Hi Folks,

As this edition of the North Area Newsletter goes out I will be in Essex making merry at the Thaxted Annual Weekend of Dance (31st May – 2nd June). As none of my sides are attending this year, I have become an honorary Essex Boy for the weekend, playing for Colchester Morris who have a side of dancers but no musician. So, I have had to re-wire my brain as they play in different traditions. It has been a challenge – I find it harder to learn a different variant to a tune I know very well than it is to learn a completely new one. It takes significant concentration to overcome the muscle memory in my fingers. I am also curious how I will return to my traditional sides and having to reverse the process.

Coming up this month we have the Evesham National Morris Weekend, and I will be there with Lord Conyers and, having mastered (sic.) a couple of dances over the winter I will occasionally be putting my violin down and stepping out to Young Collins and a bit of the old Upton Stick Dance.

We had a couple of sides making the news in May – check out updates Grimsby Morris and Wath Morris below.

Whilst on the subject of folky news, you may be interested in Tradfolk. Tradfolk.co was put together to celebrate traditional folk culture now – folk music, folk dance, folk arts and crafts, even folk food as they exist today. I recommend it.

Link: Tradfolk - Folk Culture Now

Relevant to us is a full section on Morris Dancing, including news about Nude Morris. Check it out: Morris Dancing - Tradfolk

Tradfolk also includes a useful roundup of folk festivals: Folk Festivals Roundup, 2024 - Tradfolk

Please check your side’s details at the end of the newsletter to make sure I have your correct contact details, and website and social media links.

As usual please send your photos, news, and events to daznugent@sky.com to include in this newsletter.

Kindest regards,

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

Morris Ring Events:

10th August, Stratford-upon-Avon Day of Dance
23rd – 25th August, Saddleworth Rushcart
14th September, Dartington Day of Dance
28th September, Peterborough Morris Day of Dance
11th – 13th October, The Illustrious Order of Fools & Beasts Unconvention - Birmingham

Morris Ring website: The Morris Ring |

The Morris Ring on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/TheMorrisRing
North Area Side News / Upcoming Performances

Green Oak Morris Men

Green Oak Morris had a successful Doncaster Day of Dance on 15th May, joined in the morning by Makara Morris and all enjoyed the day and the glorious weather. The local newspaper mistakenly referred to our day of dance as the Day of the Dead Morris Dancing. Did they give something away? 😂

Photo copyright: Sue Smith 2024

Grimsby Morris

Grimsby Morris made the news with their performance at the Cleethorpes Folk and Cider Festival:

More than 70 faces at Cleethorpes Folk and Cider Festival - Grimsby Live (grimsbytelegraph.co.uk)

See link for list of events: Events | Grimsby Morris
Handsworth Traditional Sword Dancers

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

Handsworth Traditional Sword Dancers welcome anyone interested in having a go at their form of longsword, which is fast, energetic and dynamic.

Harthill Morris

Harthill Morris commenced their performance season on Sunday, 12th May, at the Ridgeway Farmers Market. This has become their traditional annual launch.

For all Harthill Morris events see below flier.
Lord Conyers Morris Men

For the last four decades Lord Conyers Morris Men have celebrated May Day Morn by performing Cotswold dances and singing Maying song at dawn. As the sun is about to rise, Lord Conyers, along with the select chosen of locals (i.e. the ones that turned up), attended at the Trysting Tree in a wood near Todwick, Rotherham.

At the beginning of the twentieth century at Todwick in South Yorkshire, an ancient oak known as the “Trysting Tree” blew down in a gale. This “venerable oak” was connected to the legend of Robin Hood and is mentioned in Sir Walter Scott’s classic novel “Ivanhoe” as the “great trysting tree in the Hart-hill Walk”. A replacement Oak was planted 50 years ago.

Lord Conyers Morris were surprised as the sun was about to rise by the appearance of a group of onlookers that arrived from within the wood itself. They never said a word but respectfully watched their performance and then quietly withdrew back into the wood.
The May Morn dances included a performance of the Bacca Pipes. Afterwards the side celebrated with a very early hearty breakfast in a local café that they had persuaded to open mega early just after dawn.

Upcoming performances for 2024:

Wednesday, 5th June, 8pm, Thundercliffe Grange, Grange Ln, Kimberworth, Thorpe Hesley, Rotherham S21 2SQ. With Wath Morris

Wednesday, 12th June, 8pm, Grey Horses Inn, Carlton in Lindrick, S81 9EW.

Friday, 21st June – Sunday, 23rd June 2024, Evesham National Morris Weekend

Wednesday, 26th June, 8pm, Travellers Inn, Oxspring, S36 8YJ.
Wednesday, 3rd July, 8pm, The Leeds Arms, South Anston, S25 5DT.

