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The Newsletter No. 45 July 2006

Hello,

The administrative stuff to start with:

As we approach the zenith of the dancing season with back-to-back Ring Meetings, Days of Dance and Festivals galore, I start with thanks to those of you who have contacted me regarding the revised format for the printed Newsletter. You all recognise the need for the change was dictated by changes to the postal charging structure and a desire to conserve Morris Ring funds. I have been reminded that there are many people who do not have access to computers so please be reassured that paper documents will always be available. This includes the Morris Ring Handbook which along with the Excel Spreadsheet of Officers (Present & Past), Member and Associate Contact details has replaced the Ring Directory. I remind everyone that even this Excel Spreadsheet is only as up-to-date as the information with which I am provided please let me know when your side changes Bagman or if your Bagman moves house, or email address or phone number

Thanks also to the three people who have contacted me about the **For Sale** section of the old Morris Ring Directory and the supposedly useful addresses. Please will YOU let me know if you have used any of these suppliers and whether

or not they are still providing good service. If everyone leaves it to everyone else they might be omitted from future editions.

Peter Kennedy died on 10th June 2006 in the Sue Ryder Home, Leckhampton, Cheltenham, UK. He played a key role in the folk revival in the UK in the 1950s and 60s through his song, dance and tune books, recordings and broadcasts. A sad loss, one of the last surviving links with Cecil Sharp, Maud Karpeles et al he was also a very nice man.

Correction: In Newsletter No 44 I incorrectly attributed the obituary to Nibs that was published in The Times to Derek Schofield. It was, in fact, written by Ron Smedley. Thanks to all who raised this error with me and my apologies to all concerned.

Personnel News

There will be A celebration of the Life of Nibs Matthews - a programme of dance music and song - held at Cecil Sharp House on Sunday 17th September. There will be displays from Headington Quarry, Bampton (Daniels/Shergold side) and Stone Monkey Rapper. Other items to be confirmed.

Donations in Nibs memory can still be made to the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library.

Repeats / Reminders:

- All known Morris-related web sites: http://www.sapphireswan.com/dance/links/morris.htm
- Sidefinder: http://www.morrisdancing.org/finder/sfcgi.html
- The Black Book tunes:
 http://www.themorrisring.org/More/Tunes/index.html
- Archive News 1 Photos

Duncan Broomhead is now responsible for the Morris Ring Photo Archive - please remember to send him photographs.

- Archive News 2 Past Ring Meetings
 Visit http://www.themorrisring.org/Archive/previous_rings.html to see a
 definitive list of all the 305 (or so) Ring Meetings to date.
- Stewarding:
 Stewards need to be trained & licensed. 3 days training at approx £250 each.
- Marshalls need no training but MUST NOT BE REMUNERATED not even a free ticket or a couple of pints.

- The 1847 Town Police Clauses Act. This obscure legislation allows a Local Council to close a road. It should cost you nothing unless a police presence is required.
- The Licensing Act 2003 Please let Ring Officers know of any specific problems so that we, along with the other Morris Organisations, can monitor the true implications of this legislation.

The Licensing Act 2003 at paragraph 11 of schedule 1:

Morris Dancing etc.

- 11 The provision of an entertainment or entertainment facilities is not to be regarded as the provision of regulated entertainment for the purposes of this Act to the extent that it consists of the provision of
- (a) a performance of Morris Dancing or any dancing of a similar nature or a performance of unamplified, live music as an integral part of such a performance, or
- (b) facilities for enabling persons to take part in entertainment of a description falling within paragraph (a).

The effect of this is that Morris dancing (or dancing of a similar nature) is outside the scope of the Licensing requirements for regulated entertainment in the Act, in all circumstances; its accompanying live music will simply be outside the scope of the Act, provided it is unamplified.

TREASURERS RAMBLINGS.

The only message from our Treasurer is his concern that we still have five sides who have not yet renewed their annual membership subscription leaving themselves without Public Liability insurance. He does not feel it appropriate to publish a list of shame but it is awfully tempting. These five have now had emails and an individual snail mail letter a month ago (11.06.06).

