Hi Folks,

Festive greetings and a boozy welcome to the December 2023 Morris Ring North Area Newsletter. This edition is coming out a few days later than normal due to me being away last week, and as I write this on the Monday, I have already performed at my first Christmas event with Harthill Morris at the Kelham Island Victorian Christmas Market in Sheffield. Pictures are included in the Harthill Morris section below.

I have started to include side logos in this newsletter – please check your side’s updates and if I have used an incorrect one, or if I haven’t used one then please send me your current logo and I will include it in future newsletters.

As December commences, I start playing my favourite Christmas album – Carols and Capers by Maddy Prior & The Carnival Band. Check it out - it is a far cry from the usual Shakin’ Stevens, Wham and Mariah Carey that is repeated endlessly.

If you have any folky Christmas favourites you can recommend, please let me know and I will collate a list and share with the region to assist our colleagues escape from the hype for a short time and help bring this festive season back to a more traditional setting.

Many of you will now be in the throes of the practice season and will be commencing your Christmas/Yuletide Morris activities. Our regional activities list has been updated – please see individual side updates later in the newsletter for details of our festive frolics and mischief. For a national view I recommend the exhaustive summary in the Morris Ring website: Traditional Morris Events: Christmas | The Morris Ring

For those of you that enjoy reading about folk heritage and are struggling what to advise family and friends what to but you this Christmas there is a new biography just published about Cecil Sharp. There is an extensive review on the Morris Ring website with links on how to buy the book. See link: Cecil Sharp and the Quest for Folk Song and Dance a new biography by David Sutcliffe - a review | The Morris Ring

Wishing You All a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!

Kindest regards,

Darren Nugent,
Morris Ring North Area Rep,
daznugent@sky.com
Morris Ring News

Jigs Instructional 2024: “Probably the best Cotswold Morris workshop in the UK”. This year it will be for a single day, in the usual venue, Sutton Bonington near Nottingham, on Saturday January 20th, but still with as much of the curriculum as possible from the previous weekend events, so expect it to be quite a long day. Put the effort in and it is guaranteed to improve your dancing.

The day will start at 0930, with breakfast from 0830, and end with a meal - not a Feast - so that you can get on the road at about 1930. If you’re travelling from further afield there should be very limited indoor camping available (it is explicitly forbidden in the main hall) or there are cheap hotels not far away at East Midlands airport.

You need to be comfortable dancing set dances from at least one Cotswold tradition. The sessions are as much about dancing well as about dancing jigs, so one frequent attendee refers to it as "an MoT for my Morris".

Cost is expected to be around £30 including all meals. If you’re interested, email jigsinstructional@themorrisring.org to get more details and an application form. Entries don’t have to be through clubs, just mention your club (or one of them).

ARM: Just a reminder about the 2024 Morris Ring ARM on 2nd March 2024. I will be going. It is a fun event - I would love to have some company from other sides in our region. Details at: Morris Ring 2024 Annual Representatives Meeting | The Morris Ring

Morris Ring Events:

23rd December, The Original Welsh Border Morris Men Christmas 2023 Tour
20th January, Jigs Instructional
2nd March, Morris Ring 2024 Annual Representatives Meeting
31st May to 2nd June, Thaxted Weekend of Dance
27th April, Cambridge Morris Men, Centenary Spring Day of Dance
23rd – 25th August, Saddleworth Rushcart
28th September, Peterborough Morris Day of Dance

North Area Side News / Upcoming Performances

Green Oak Morris Men

Green Oak will perform their first Boxing Day dance out in 50 years!

They'll be at The Sun Inn, Gainsborough Road, Everton, Doncaster, DN10 5BW. 13:30 to 14:30.

If you don’t have any Boxing Day plans and would like to join them, please email greenoakdoncaster@gmail.com
Green Oak had a chance encounter at practice night with the cast of their local pantomime (oh no they didn’t!)