Wednesday, 10th July, 8pm, Hare and Hounds, Dore, S17 3GR.

Thursday, 18th July, 8pm, The Duke of Leeds, Wales, S26 5LQ. With Harthill Morris.

Saturday, 20th July, walking tour of Shardlow, 1pm-8pm

Wednesday, 31st July, 8pm, Crown & Cushion, Chapeltown, S35 1SS. With Lizzie Dripping

Friday, 9th – Sunday, 11th August 2024, Lord Conyers Morris Men annual weekend at Robin Hoods Bay.

Saturday, 24th August, Saddleworth Rushcart. TBC

Friday, 6th – Sunday, 8th September 2024, Bromyard Folk Festival.
As this edition goes out Wakefield Morris will be busy with their annual Ossett Beercart Festival, (31st May – 2nd June), with a beer festival on the Friday evening and all day Saturday, and dancing in the town on Saturday (with White Rose Morris Men dancing in attendance) and further dancing in Wakefield on the Sunday morning. I look forward to seeing the photos of that and hopefully get a report in the next edition of this newsletter.

This is their report for this month’s newsletter (thank you, Hazel): On Saturday 4th May, Wakefield travelled up the Calder Valley, through the mist and drizzle, to take part in the Todmorden Folk Festival. It was chilly, but the rain stopped, and we were able to enjoy meeting and dancing with a variety of other teams during the day.

The side danced on the Sunday at Holmfirth Folk Festival on 12th May and had a very enjoyable day in glorious sunshine with appreciative audiences.
Wayzgoose had invited us to join them at The Hare and Hounds in Rothwell, Leeds, on Tuesday, 21st May. The evening was a resounding success, and a repeat invitation has already been received and accepted for next year.

31st May sees us hosting our annual Ossett Beercart Festival. The beer festival takes place in Ossett Town Hall from 6 - 11 pm on the Friday evening, 11 am till 11 pm on the Saturday. Saturday starts with our procession at 10.15 am when 14 Morris teams of varying traditions will help pull the Beercart around the streets of Ossett before arriving in the precinct. Dance displays take place throughout the day alongside a craft market, children’s Morris workshop and other fun activities.
We have a slightly quieter month in June with just a couple of evening dance outs:

Monday 10th June, 7.30 pm at The George in Upper Denby with Cutlers Gate;

Monday 24th June with Slubbing Billys, 7.30 pm at The Blacksmith's Arms, Kirkheaton.

If anyone is interested in a Taster Session, both dancers and/or musicians, we are running one on the evening of Monday, 4th June, 7.30 - 9.00 pm in our usual practice hall: The Kings Way Methodist Church Hall, Kings Way, Ossett, WF5 8ET.

For the latest news on events, see link: WAKEFIELD MORRIS DANCERS DIARY 2024
May has been eventful for Wath Morris starting with four consecutive days of dance at Wath Festival and then at the opening of the garden Centre in Hooton Roberts. Wath Morris managed to get on Calendar News (just briefly) as part of the report on the festival and also on a Yorkshire Post podcast as well as a great write-up in the Sheffield Star about our performance at the garden centre.

South Yorkshire sun, plants, cake, Morris Dancers and the Mayor - what more could you want from a Bank Holiday Monday? (thestar.co.uk)

On Tuesday 21st May Wath Morris danced at Pastures Lodge and then The Gorilla Brewery, though on a dismal night even the “one man and his dog” audience failed to show.
The team are strong at present, being able to turn out over two sides to perform, plus their Morris Minor team who are in constant demand.

Future events:

5th June – Thundercliffe Grange with Lord Conyers (S61 2SQ). 8:00 onwards.

15th June – Ebor Day of Dance. There are nine teams performing: Ebor, Acorn, Five Rivers, Grimsby, Sallyport, Leeds, Blackheath, Leicester, Wath. Wath will be rotating around 3 spots in the middle of York (all walking) and then having a massed display.

22nd June – 15th annual Pretty Villages Tour. Tour of the Doncaster area. 6 venues on a magical mystery bus tour of “pretty villages”

27th June Travellers, Oxspring with Yorkshire Chandelier. 8:00 onwards

7th July – Hooton Pagnell Fete

6th – 8th September, Bainbridge family weekend

White Rose Morris
## North Area Sides - contact and social media details

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Contact Person</th>
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**Darren Nugent, Morris Ring North Area Rep.**
daznugent@sky.com
The Morris Ring

The founding National Association of Morris and Sword Dance Clubs