Thaxted Milestone

The dancing at the Bull Ring in Thaxted on Easter Monday 2006 was the 85th consecutive time that there has been dancing on a bank holiday in Thaxted

Thommo

Other Issues / Topics / News

The Vaughan Williams Memorial Library has launched VWML Online. Indexes to the collections of some of the best-known folk music collectors of the twentieth century are now available on the Library's website - http://library.efdss.org This is the first stage in a longer-term development to make all the Library's catalogues and indexes available online through the EFDSS website.

The Vaughan Williams Memorial Library (VWML) is owned and maintained by the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS). Access to the Library is available to all. Members of the EFDSS enjoy free access, while non-members can pay a daily fee to use the Library. The Library has its origins in Cecil Sharp's personal library which was bequeathed to the Society. Over the years, the Library has been added to by purchase, donation and bequest, and now covers all aspects of folk music, dance, song and custom from Britain and Ireland, America and beyond. It includes books, manuscripts, archival and commercial sound recordings, films and videos, photographs, periodicals and artefacts. It is the country's national folk music archive, comparable to the American Folklife Centre at the Library of Congress.

The main Library website is www.efdss.org/library VWML online is available via a link on the main site, or on http://library.efdss.org

For further information contact Malcolm Taylor 020 7485 2206 ext 29 or Email VWML

Morris Man featured in NME. The Young Knives (band formed 2000, genre "modern Jazz" with punk influences), who were on a nationwide tour between the 1st and the 13th of June were featuring a Morris Man in their publicity. See the New Musical Express (NME) 13th May 2006. Following a recent series of photoshoots (the photographers' subjects ranging from Whittlesea straw bear to Cumberland Wrestling) the NW foreman of John o Gaunt Morrismen was featured in full kit in the tour ad. He may well be on their album cover too! Watch this space!

Ann Tanner (temporary Baglady to John o Gaunt Morrismen)

Simon Matthews You can sponsor him via his website (and find out briefly explaining what he is doing) or in person. Why not invite him to come and dance in your area. http://www.justgiving.com/monkeymcdouga

How good is your geography?

Rich Holmes, on a web-based *Morris Dance Discussion List*, recently drew attention to the range of high-definition map sites that pinpoint the homes of some of the dance traditions. I include them for your information (and delight?)

Sherbourne

http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&hl=en&t=h&ll=51.828146,-

1.744155&spn=0

.004157,0.010836&t=h

or http://tinyurl.com/ag5rh

Wheatley

http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&hl=en&t=h&ll=51.747757,-

1.138973&spn=0

.00833,0.021672&t=h

or http://tinyurl.com/aup9y

Abingdon

http://maps.google.com/maps?f=g&hl=en&t=h&ll=51.669574,-

1.28334&spn=0.

.016688,0.043344&t=h

or http://tinyurl.com/bjlea

Longborough:

http://maps.google.com/?ll=51.964789,-

1.740131&spn=0.004396,0.009656&t=h&om=1

(or <http://tinyurl.com/mm5zf)</pre>

Oddington:

http://maps.google.com/?ll=51.930255,-

1.67151&spn=0.008799,0.019312&t=h&om=1

(or <http://tinyurl.com/qe5qb)</pre>

Chipping Campden:

http://maps.google.com/?ll=52.051224,-

1.778734&spn=0.008775,0.019312&t=h&om=1

(or <http://tinyurl.com/mkbch)</pre>

Bledington

(Unfortunately, is only available in low-resolution.)

Thanks to Rich Holmes

Number 38 in Hit Charts! Morris Men on record sleeve which has reached no 38 in the singles charts!

Two members of John o Gaunt Morrismen, John Slinger and Peter Livesley, feature on the sleeves for 7" vinyl singles released by The Young

Knives (A side "Shes attracted to.." B side various). I can not vouch for the music not my taste exactly but the record sleeves and accompanying postcards are good. John is in a changing room and Peter is doing DIY in his front room both in full kit! Take a look in your local HMV or on Amazon.com They are also due to feature on the sleeve of the forthcoming album - Voices of Men and Animals

World Record "Next Foot Up" Long Distance Morris Dance

"Well, it's over!" Despite being plagued with inflamed tendons from Day Three onwards thanks to the ministrations of Debbie, Bens physio, he will be submitting a claim to Guinness World Records for a verified distance of 146 miles and 294 yards danced over a period of seven days. We have been truly amazed at the amount of support and goodwill that we have received over the past weeks. I would especially like to thank Nissan UK and Swindon Hyundai for the loan of vehicles; The Trumeter Company for the loan of calibrated measuring devices, and the many other individuals and companies who have offered sponsorship.