They arrived at their usual practice venue (upstairs in Doncaster Brewery Tap) to find 8 young performers laughing and drinking. A perfect excuse to get them involved in Morris dancing!

Several of them gave it a go, everyone had fun, and a couple expressed an interest in coming back next week!

Well done, Green Oak 🎉
Green Oak upcoming festive performances:

Wednesday 6 December, St George and the Dragon mummer's play. 8.30pm, Jemmy Hirst at the Rose & Crown, 26 Riverside, Rawcliffe, Goole, DN14 8RN

Wednesday, 13 December, St George and the Dragon mummer's play. 7pm, Cross Keys Inn, Wroot, DN9 2BT, and the at 8pm, Angel Inn, Misson, DN10 6EB

Wednesday, 20 December, St George and the Dragon mummer's play and Christmas social. 8pm, Doncaster Brewery Tap, DN1 3EL

Boxing Day, Tuesday, 26 December, 1.30pm, The Sun Inn, Gainsborough Road, Everton, Doncaster, DN10 5BW

Wednesday night practices at Doncaster Brewery Tap, DN1 3EL

**Handsworth Traditional Sword Dancers**

Christmas Festive Performances:

Boxing Day, Tuesday, 26th December, 11:15 am at Market Square, Woodhouse, S13 7JX. (Next to Cross Street); 12 noon at Handsworth in front of St. Mary's Church, S13 9BZ. TBC – please note, this is taken from the Morris Ring website not the HTSD website, so check in advance of attending. See contacts at the end of the newsletter.

Wednesday night practices at Burton Street Foundation, 57 Burton St, Hillsborough, Sheffield, S6 2HH. 8pm-10pm

**HARTHILL MORRIS**

Harthill traditionally have a busy time at Christmas.

On Thursday evenings members and musicians join in the Yorkshire Carols sessions upstairs in the Beehive Public House in Harthill – this is every week from the first Thursday after Remembrance Sunday, all the way up to the Thursday before Christmas.

And Harthill have performed on every Boxing Day since 1976 without fail. Even during Covid we managed a musician and two dancers to go out to maintain the tradition under lockdown rules.
Harthill have already commenced their festive performance season at the atmospheric Kelham Island Victorian Christmas Market, on Sunday, 3rd December. Kelham Island is the major industrial museum of Sheffield and a fitting setting for a Victorian event. Despite the snow and cold the side put out a full side and the crowds really enjoyed the performance with some joining in the Bonny Green Garters at the end. With thanks to Mick Parker, the Harthill Morris official photographer, for the fabulous photos.
Harthill Morris Christmas Festive Performances:

Every Thursday evening (up to the Thursday before Christmas) members of Harthill Morris attend the Yorkshire Christmas Carols, 8.30pm, The Beehive, 16 Union Street, Harthill, Sheffield S26 7YH

Sunday, 3rd December, 1pm, Kelham Island Victorian Christmas Market, Sheffield

Boxing Day, Monday, 26th December, 11am, The Blue Bell Inn, 4 Woodall Lane, Harthill, Sheffield S26 7YQ

Boxing Day, Monday, 26th December, 12noon, The Beehive, 16 Union Street, Harthill, Sheffield S26 7YH

Thursday night practices in the Harthill Village Hall, Winney Hill, Harthill, Sheffield S26 7YL. 7.45pm-9.30pm.
Lord Conyers Morris Men

Christmas Festive Performances:

Saturday, 23rd December, 2pm, Christmas Wassail at the Duke of Leeds, 16 Church St, Wales, Sheffield S26 5LQ. **Please note the change of venue from previous listings.**

Saturday, 23rd December, 4pm, Horn Dance, Trysting Tree, Kiveton Lane, Todwick, Sheffield S26 1JJ

Wednesday night practices at the Duke of Leeds, 16 Church St, Wales, Sheffield S26 5LQ. 7.30pm-9.30pm.

