.

Fri 4th – Mon 7th

Hastings Jack in the Green

Sat 12th-19th

Kennet Morris canal cruise from Bath to Reading to celebrate 50 years of dancing.

June

Sat 9th

The Gate to Southwell.

A traditional procession from Nottingham to Southwell. More information can be found on www.dolphin-morris.co.uk and click on the Gate to Southwell link.

Sat 16th

Ripley Green Garters 25th Birthday Carsington Reservoir

Fri 15th-Sun 17th

Maybe Morris Weekend of Dance
Based at Wisborough Green, West Sussex
There are still some places available at this biennial event so if anyone would like to come along they would be most welcome (teams or individuals). Contact May on maybemorris@tiscali.co.uk

Sat 23rd

Locos in Motion Midsummer Morris Festival

July

Fri 6th - Sun 8th

Fylde Coast 20th Birthday. St. Annes carnival and Lytham
Sompting Village Morris "END OF THE PIER" Weekend of Dance.

Mon 9th

Harthill Well Dressing, Harthill, Sheffield. Three Shires at the opening ceremony

Fri 20th - Sun 22nd

The 2007 International Pipe and Tabor Festival, St Albans, Herts

MORRIS SIDE WANTED

The Moira Furnace Charitable Trust Museum are looking for sides to attend their Canal Festival Morris Event on MAY 12th and 13th 2007.

If any team can help this Morris friendly Museum with this could they phone Helen Shepard 079733 729584. Moira is near Ashby-de-la-Zouch in Leicestershire. The Moira Furnace is alongside a section of the Ashby canal which has been restored.

There are some more details at

<http://www.oakleaves.org.uk/newsdetail2.asp?NewsID=356>

WOT NO PEL?

Last page and barely a mention of the PEL legislation. Is the editor not well? Fear not folks here's the item you seek. The Prime Minister, or someone close to him, decided that on line petitions would be a good wheeze.

Amongst the frivolous "The PM should stand on his head and juggle ice-cream" and the heartfelt "Ban mobile phones in shops" nestles this one "We the undersigned petition the Prime Minister to recognise that music and dance should not be restricted by burdensome licensing regulations." If you support this idea visit:

<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/licensing/>

and sign the petition.

MORRIS FEDERATION SHOP

PUBLICATIONS:

Cotswold Glossary: An invaluable reference book including definitions of steps and figures found in two or more traditions; a cross-reference to all Cotswold traditions and types; terms used by different authors for the same movements; Morris musicianship and much more.

£4.00 + £1.75 UK, £3.50 OVERSEAS (p&p)

Adderbury: Produced jointly by Tim Radford and The Morris Federation, this book contains the history of the tradition, copies of original notation from the Blunt manuscript and modern notation with easy-to-follow diagrams for 13 stick and 13 hanky dances. Includes photographs and music.

£4.50 + £1.75 UK, £3.50 OVERSEAS (p&p)

North West Morris: This book contains notations, illustrated with figures and diagrams for ten of the best North West Morris dances, originally researched by Trefor Owen.

£4.00 + £1.75 UK, £3.50 OVERSEAS (p&p)

Wheatley: Wheatley is a very pleasing tradition to dance and yet one of the most straightforward. This book was produced from a complete review of source material and includes current practice and innovation.

£3.25 + £1.75 UK, £3.50 OVERSEAS (p&p)

Hinton: Traditional and creative Morris by Sue Swift.

£4.00 + £1.75 UK, £3.50 OVERSEAS (p&p)

Abram Circle: Provides background, complete notation, pictures and music for the Abram Circle dance. The dance originates from the North West but has a different structure to most North West dances.

£3.00 + £1.75 UK, £3.50 OVERSEAS (p&p)

Molly: Dancing into the Twenty First Century, by Tony Forster

£3.50 + £1.75 UK, £3.50 OVERSEAS (p&p)

BOOKLETS: A series of A5 sized booklets with between 8 and 20 pages

Warm-up exercises: Clear diagrams and careful explanation of exercises designed to prepare dancers and reduce the risk of injury.

£0.90

Publicity tips: Hints on promoting your team, attracting new members, etc.

£0.90 (Temporarily out of stock)

Raglan Bantamcocks Morris: characteristics of the tradition, notation and some music

£1.25 + £0.50 UK, £1.00 OVERSEAS (p&p)

Women and the North West Morris Dance

£0.90

Beginners and Basics: Roy Dommet's ideas on the basics of Cotswold. Essential reading for leaders and foremen.

£1.25

Twenty Years On, 1975-1996

£1.25

Border Morris: a brief outline

£0.90

Few Facts About the Morris

£1.00

Compact Discs – The Magic of Morris

Double CD £15.00 p&p £1.00

BELLS:

Size/qty	25	50	100
1 1/4"	£14.50	£29.00	£56.00
1 1/8"	£10.00	£19.00	£37.00
1"	£8.50	£15.25	£30.50
7/8"	£7.25	£14.00	£25.50
3/4"	£6.75	£12.75	£24.75

NB: For bells all prices include 1st class postage

Orders for quantities of over 100 bells will carry a surcharge for additional postage costs.

PROMOTIONAL GOODS:

Sweatshirts: Sizes – S. M. L. XL. Colours – black, navy, raspberry, yellow, jade, white, royal blue

Round Neck: £11.00, Button: (black and navy, small only) **SALE £7.50** No choice of colour (Was £12.50)

T-Shirts: Sizes – S. M. L. XL. Colours – black, navy, red, yellow, green, white, royal blue

SALE £3.50 No choice of colour (Was £5.50)

(Please give 2nd and 3rd colour choice for clothing)

Stickers: 4" diameter bearing MF name and logo – self-adhesive for music cases, files, etc.

£0.50

Leather Badges: 2" in diameter bearing MF name and logo (Black and colour on natural background or Gold on black background)

£1.25

Leather Key Rings: 2" in diameter bearing MF name and logo on natural background

£1.25

Most booklets and promotional goods include postage.
Prices are correct at time of printing.
Order form on the Federation web site or from the treasurer.