- Lots of Thanks: Ravensbourne Morris for all their help and support not only on the event itself but for all their time and effort during the previous months.
- Bob Cross, the Squire of The Morris Ring, and all the other adjudicators who gave up a week of their time to witness the event.
- Morris sides from The Ring, The Federation and The Open Morris who sent representatives to meet Ben along the road.
- Headington Quarry; Windsor; Charlbury and Faithful City for their wonderful hospitality.
- Liz and Charlie the catering team. Debbie the physio who did such a wonderful job in keeping him more or less mobile.
- Jodie, Bens wife, who has been a tower of strength to Ben ever since he had the mad idea in the first place.

Now, all we need is for the sponsorship monies to make the event really worthwhile. All Morris clubs have been sent sponsor forms and it is hoped that we will receive a good response. If you would like to make a donation, sponsor forms are still available on line or you can donate directly via www.nextfootup.com or contact Roger Dauncey on 01883343773. Also available is the Ravensbourne CD The Next Foot Up; a Tee shirt and a Badge for a bundle price of 15.00 also available from Roger Dauncey.

Broadwood Morris Men St Georges Day celebrations 2006

"This year St Georges Day fell on a Sunday which gave us a whole day to celebrate in. At 1pm Broadwood were invited to perform a Mummers Play outside the Plough in Rusper (which we consider to be the sides home village) so we polished up our summer play the one in which St George kills the dragon. We also danced Shoot the Dragon (of course) and enlisted a local damsel to bring it back to life with a kiss, followed by the rest of the team who had also succumbed.

Next, at 2pm-ish we took ourselves off to one of the three small breweries in Horsham, Weltons, where the owners were keen on us helping advertise their St Georges brew. We met up here with friends from Magog Morris and both sides danced inside (as it had begun to rain), helped taste the new brew and some of the supplied cheese. At about 3.30pm we repaired to the centre of Horsham where we danced in the Carfax the rain now having eased off. We had been informed that the local Scouts, Cub Scouts, etc were having their St Georges Day Parade in the Parish Church, which meant their parents would be wandering around the town and we would be assured of an audience. When the scouts finished in church they too came to watch.

As we were now feeling a bit in need of refreshment we repaired to the local Cricket Club for a traditional meal of sausages and mash, followed by apple pie and custard. Our number also included members of Stane Street Morris, Sun Oak Step Cloggers and the Folk Club.

In the evening the four Morris sides danced at the Folk Club, and Folk Club members sang appropriate songs. A brilliant evening to round off a long but splendid high profile day.

Bob Weddell, Bagman, Broadwood Sword and Morris Men.

The Countryman

Kathleen Ambrose has written an article about the Morris that appears this month. She has contacted several people over the last month with a series of questions. From the look of the article she seems to have used our web site to help. It is certainly very positive, and pretty accurate for once.

John Maher, Overseas Bagman & Morris Ring Web Master

HOP HOODENING IN CANTERBURY Saturday 9th September 2006

"Hop Hoodening" is a celebration of the hop harvest held annually in Canterbury. Its origins are not in the mists of time but the early 1950s when hop growing was still a significant industry in Kent. For some years the event has been organised by the **Wantsum Morris Men** who maintain the tradition of the "Hop Queen" who processes in a bower decorated with hops and is accompanied by dancers and musicians.

The days activities begin with a service in the Cathedral at 11a.m. when the hops are blessed. Then there is dancing in the Precincts and City when anyone who contributes to the collection is given a sprig of hops. If you would like to participate, please contact David Stephens (Tel: 01843 591701, email below) and arrive in the Precincts at 10:30a.m. If, however, you just want to watch, go straight to the Cathedral or catch up with the dancers in the City.

