Hi Folks,

We're back!! I was unable to produce the last two editions (March, April) due to pressing circumstances at home. But that has now passed, and I am excited to be back fully involved with the Morris North Area Region, and especially about the performance season that really kicks into gear from May.

**Now is the Month of Maying**

Now is the month of maying,  
When merry lads are playing,  
Each with his bonny lass,  
Upon the greeny grass.

The spring, clad in all gladness,  
Doth laugh at winter’s sadness,  
And to the bagpipe’s sound,  
The nymphs tread out their ground.

Fie then! Why sit we musing,  
Youth’s sweet delight refusing,  
Say, dainty nymphs, and speak,  
Shall we play barley break.

(Thomas Morley)

There’s nothing more refreshing and heartening than waking up in the morning in the month of May with some Thomas Morely coming out of my speaker. *Now is the month of maying* is one of his most popular madrigals and I have it set as my wake-up alarm.

I like (and wake up to) the King’s Singers version, but it is fun to hear how different groups of singers reinterpret this English classic. Thomas Morley (1558-1603) composed another classic May Day madrigal - *About the maypole new* – which is equally refreshing.
As you receive this edition many of you will have completed your annual May Day celebrations. In the Morris world May Day is the most popular date for dancing and performing. It is when 43 per cent of sides regularly perform, according to the results of the Morris Census 2023 that has recently been published. The link with full details of the result of the 2023 Morris Census is included in the Morris Ring news below, along with an invite from Great Ring Squire Nigel Strudwick to join a seminar on the census later this month.

The three main organisations in the UK that support Morris and traditional dance teams are The Morris Ring, The Morris Federation, and Open Morris.

They come together as the Joint Morris Organisations (JMO) to discuss issues that affect all of their members, including access to both public liability and personal insurance cover. The JMO comprise committee members of The Morris Federation, The Morris Ring and Open Morris and other co-optees. Their objective is to collaborate on matters of interest to, or affecting, the Morris community as a whole.

Last October saw the 20th anniversary of the JMO. I didn’t get to the recent JMO day of dance in Newark because of my 2-month absence from the world of Morris, which is a shame because the event this year was fairly local (for me).

To celebrate the 20 years of JMO the Morris Federation produced a JMO 20th Anniversary edition of FedExtra, their in-house magazine. This special edition is a 16-page magazine crammed with JMO history and photographs. I thoroughly recommend you sit down with a tea/coffee/whiskey/beer/wine (delete as appropriate) and relax reading this wonderful tribute. And you can enjoy the happy photo of Great Ring Squire Nigel Strudwick on page 2.

See following link:

2024-JMO-20th-Anniversary-FedExtra-Updated.pdf (morrisfed.org.uk)

But back to this month’s newsletter – a big thank you once again for all your contributions, we have some amazing photos this month from Green Oak Morris and Wakefield Morris, and a haunting image from Lord Conyers Morris Men.

And again (drone, drone, drone) please, please, please, may I make another request to all the other sides in our region that rarely (and even sometimes never) get a mention in this illustrious magazine (okay – newsletter) to send me photos, stories, anecdotes, or if you prefer, just send me a link to your social media accounts that include coverage of your events (but only if you don’t mind me taking material from them for the newsletter). I know it is an old cliché, but this is your own regional newsletter for you to circulate news about your sides’ activities.
Every year for the last four decades Lord Conyers Morris Men perform back-to-back to celebrate the coming of May, starting with a performance of the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance at Robin Hood’s Trysting Tree, just outside Todwick, South Yorkshire, at sunset on May Eve. And then they are all up bright and early a few hours later and head back to Robin Hood’s tree for the sunrise celebrations. Photos of the sunset event are included below.

If your side partook in any May Day celebrations, please forward me photos and a brief description of the event as I am planning a May Day special edition of this newsletter for the June edition.

Kindest regards,

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

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About the maypole new

About the maypole new,  
With glee and merriment,  
While as the bagpipe tooted it,  
Thirsis and Cloris,  
Fine together footed it.

And to the wanton instrument,  
They went to and fro, both,  
And finely flaunted it,  
And then they met again,  
And thus they chanted it.

The shepherds and the Nymphs  
Them round enclosed had,  
Wond’ring with what facility,  
About they turned them,  
In such strange agility.

And still when they unloosed had,  
With words full of delight, both,  
They gently kissed them,  
And thus sweetly to sing,  
They never missed them.

(Thomas Morley)
Morris Ring News

Happy 90th anniversary to the Morris Ring!!

The Morris Ring was formed 90 years ago, in 1934, and currently has 180 morris, sword and mummers clubs and teams keeping our wonderful traditions alive. To commemorate the 90th anniversary the Morris Ring Bagman has redeigned the Morris Ring logo to incorporate the 90 in the centre.

The 2023 Morris Census was the 4th collected and analysed by Jack Worth since its inception in 2014.

The results are now in: Morris Census 2023 – the full results | The Morris Ring

Great Ring Squire Nigel Strudwick invites us all to join an online presentation of the key findings, on Monday 20th May, 18:30 – 19:30. “Please come along to the session to hear more detailed findings and join the discussion about what they mean for the future of Morris, sword and step dancing.”

Sign up using this Google form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSexu1YhlDh60XMGyN3gb0zi0c7...

Morris Ring Events:

11th May, Westminster Morris Dancers Day of Dance
31st May to 2nd June, Thaxted Weekend of Dance
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**

Sunday 5 May - Manor Farm, Worksop, S81 8JA. 12:15 to 14:15

Saturday 11 May - Day of Dance. Doncaster city centre. 10:00 to 15:30.