Spen Valley Longsword Dancers

Boxing Day, Monday, 26th December, traditional tour of some of the pubs in Spen Valley to perform dances and sing a few songs; (1:00 pm, Wickham Arms, Cleckheaton; 2:00 pm, Spen Victoria C & B Club, Spen Lane, Gomersal)

Wakefield Morris

Christmas Festive Performances:

Boxing Day Wakefield Morris will be at the Kings Arms, Heath Common, WF1 5SE, at 12:30pm.

Practice nights are on Mondays at The Kings Way Methodist Church Hall, Ossett, Wakefield, WF5 8ET.

Wath Morris

Wath Morris were formed in 1972 with three founder members (Eric Pressley, Dave Wigfield and John (Mont) Auckland), the team learned its first dancers from Ivor Allsop (later to become Squire of the Morris Ring).

The side made their first public appearance in May 1973 at the inaugural Wath May Welcoming Celebrations, which became in time, Wath Festival. 51 years on, Wath Morris are still performing strong as seen recently at the SDU competition in Handsworth.

As you will see from the below, Wath Morris are very active over the Christmas season.
Wath Morris events programme up to the Christmas Festive Season:

Friday, 8th December - Mumming tour, Wath

Tuesday, 12th December - Dodworth Fire Festival

Sunday, 17th December - Wath Fire Festival:
   6.30pm Parish Church
   8.15pm Wath Rugby Club for songs and dance

Tuesday, 26th December - Boxing Day Tour: 11:00 am Dancing outside Wentworth Post Office; 11:30 am Carols in The Rockingham Arms 8 Main St, Wentworth, Rotherham S62 7TLs; 12:45 pm Dancing outside The Rockingham Arms; 1:00 pm Procession: 1:15 pm Dancing and mummers plays outside The George and Dragon; 3:00 pm Dancing at the Rugby Club, Wath: 4:00 pm Songs and tomfoolery!

Friday, 29th December - Ceilidh at Burlington Club, Wath. Advance tickets available and on the door

Saturday, 6th January - Wassail event followed by annual Feast

Practice nights:
Every Tuesday (October -April) (excluding 12, 19, 24 December) 8pm-10pm at Wath Rugby Club, Moor Road, Wath. “New members and visitors ALWAYS welcome.”
North Area Sides - contact and social media details

**Barnsley Longsword** Andy Cox  acox3630@gmail.com
Facebook: Barnsley Longsword

**Claro Longsword Morris Men** Barry Slaymaker  barry_slaymaker@yahoo.co.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/1926895320929282/

**Green Oak Morris** Ady Horan  greenoakdoncaster@gmail.com
Weblink Green Oak Morris Men, Doncaster - Home (weebly.com)
Facebook: Green Oak Morris Men
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/green_oak_morris_men/

**Great Yorkshire Morris** Bob Carter  bjcarter@ntlworld.com
Weblink Great Yorkshire Morris (wordpress.com)
Facebook: Great Yorkshire Morris

**Grimsby Morris Men** Nick Booth  bagman@grimsbymorris.org.uk
Weblink www.grimsbymorris.org.uk
Facebook: Grimsby Morris

**Handsworth Traditional Sword Dancers** James Merryclough  handworthsword@yahoo.co.uk
Weblink Handsworth – Traditional Sword Dancers (handworthsworddancers.org.uk)
Facebook: Handsworth Traditional Sword Dancers

**Harthill Morris** Lesley Ellam  harthill.bagman@gmail.com
Weblink Harthill Morris
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**Lord Conyers MM** Peter Yendley  lordconyers@gmail.com
Weblink lordconyers.org.uk
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**Spen Valley Longsword** Dave Webster  parkin4man@outlook.com
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**Wakefield Morris** Hazel Parker  wakefieldmorris@googlemail.com
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**Wath Morris** Tim Binns  wathmorris@aol.com
Weblink Wath Morris New (wath-morris.co.uk)
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**White Rose Morris** Dan Baker  bagman@whiterosemorrismen.org.uk
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