David Stephens, Bagman Wantsum MM

WANTSUM MORRIS MEN at 40

The Wantsum Morris Men will be 40 next year and they shall celebrate the occasion with their flagship event, "Hop Hoodening", in September 2007. They are determined to include all their founder members and anyone who has at one time or another been a member of the side. If you are one such person and have yet to receive an invitation please contact Dave Stephens. (See above)

Devils Dyke MM on BBC

DDMM were included in the BBC's "Video Nation" project on May Day. You can see how at

http://www.bbc.co.uk/cambridgeshire/videonation/index.shtml. (Its worth a look. *CC*)

Nigel Strudwick Devil's Dyke MM

The Illustrious Order of Fools and Beasts

Dear Humans,

The official Web Site of "The Illustrious Order of Fools and Beasts" is now on line at www.foolsandbeasts.org.uk

As the webmaster, I would appreciate information about the order, pictures of events, current and past members, etc. to add to the site. This is preferred by electronic methods, but items sent by post will be returned. Particularly important are entries for the Gallery of Fools and the Gallery of Beasts. These should be non-copyright pictures and a few lines about the character. For "Past" beasts, some indication of their location, or demise, would be of interest. I know various lists exist, but not all are in the public domain. The order is a Ring organisation that welcomes input from any Morris or other traditional characters and the web site is designed to reflect this, so any relevant pictures will be included.

I look forward to hearing from you at the email below.



Knotty (Hobby-horse to Stafford Morris)

RING PUBLICATIONS

Harry Stevenson: Editor of the Morris Circular

Erin House, 59, Olivers Battery Road North, Winchester 5022 4JB. Mobile 07775 785271

Tel: 01962 855911

Email: Email: Harry Stevenson

Editor of the "Morris Dancer". Post currently vacant

Warning!

At Rose & Castle Morris weekend, held at Ashton near Northampton over the first weekend of July, a lot of property was stolen. Whilst everyone was out touring the local villages, on Saturday, the rugby club where they were encamped was raided, and at least 2 caravans were

stolen and other caravans and vehicles were broken into. Amongst the missing items were several musical instruments. **Stolen:**

- 48bass Galotta Accordion, with the digits "75" somewhere in the serial number.
- Steel stringed Guitar (no real distinguishing marks)- a 21st birthday present some years ago
- Pickup with battery inside.
- Nylon Stringed guitar.
- A Castagnari MORY tuned C/F, with single strap, in a brand new BLACK CASTAGNARI RUCKSACK. The Mory is about 10 years old and is well played. It has the Castagnari metal nameplate on the front and the arc of raised wooden pieces on the front grill. Finished in CHERRY wood and has Velcro strips to accept a pick up. It is tuned in C/F with the half row to individual specification.

If you come across anything please contact Northampton Police on 08453 700 700 quoting the incident number (567) and date of the incident (1st July 2006).

Our sympathies are with those whose weekend was ruined especially those who lost much loved instruments. It is easy to be wise after the event and although there have been minor incidents in the past this was clearly a well-planned raid. The Morris Ring advice has to be to leave somebody, or better still some people, on site to make it obvious that someone is there. Some sides have used a security firm before, but, it does rather raise the profile. It might be better to keep things low key, and make sure nobody leaves valuable things on site in tents/caravans/cars. Bob Cross



Help? Are you a wiz with a video? Dave Brewster is acting organiser for a foreign trip that Chanctonbury Ring MM are proposing to undertake this autumn. In order to promote the country and tourism the festival organisers would like the side to be accompanied by a suitable journalist video man. Could this person be you or someone you know? Contact Dave for further information

This was part of a recent Pimms promotion! http://www.anyoneforpimms.com/summertour/gigguide.htm

Future Ring Meetings

If your side might be interested in hosting a Ring Meeting to mark an anniversary or simply because you want to please ask me for a set of guidelines