Saturday 3 August - Yorkshire Day, Kirkstall Recreation Ground, DN3 1HQ

Leaked picture on-set of:
Star Wars: Episode X - The Morris Menace.
(copyright Gerald R Stables 2024)

Green Oak Morris performed on Saint George's Day for the first time in many years. This included dancing some jigs and singing songs in a care home. A lovely day, but a challenge performing at 26°C!
Grimsby Morris

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 have retained three of their new members following their recent recruitment campaign (as reported back in the February newsletter) and all will be performing for the first time on Sunday 12th May at Ridgeway Farmers and Croft Market.

For all Harthill Morris events see adjacent flier.

HARTHILL MORRIS

2024 Dance-out Programme

May
- Sunday 12th, 12pm & 1.30pm
- Saturday 18th, 1pm & 2.30pm
- Thursday 30th, 8pm

June
- Sunday 9th, 1pm
- Thursday 13th, 8pm
- Thursday 20th, 8pm
- Wednesday 26th, 8pm

July
- Thursday 4th, 8pm
- Monday 8th, 7pm
- Saturday 13th, 12.30pm
- Thursday 18th, 8pm
- Saturday 20th
- Thursday 25th, 8pm

August
- Thursday 1st, 8pm
- Thursday 8th, 8pm

December
- Thursday 26th, 11am & 12pm

Please check our website for up-to-date information & any changes to the above programme: www.harthillmorris.org.uk

May 2024 Morris Ring North Area Newsletter
Lord Conyers Morris Men

For the last four decades Lord Conyers Morris Men have celebrated May Day Eve by performing the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance. As the evening approached sunset, 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 then rise early on May-morn to return to the tree and celebrate the sunrise on May Day with Cotswold dances and song. Details of our regional May-morn events will feature next month.
Planned performances for 2024:

Tuesday, 30th April, Horn Dance at the Trysting Tree, Kiveton Lane, Todwick, Sheffield.

Tuesday, 7th May, 7.30pm, Kiveton Park Folk Club, Kiveton Park Cricket Club, Stone Close, S26 6SQ

Wednesday, 22nd May, 8pm, Fat Cat, 23 Alma Street, Sheffield, S3 8SA, with Yorkshire Chandelier and Handsworth Traditional Sword Dancers.

Wednesday, 29th May, 8pm, West End Hotel, Westthorpe, Sheffield, S21 1EU

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.
Wakefield Morris

Wakefield Morris are busy preparing for their own major, annual event - the Ossett Beercart Festival, which takes place over the weekend of 31st May – 2nd June. There will be a beer festival on the Friday evening and all day Saturday, with dancing in the town on Saturday and further dancing in Wakefield on the Sunday morning.

Wakefield Morris had a fun day out at the Rhubarb Festival in Wakefield on Sunday, 18th February with their guests, Wayzgoose and Rackaback.
Saturday, 27th April, Wakefield Morris joined Great Yorkshire Morris for their walking tour of Leeds City Centre. An enjoyable day albeit a little on the cold side for April.

Wakefield Morris will be at Todmorden Folk Festival on Saturday, 4th May, and Holmfirth Folk Festival on Sunday, 12th May, with an evening dance out with Wayzgoose at the Hare and Hounds in Rothwell on Tuesday, 21st May.

For the latest news on events, see link: WAKEFIELD MORRIS DANCERS DIARY 2024
Events coming up:

3rd - 5th May 2024, Wath Festival
15th June 2024, Ebor Day of Dance
29th June 2024, Pretty Villages tour
6th – 8th September, Bainbridge family weekend

Practice nights:
Every Tuesday (October - April), 8pm-10pm at Wath Rugby Club, Moor Road, Wath.

“New members and visitors ALWAYS welcome.”

White Rose Morris

All events 8pm except daytime events marked in red

Wednesday 1st May: Castle Hill, Huddersfield (5.30am)
Wednesday 1st May: St George’s Square, Huddersfield
Saturday 4th May: Todmorden Folk Festival
Thursday 9th May: Old Shoe, Sheffield
Saturday 11th May: Golcar Lily Day
Wednesday 15th May: Riverhead Tap, Marsden
Wednesday 22nd May: Dukes Bar, Halifax
Wednesday 29th May: Holy Trinity Church, Holmfirth
Saturday 1st June: Beercart, Ossett
Wednesday 5th June: Bridge Gate, Hebden Bridge
Wednesday 12th June: Old Bridge Inn, Ripponden
Wednesday 19th June: St George’s Square, Huddersfield
Monday 24th June: King’s Square, York
Wednesday 3rd July: The Hideaway, Saltaire
Wednesday 10th July: The Hop, Leeds
Wednesday 17th July: Greystone Unity, Halifax
Wednesday 24th July: Sair Inn, Linthwaite
Wednesday 31st July: St George’s Square, Huddersfield
North Area Sides - contact and social media details

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

**Green Oak Morris**  Ady Horan  greenoakdoncaster@gmail.com
Weblink Green Oak Morris Men, Doncaster - Home (weebly.com)
Facebook: Green Oak Morris Men
X: https://x.com/GreenOakMorris?t=EfCaMc_pgSRdVBtwrNManQ&s=09
TikTok: https://www.tiktok.com/@greenoakmorris

**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
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**Handsworth**  James Merryclough  handsworthsword@yahoo.co.uk

**Traditional Sword Dancers**
Weblink Handsworth – Traditional Sword Dancers (handsworthsworddancers.org.uk)
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**Harthill Morris**  Lesley Ellam  harthill.bagman@gmail.com
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**White Rose Morris**  Dan Baker  bagman@whiterosemorrismen.org.uk
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Facebook: White Rose Morris

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

The founding National Association of Morris and Sword Dance Clubs