Hello Friends,

Well on the eve of May Day I’m sure you are all anticipating a great day tomorrow and I hope the weather is kind to you. I’m sure the Met Office are making this up for us tomorrow:

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>06:00</th>
<th>07:00</th>
<th>08:00</th>
<th>09:00</th>
<th>10:00</th>
<th>11:00</th>
<th>12:00</th>
<th>13:00</th>
<th>14:00</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☁️</td>
<td>☁️</td>
<td>☁️</td>
<td>☁️</td>
<td>☁️</td>
<td>☁️</td>
<td>☁️</td>
<td>☁️</td>
<td>☁️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

Whatever the weather I hope you all have a brilliant May Day.

Any how it’s fantastic to have news from Kennet and Westminster which you will see below. It would be great to hear from some of you too, maybe when you’ve recuperated from tomorrow’s events.

I have listed your contact details, as I have them, below. Please let me know if they are any errors or changes needed.

Also if you have any matters that you wish to be raised with the advisory council or the ring offices please feel free to let me know using this email address morrisringsouthmidlandsarearep@gmail.com

Morris on,
Roger Comley, South Midlands Area Rep, Morris Ring

**News from South Midland Sides**

**Kennet Morris Men:**

- The Kennet Morris Men began the year in our customary manner by dancing out on New Year’s Day, and wassailing the orchard of a Berkshire cider producer on the following Saturday. (The wassailing must work, as they recently won a CAMRA award for the best cider at the Ascot Beer Festival.) We enjoyed attending the Winchester Morris Men’s Feast in February, and later that month we hosted our own Ale after a two-year hiatus. We were delighted that it was so well supported by our regular guest sides, and also some past and present officers of the Ring. We have also given two private displays so far this year: a demonstration of Morris Dancing at Reading University for a class of overseas students on a Study Abroad visit, and a Morris Dancing instructional for a group of Reading Scouts.

- We continue to meet for practices on Monday evenings until the end of April, and we are working through our repertoire of dances in anticipation of a busier than usual May. For as well as our regular village fetes that we attend on the two bank holidays, we have two additional bookings over the coronation weekend.

**Letchworth Morris:**

- We had our last practice of the season on Thursday gone, and spent the evening running through our display dances for May Day. We are now (as I write) looking forward to a fantastic start to the dancing season tomorrow, when we will do our traditional dances at the maypole in Ickwell with Bedford Morris Men. We will then repair to Biggleswade for breakfast and dance in the market place before returning to Ickwell for their May bank holiday celebrations including a processional from Northhill to Ickwell where the May Queen will be crowned and there will be displays of various folk dances. We will then do some busking around the show ground before a final display and refreshment at the cricket pavilion.

- As well as returning to dancing out at some of our favourite pubs on Thursday evenings we are also looking forward to participating in the coronation celebrations in Letchworth Town Centre, Ashwell at home and Baldock Midnight Morris’ day of dance in the coming month.
Westminster Morris:

Westminster Morris Dancers are looking forward to the new season, which will also mark our 70th anniversary! We will be dancing over the Coronation Bank Holiday weekend 6th to 8th May, first on the Coronation Day itself then at a street party on the Bank Holiday Monday, both in Westminster.

We have been doing a few things over the winter as well as practising every week. In March some of us went to the Aldbury Ale, which was a lot of fun and featured the most enormous portions of fish and chips. We did not have any problem drinking a lot of the very acceptable Tring Brewery beers though.

A couple of days before that we were morris dancing on the radio when we featured on Chris Moyles’ breakfast show on Radio X ‘helping’ his assistant Dom Byrne celebrate his 50th birthday by teaching him a morris dance. This was a lot of fun and Dom was a good sport who made a very creditable attempt at Fieldtown Shepherd’s Hey jig. The video evidence is still there on the Radio X website, but quite hard to find - the easiest way is to Google “Dom Byrne 50 at 50”. Here is a photo of Dom with us outside the Radio X studio in Leicester Square - he’s the one wearing non-regulation shoes and holding his hankies up! It was a lot of fun and pretty well quadrupled the number of our Instagram followers to just under 900.

