Greetings,

This final Newsletter of the 1998 season is somewhat longer [my apologies], but there are a number of matters that have to be covered [as well as the Bagman’s ramblings!!].

Firstly, may I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Similar greetings from the Daniel Fox, The Squire of the Ring, are included within.

A list of Sides who have applied for Ring Meetings is provided. Please check that I have received your application for 1999. A brief summary of the contents is again enclosed. Please copy this to your Side, or leave this full copy around for them to peruse.

Also enclosed with this mailing are:

- Application forms for the ARM and the Archive Meeting.
- Two pages of amendments to the Directory.
- Details of the Notes for Guidance on Elections – see also comment within.
- Notes on Morris 2000 [Morris in the Millennium] and an opportunity for some funding.
- For Members of the Advisory Council, the Minutes of the Meeting on 14 November.

The Treasurer is grateful for the prompt response by most Sides to the call for subscription payments. Have you remembered your SUBSCRIPTIONS – the full rate now applies [Full £45 – Associate £35]. Remember: NO PAYMENT MEANS NO INSURANCE.

Stop Press: - The Ring Jigs Instructional is Fully Booked. Information from Bert Cleaver [Tel: 01226 241 551].

Remember: Unless you pass on the content of this Newsletter to the Men in your Side, the information stops with you. Pass it around - copy it – read it out – précis it – whatever …. but let the Men know that the Ring does communicate to you and hence to them all!!
THE SQUIRE’S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

“As John has said elsewhere in his newsletter, visits to Plymouth and Headington have been among the highlights of the past couple of months. I appear to have a gap between Christmas and New Year in Morris events, though I will be dancing with Thaxted in Thaxted on Boxing Day – with at least one dance in The Bullring whatever the weather.

“This gives me the opportunity to wish all dancers, musicians, fools and beasts a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. I look forward to your company in 1999. I hope that many sides will be able to attend the ARM in Bedford on 6th March.

“We need your support for events to mark the Centenary of Cecil Sharp’s meeting with Headington Quarrymen and the dreaded millennium, which prompts the question: who else thinks the current millennium ends on 31/12/2000?

“Continue to flourish, Daniel Fox, Squire of The Morris Ring”


An application form for the 1999 Annual Representatives Meeting is included with this Newsletter. The ARM itself will be held on 6 March 1999 at Daubeney School, Kempston, Bedford. We have kept the price to a minimum – the basic price is less than last year!!

There has been only one nomination for Bagman, and no formal motions. The three Area Representatives due for re-election at the subsidiary meetings, are all willing to stand. The Midlands and North Representative, Geoff Thompson, will be Stateside for a year or two and is standing down - David Thompson, of Ripley, is prepared to stand. The London area Representative has stood down – there is no current volunteer, and we will take soundings prior to the ARM as to the way forward for the [few] London area clubs affected.

We are also arranging to fill the Saturday afternoon gap [when some vanish to reconvene as the Advisory Council] with constructive activity. We anticipate an instructional taken by Roger Nicholls – probably covering the three set dances from Hinton-in-the-Hedges.

VOTING ARRANGEMENTS AT ARMs

At the ARM last March, it was suggested that there be a review of the Voting arrangements.

This review was undertaken by Past Squire, Geoff Jerram, with input from John Burke of King John’s Morris Men. The Draft was discussed at the Advisory Council Meeting in November and some minor amendments were incorporated. It was agreed that as these “Notes for Guidance” did not require any change to the Constitution, and that they would be circulated to all Sides. A copy of the “Notes” is therefore enclosed with this edition of the Newsletter.

The procedures will be used as required in the future.
ARCHIVE MEETING, 7 MARCH 1999.

This will be held as a Sunday “follow-on” after the Ring ARM. Outline details and an application form are enclosed – further details in the next Newsletter.

We hope to be able to show various “historical” film at the Archive Meeting and possibly at the ARM, including some provided by Simon Melvin, Squire of Bedford, who has raided his father in law, Nicolas Wadworth’s home movies.