2007

 2^{nd} - 4^{th} March ARM Hosted By Leicester Morrismen 14^{th} April '3 Orgs. Event. Birmingham 1^{st} - 3^{rd} June 309 Thaxted Ring Meeting 29^{th} June 1^{st} - July 310 Ripley 25^{th} Anniv. Ring Meeting 20^{th} - 22^{nd} July 311 Stafford 50^{th} Anniv. Ring Meeting 31^{st} Aug - 2^{nd} Sept. 312 Tonbridge Ring (Geoff Metcalf) Meeting

2008

7th - 9th March ARM - Hosted By Wadard MM Provisional

TBA 313 Thaxted Ring Meeting

11th - 13th July 314 Mersey MM 90th Anniversary Ring Meeting

TBA 315 Whitchurch MM 60th Anniversary Ring Meeting

5th - 7th Sept. 316 Dartington MM Ring Meeting

2009 - THE MORRIS RINGS 75th ANNIVERSARY

6th - 8th March ARM Hosted By TBA

TBA 317 Thaxted Ring Meeting
TBA 318 Harthill Ring Meeting
TBA 319 Exeter Ring Meeting

<u>2010</u>

5th - 7th March (?) ARM Hosted by TBA

TBA 320 Thaxted Ring Meeting

2011

4th - 6th March (?) ARM Hosted By TBA

TBA Thaxted Centenary Ring Meeting

TBA Bristol 60th Anniversary Ring Meeting

2012

3rd - 5th March (?) ARM Hosted by TBA
TBA Thaxted Ring Meeting

TBA Hartley 60th Anniv. Ring Meeting

Instructionals

It is still NOT too late to offer to host and / or organise an instructional this Winter.

Sat 14th October - Three Morris Organisations Joint 'Instructional' At the last meeting of the Officers of the three Morris Organisations it was apparent that there was some demand for a Foreman/ Officers ideas / method swap event (perhaps the word instructional is misleading here). Based in Rickmansworth Village Hall with teas, coffee etc in the hall and a local pub for lunch. Three sessions are planned:

Press releases, articles for papers, TV radio stuff etc. Gavin
 Atkinson, ex Seven Champions, musician with Florida Ceilidh Band

- and Journalist by trade (he edits British Medical Journal, a number of sailing mags and is a PR whizz for a variety of orgs.)
- Funding and Money. Steve Rowley, dancer, all round good finance chap.
- Announcing, Voice Projection and interacting with the public: Chris
 Pitt (he sings but is a recognised Ceilidh Caller plus Prize winning
 "Tommy" with Newcastle Kingsmen.

If you are interested and want to know more contact me and I will get back to you as soon as final details of cost, booking arrangements are confirmed.

Have you been harbouring a secret dream of trying Longsword? At their successful workshop in April the Sword Dance Union (whose remit is to help other organisations when Long and Short sword is being considered) took 'Innovation' as the theme, three sets developed some fantastic ideas encouraged by Ivor Allsop (Ex Ring Squire and EFDSS Gold Badge holder) and sowed seeds for the future. They are planning to run a Longsword Tournament, at Kelham Island, Sheffield, 17th October 2006. This will involve workshops, dance swops, "old dug up texts reworked by old dug dancers", along with a competition to replace the Darlington and Whitby, complete with trophies and prizes.

For further information contact Phil Heaton

Fools and Beasts Unconvention (hosted by Letchworth) Dates confirmed as 27^{th} - 29^{th} October at Old Walden, nr Biggleswade, Bedfordshire. Usual Workshops, Saturday Tour etc., room only for 35 delegates, indoor camping at the Village Hall. Cost approx. £50 pp.

Longswords and Rappers.

Following a couple of enquiries of sources of swords. The two principle suppliers of such artefacts are Colin Moxon and Frank Lee. Both are as good as each other and are equally recommended:

Colin Moxon, Flaxdale Products, 19, Flaxdale Close, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire, HG5 ONZ.

Tel: 01423 866613 ~ Em: N/A ~ Web: N/A

Frank Lea, Leafiled, Market Place, Brampton, Cumbria, CA8 1TL. Tel:

016977 2649 ~ Email: Frank Lee

Web: http://www.rapper-swords.co.uk

Sticks: A Leicestershire coppicing worker is expanding his range of Hazel coppice products to include the supply of Morris sticks. Cost: from £1.50 each (70cm long 3cm diameter) and discounts are available for quantities over 20 in one order. Email: Ben Chester or Mobile: 07947 363976



Please respond to the website contact - not me!!