Our next big event is our Day of Dance, this year on Saturday 20th May. We are very excited to have twelve guest teams coming to this! Sadly, The Greater London Authority no longer permits all day bookings for Trafalgar Square so the main massed dances there will be between 12.30 and 1.30, so please do come and see us if you are in the area. In the morning and afternoon we will be dancing at various locations, around the area, including some good pubs.

We are also looking forward to the Thaxted Weekend of Dance in June; we were thrilled to be invited to it last year, after a bit of a gap, and it is great to be doing this again. In between all of this, we will be having our usual Wednesday evening tours from May through to July, all around different parts of Westminster, with one outing to the City of London. Details for all of these will be on our web page and social media. Do come along if you are in the area.

We thought of trying to mark our 70th anniversary by getting in touch with other 1952/53 teams to organise some kind of get-together, but sadly we just have not been able to do this, so apologies and happy anniversary to: Chanctonbury Ring Morris Men, Colchester Morris Men, Leicester Morris Men, Martlet Sword & Morris Men, Thames Valley Morris Men, White Rose Morris and Winchester Morris Men.

One of the reasons for this is that we are a small team - but we would like to have more
members. Over the last month or two, we have really noticed the “Boss Morris effect” with much greater public interest in morris dance and we have had more enquiries from potential dancers than before. Not all have stuck around, but at least they have tried it out and, hopefully, enjoyed what they did. So, thank you, Boss Morris!

We were sorry to learn of the death of Mike Wilson-Jones on 4th March at the age of 78. Mike had specified that there was to be no funeral or other commemorative event, but members of Westminster, joined by former member Tom Cronin, raised a glass or two in his honour after practice one week. An obituary appeared in English Dance and Song:


Find and follow us on:
Facebook: Westminster Morris Dancers
Instagram: @westminster.morris
Twitter: @morrisdancers
or see our web page http://westminsternorris.org

**Morris and Folk Events this month:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>7th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>11th</td>
<td>12th</td>
<td>13th</td>
<td>14th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unicorn Ceilidhs With Panadrum and New Esperance Morris</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th</td>
<td>16th</td>
<td>17th</td>
<td>18th</td>
<td>19th</td>
<td>20th</td>
<td>21st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22nd</td>
<td>23rd</td>
<td>24th</td>
<td>25th</td>
<td>26th</td>
<td>27th</td>
<td>28th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29th</td>
<td>30th</td>
<td>31st</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**South Midland Sides and Contact Details:**

**Abingdon Traditional Morris Dancers**
Harry Knight
bagman.atmd@gmail.com

**Adderbury Village Morris Men**
John Ekers
johekers52@gmail.com

**Bampton (Traditional) Morris Dancers**
Richard Broughton
bagman@traditionalbamptonmorris.org.uk

**Crendon Morris**
Pete Summerskill
crendonmorris@gmail.com

**Datchet Border Morris**
Harrie Hayward
bagman@datchetmorris.org.uk

**Etcetera Morris Men**
Jeff Hopwood
bagman@etcorrysmen.org.uk

**Grand Union Morris**
Dudley Wells
gum_bagman@hotmail.co.uk

**Greensleeves Morris Men**
Frederick Dunstan
bagman@greensleevesmorris.org.uk

**Headington Quarry Morris Dancers**
Dave Townsend
dtmellstock@aol.com

**Icknield Way Morris Men**
Jonathan Marriott
bagman@icknieldwaymorrismen.org.uk

**Kennet Morris Men**
Jon Holmes
bagman@kennetmorrismen.co.uk

**Letchworth Morris**
Andrew Harper
harperandrew937@gmail.com

**Oxford City Morris Men**
Duncan Drummond
bagman@ocmm.org.uk

**St Albans Morris**
Richard Hayes
bagman@stalbansmorris.org.uk

**Westminster Morris**
Sarah Crofts
newbagman@westminsternorris.org
Whitchurch Morris
Alan Hogston
info@whitchurchmorris.org.uk

Yateley Morris Men
Paul Lethbridge
bagman@yateleymorrismen.org.uk