Taken mainly in the 1960s, these included colour [no sound] shots of Padstow, Minehead, Abbots Bromley, Headington, Brackley, Bampton, Chipping Campden, and Abingdon. They also include the Farnborough Morris, dancing their own tradition and the shots include a youthful Roy Dommett – the victim of the camera for once, rather than being behind the lens – dancing both the “Farnborough” Tradition, and featuring in a Mummer’s Play. Much to my delight, there is also a black and white sequence of a rapper instructional [probably at Cecil Sharp House circa 1967] which features the Bedford side, with Past Ring Squire, David Welti.

These films have been transferred to video for ease of viewing, and comprise some 65 minutes of fascinating material. Hopefully, a modest contribution to the transfer costs will be negotiated to allow copies to be produced for the Ring Archive and further distribution.

Stop Press: The Director of the East Anglia Film Archive is the latest speaker to be recruited for the Archive Day. He will cover the preservation and storage of old films and video.

RING MEETINGS – 1999 - APPLICATIONS

Applications had been received from the following Sides by the “official” deadline date.


The applications of these Sides will be processed first. The majority should get their first choice. The Silurian and Long Man Meetings have been oversubscribed, some will be unfortunate. These Sides will be offered their second choice, or a chance to make an alternative application - and will get priority next year. There have been some late applications, these will be subject to availability of space. There is still some space at the Leicester and Thaxted Meetings.

CORRECTION -- LEICESTER RING MEETING is from 10 - 12 September 1999

A list of Sides at each meeting will, hopefully, be included in the January Newsletter, but by that time most Sides should already have learned their fate. There may be some delay on the Silurian Meeting information, as the original venue is no longer available. However, Silurian can be seen every evening with bricks, mortar and trowels building an alternative – and when they know how big they can build it – they will know how many Sides can be squeezed in!!!
FUTURE RING MEETINGS

For those contemplating hosting Ring Meetings, the bookings are already stretching into the future. There is space for one more in 2000; [2001 is overfull]; one in 2002 and possibly one in 2003. Naturally things can change – if you are contemplating celebrating an anniversary, it is worth thinking well ahead. There are opportunities to host the ARM from 2000 onwards.

THE WEB – www.TheMorrisRing.org

Remember that there is a vast amount of Morris information that can be accessed through our web site. Chris Metherill’s Archive pages include the original version of Sharp’s 1st edition.

The site also facilitates alternative Morris Ring E-mail numbers to contact the Bagman – and NEW THIS MONTH – the Treasurer – see Newsletter Header.

OUR IMAGE

The following appeared on a Morris discussion page on the Web: -

“I went on tour yesterday with lots of other teams. Now we all got on well, except one team whose arrogance was really something. You know, pushy and looking down on everyone. The ultimate was when they pushed in front of a women’s team with the statement they’re only women so they can f*** off. And they were a Ring team. Just the sort who give all the rest a bad name. It is true that another Ring team there were absolutely charming. It could be said that you find arrogant teams everywhere, but it led me to think about the incident on the way home. The arrogant team had no features in their dance to make them superior. They were a good team, but not outstanding. Clearly they lacked self-confidence and this was their problem. It seems to me that unfortunately men’s teams who lack confidence tend to lurk within the Ring, hiding behind all the Ring’s rules and traditions. It is these groups who tend to perpetuate the old ways. The new threatens them in some way. It is a very right wing attitude. How can it be turned? Or is the fact that increasing numbers of male teams are leaving, or not joining the Ring sufficient. So that in the end it will just become anachronistic and of no relevance, which would be a shame as the Ring has some worthy features. Keith Leech”

There had been one reply:

“I know of a Federation side who behaves exactly as Keith has described! Peter Cripps, England’s Glory”

However, if this is how others see us, it is something we need to think about. Whatever our various views on the other Morris Organisations, we can be courteous – if you don’t like other dancers, go somewhere else to dance!! The other Morris Organisations appear to be very tolerant of our views, and indeed understand them. If we are to market the Morris effectively, we need to present a concerted face to the outside world, not a bickering one, and certainly not a discourteous one.

OTHER EVENTS  [non-Ring, but Ring Sides welcome]

Scarborough Fayre: 28 May – 6 June 1999. Most Sides will have already been “circularised”. Details from Jim Clarke, Tel: 01944 738422  Email: jimclarke@morris99.demon.co.uk.
OTHER MORRIS ORGANISATIONS ARMs

The Morris Organisations keep in touch and attend as observers at each other’s AGMs. I attended both the Morris Federation and the Open Morris AGMs as the Ring’s observer.