4 - 11 August 2006

Last year Sidmouth Folk Week exceeded all expectations for its first year under new management. This year there's an even bigger line up of events, including concerts, ceilidhs, social dance, workshops, showcases, a full programme of children's events, crafts and more. Folk week runs from 4 to 11 August 2006. You can read all about it at www.sidmouthfolkweek.co.uk

With all these embarrassments of riches comes the need for reliable, enthusiastic venue stewards. Stewards staff venue doors, check and sell tickets, watch out for everyone's safety, look after customers and make a big contribution to creating a successful, friendly festival.

We still have vacancies for people to work in the large number of venues across the festival, from marquees to theatres, concerts to workshops, and dances to storytelling; the list goes on and on! Both season and individual event tickets are selling fast; we're expecting a very busy, vibrant festival with something for everyone.

Stewards get a free season ticket, free camping, free bus travel around Sidmouth, a lot of respect and big thank yous in return for 4 to 5 hours work a day. If you're interested visit our website and download a stewards application form. If you've any questions email Simon on simon@spoerer.freeserve.co.uk or Alison at alison.duncan@bigfoot.com; we'll get back to you as soon as we can.

London 2012 Up-date from Steve Heap (Director)

FOLK ARTS ENGLAND

"Steve recently had a meeting with Jude Kelly, Chair of Culture, Ceremonies and Education, London 2012 and she expressed a great deal of interest in folk roots music and traditional culture. The plans for the Olympics are starting to gather steam with the appointment of Bill Morris as director of culture, ceremonies and education.

"John Clifford and colleagues have completed their Caper West project funded by Awards for All and submitted a copy of the CD to Jude Kellys office. The project is a result of collaboration between nine schools and to quote dance director Kim Woodward "This project adds that London 2012 Olympics provides a unique opportunity for children across the country to learn and perform the traditional and quintessential English Morris dance". For more information go to website www.thegreatcaper.co.uk

"In other areas we hear of folk roots and traditional music clubs and activists starting to look at ways in which they can involve themselves with the ceremonies and education programmes. Dont forget the real activity gets into full swing straight after the Beijing closing ceremony in 2008, an education programme throughout the country lasting the whole four years, so we are not just focused on opening and closing ceremonies. "Back at my meeting with Jude Kelly, she did say "It will be a couple of years before we get down to this area of work in any detail, lets get Beijing closing ceremony out of the way first then we will talk more". This doesnt mean to say we should all sit back and forget it. Ideas, discussions, thoughts, plans and preparations for submission should without doubt continue and we here at FolkArts England of course will continue to report anything we hear through the pages of Folk Arts England news and our bulletin board."

CONCLUSION

Keith Ashman contacted me with this gem:

"I know the morris is now being appreciated by a much wider audience, but was surprised by this request we received last week. Fortunately (or unfortunately, depending on one's viewpoint) we did not have enough men interested or available to dance.

To: Manchester Morris Men

Subject: Cabaret Night - looking for morris dancers

Hi, I run a monthly cabaret night in Manchester and I'm currently looking for Morris Dancers for a date in May - the theme is along the lines of a village festival (more specifically about ritualisation The vibe of the night is fairly tongue in cheek and fun.

We have on the night a group of witches, a couple of poets, a pole dancer dressed up as a pagan sacrifice (an albino weasel) along with a troupe of burlesque girls - I would love to add a morris dancing troupe to the number.

The performance area is relatively small so I think only 4 could appear. I'd like them to do a 15min - 20min performance as well as performing as backing dancers for our headline band. I look forward to your response.

I repeat my offer to use this newsletter as a means of communicating with other sides in the Morris Ring. I cannot pass on News if I dont receive any.

Enjoy the rest of the Dancing Season and please dont forget that the Ring Archivists likes to receive copies of your programmes, photographs taken, media coverage, etc..

Bagman of The Morris Ring

Remember: Unless you pass on the content of this Newsletter to the Men in your Side, the information stops with you.