I was pleased that, in common with us [and all clubs] there was good-hearted discussion – some of it somewhat suitably inconsequential.

The Federation held their AGM in the wilds of Grassington, North Yorkshire. I was interested that they have an individual grade [with voting rights] and this does now seem to give them some problems – the keen “groupies” having a potentially significant input. At least the Ring’s “one club, one vote” keeps the Ring subservient to the Clubs – and whilst individuals can have their say [and long may that continue], it is the Clubs that dictate the policy of the Ring.

After the Federation AGM, there was an opportunity to discuss some areas of mutual interest – in particular Morris in the Millennium, of which more elsewhere.

The Open Morris met near Liverpool. A smaller gathering dealing mainly with business matters, but was followed by some useful discussion of areas of mutual interest and activities in the Millennium.

We are fortunate to have excellent relations with the other Morris Organisations. There is a fine spirit of co-operation, but with an understanding tolerance of our own Traditional views.

MORRIS IN THE MILLENNIUM

Following a meeting after the Morris Federation AGM, some guidelines for Marketing Morris in the Millennium were laid down. The Morris Organisations agreed an outline policy for the celebrations. A copy is enclosed. The Ring PR advisor, Adrian Wedgewood, has provided some input into the wording, in order that they show a positive “spin”!!

These guidelines have been very mindful that some members of the organisations may want to do their own thing – or have nothing to do with any combined events. However, hopefully, most Sides will find this to be constructive, feel it reflects what they do anyway, could not see what anyone is worrying about – or just could not care less!!

As far as possible “Dome” activities go, the Ring contact and “Dome-master” will be Paul “Monty” Montague, Bagman of Yateley [see current Ring Directory - Tel: 01276 20817]. He has kindly volunteered to be the co-ordinator of any information on the Millennium Dome. He will also keep in touch with the other Morris Organisations to ensure any Ring views are heard. Please get in touch with him if you have any ideas or information.

A FIRST REGIONAL EVENT – YORKSHIRE 2000

Ebor Morris have already indicated that they will be co-ordinating an event for Yorkshire clubs in York from 8 – 10 September 2000. Invitations and details will follow by Christmas card in due time. For information: Paul Sanderson Tel: 01904 796958.
ROY HORTON’S FUNERAL

A sad visit to Exeter in September to say farewell to Roy Horton. He was Bedford’s Fool for many years and was latterly collecting and Fooling for Exeter. A very good turnout of Exeter and Bedford Men [including Past Ring Squire David Welti], and Plymouth’s Fool.

A quiet Funeral Service in Exeter was followed by a cheerful memorial service in Seaton. Roy’s regalia were on the altar, together with the presentation plate of Honorary Membership of Bedford – presented only a few weeks earlier at the Exeter Ring Meeting. He had been determined to make that event – and he did.

After the service, two Sides danced “Orange in Bloom”, and then as Roy’s role in selecting “victims” for Brighton Camp had been mentioned in the service, an Exeter side, augmented by two extra Bedford Men [for Roy always chose such cuddly wenches, that we had to increase our lifting power] danced that dance – and bravely Roy’s widow, Yvonne, allowed herself to be led into the dance by Roy’s successor as Fool at Bedford, and was raised up at the end of the dance – Roy would have enjoyed that!! A buffet followed at a local hostelry.

“Shag” Graetz from Pinewoods Morris in USA writes:-

“Today (22 Sept) arrives the latest Ring Circular. Most welcome, except that it carries the news that my old friend Roy Horton has died. Roy was instrumental in making me feel welcome on the Bedford team in 1974 -1975.

“I will miss his openness and great sense of humor - my favorite memory: on the day of the Bedford ceilidh, Roy had been at Twickenham to watch the Bedford rugby team in the knockout final. He just made it back in time to take his part in the mummers play, getting a thunderous cheer with his opening lines,

   In comes I, I’m Doctor Clark,  
   I’ve just seen Bedford beat Roslyn Park

“I last saw Roy in 1992 at Bedford Ring Meeting. It’s saddening to know it was the last time.”

YOUR NEWS

Brian Padgett of Stockton Morris made the Times Magazine [15 August] events page with a mention of his course at the Billingham International Festival. The reporter’s final quip was less pleasing - “The week … brings together folk dancers from across the world. And, hopefully, keeps them from cluttering up our more touristy pedestrianised town centres for a week.”

Fuller details from South West Representative Dudley Binding who has visited Helier Morris in the Channel Islands as well as Vancouver Morris in Canada, whilst on holiday travels. He is contemplating claiming them for the South West Region – and wonders whether our esteemed [and miserly!!!] Treasurer would sanction travel expenses. [OK Steve, I said NO!!]. Helier’s “Mushroom Mines” should be in the running for “most unusual practice location”. His visit to Vancouver was mentioned in the last edition – but this coincided with their weekend of dance, and they were able to join the Saturday night Morris and Folk festivities. He reports that both Sides are a credit to the Morris Ring. -- Remember if you are travelling overseas, there may well be a welcoming Morris Side – contact the Overseas Bagman, John Maher for details.
Congratulations to East Suffolk Morris on their 40th Anniversary. Among other events, the Side gathered for some dancing and drinking in Ipswich on 12 September.

Offley Morris were visiting and dancing in Bingen am Rhein in Germany in September – no more details but they did produce a very fine German language version information leaflet – you can read all about “Cecil Sharp … im Jahre 1899 im Dorf Headington …”. Peterborough Morris have also been visiting Germany – and their leaflet includes the German translation of more traditional rhetoric “Let the Magic of the Morris bring you health, wealth and long sticks of red rhubarb”? They assure me the Germans saw the joke – perhaps it reads better in German!!!

Stafford Morris produce their own newsletter, and use it to disseminate relevant parts of this Newsletter to their Men. Well done – keep the information flowing. Their Squire, Peter Morgan, reported some recollections of the Chipping Campden Meeting: the farmhouse cider at the Monkey House at Defford – complete with flies [but to his liking!]; and the complete population of White Ladies Aston watching the dance of that name – they both enjoyed it!!!

FOOLS AND BEASTS UNCONVENTION - PLYMOUTH - 23 – 25 OCTOBER 1998

The 1998 “Unconvention” was hosted by Plymouth Morris Men, who together with their guests from Dartington Morris Men were to provide the foils for the antics of a set of frenetic Fools and Animals. Your correspondent waved his pen and paper and bluffed his way into the heart of this privileged gathering.

The weekend was based in a Victorian Artillery Fort, designed to protect the rear of Plymouth from the incursions of the French. It is being restored by the Landmark Trust to its original external condition – with parts being converted to offices, workshops and holiday flats. We were housed in the old barrack block – which was still under restoration. Lighting was by jury-rigged cables and floodlights. The sparse “facilities” were across the parade ground, which meant some intrepid night time trips through rain and flood!!!

Friday evening was gathering and drinking time – for we had not yet realised the distance across that parade ground!! Amongst those present – apart from Fools and suchlike – were Squire of the Ring Daniel Fox; and Past Squires Tim Sercombe and Ivor Allsop [and video]. Besides our home grown Fools, there were Fools from Holland, both Utrechts and Helmond, and the USA.

Saturday had been forecast to be wet – and we had tropical storms, wind and torrential rain. The outside dancing was called off – as was the boat trip – and we expected a lazy day in the pubs of Plymouth. Oh no! Alternative venues appeared from nowhere – before we had even ordered our second pints [draft Bass straight from the barrel – I would have never moved on, but they promised a brewery lunch spot!!!].

The alternative venues included the Dartington Glass showroom and shop. The vision of two horses and a dragon or so in a glass shop is potentially even worse than a bull in a china shop – [note to Ring Treasurer – are we insured for glass? or would it count as self-inflicted wounds?]. We also danced and fooled in the foyer of the Plymouth Dome - an underground theme park next to Plymouth Hoe and Smeaton’s lighthouse – and the mime play at this spot was superb.

Lunch was at said brewery pub, the Thistle Arms of the Sutton Brewery. Lunch was washed down with “Fools Ale” or “Fool’s Ail” [depending on the pump clip], which had been specially brewed for the occasion – and sold at a special [low] price.
After lunch we invaded a craft fair. After being consigned to the lobby by the management, a vote among the stall-holders admitted us – on the grounds that there were far more of us than they had seen customers all day [yes, that wet!!!] and we might buy something. Some did [but Fool’s tend to be gullible!!!] and the Trigg Horse highjacked some packets of dip-mixes under the impression that they were free samples!! Peace was restored by application of folding stuff.

The Morris dance high spots: - Plymouth dancing their specialities: their four man dances, especially devised for hard times, when potential men had been “press-ganged” leaving the Side short of Nos. 5 and 6; also their cutlass dances, including a “Bledington” style “Skirmish” with naval cutlasses. Two Fools, who possibly near proved the old adage that their own Sides could well be six Fools and a single dancer, treated us to a fine double jig, “I’ll go and enlist”.

Back to the Fort for tea – scones and jam and lashings of real Devon clotted cream. Then after a rest [and a few samples of Ivor’s home made wine] off Eastward to the Westwood Arms [St Austell Brewery Ales] for the Feast. This surprised of some other diners – expecting an intimate supper – who found they were serenaded with speeches and songs - and later collected from!! Our guest – the Fort Director, attended resplendent in his “kit”, a Victorian Artillery Officer’s uniform. We finished with dancing in the bar and some jigs, before taking the low road home – the higher bypass being closed to buses because of the gales.

Back at the Fort, time for many more songs – echoing around the barrack room – and much enjoyed by said Director - and a few more beers, until long after your correspondent retired.

Sunday was theory day – and various Foolish topics were discussed. Afterwards the Fort’s gun crew – all in Victorian uniform, fired a large breechloader down the fort ditch with a satisfying bang. All in all the whole weekend went with a bang; we may have been foolish to be there on such a wet weekend and finished up living and looking like animals, but it was a seamless feat of fine organisation despite the weather.

Well done to all involved – I thoroughly enjoyed myself – I must get a bladder [and a capacious one indeed, if parade grounds are to be so extensive!!]. A thank you to our Plymouth hosts; their Fool - the infatigable Julian Kohler, and to Eric Pressley, the Convenor of the Fools Union.


This year’s Headington Ale had transferred out of the Quarry [a booking problem at the Mason’s Arms!!] but was in the plush surroundings of the Bowls Club, somewhat closer to where Headington had first encountered Cecil Sharp.

After the toasts, an ex-Squire’s medal was presented. This was for the late Jim Phillips [Squire of the Ring 1958 - 1960]. Squire of the Ring, Daniel Fox, presented it to his son, Roger Phillips [a current member of the Headington Side]. In his few words Daniel produced a family connection with Headington: his father had been presented with a set of bells by William Kimber, some 75 years ago in 1924.

The Squireship of Headington passed, after some 8 years, from John Graham to Anthony Parsons. The guest of Honour, the Rev Tom Honey, vicar of Headington Quarry proved to be an old friend of Leonard Pepper, the present Bagman of Whitchurch.

Guest Sides present included Winchester; Oxford City; Icknield Way and Mr Hemmings from Abingdon. All danced a spot. The Squire and Bagman danced Fieldtown “Nutting Girl” [further
reminder to Bagman – attend Jigs Instructional!!]. Some fine Headington Jigs and Bean Setting were performed by the host Side.

Also present at Headington were Past Squire Nibs Matthews; also Ron Smedley, who had produced the BBC folk dance videos, including the one on Morris featuring Headington that were broadcast in the Spring. They both have Bedford connections: Nibs is a Honorary Member [the Bagman currently wears his old presentation baldrick] and Ron mentioned that he also had a Bedford baldrick, having danced with Bedford whilst stationed at RAF Cardington “in Fred Hamer’s time”.

The Headington Men look forward to the Centenary, on Boxing Day next year, of their meeting with Cecil Sharp in 1899.

OUT AND ABOUT

The season of practices – but I was able to visit some final end of season dance outs as the last Newsletter went to press.

A joint evening in Taplow, hosted by Datchett Border Morris and with guests, Kennet Morris. This being late in the season and with the nights drawing in, Kennett had brought candles and their fool had a miners lamp on his hat!! Candles tucked into hatbands of straw hats seemed somewhat hazardous – but were removed for dancing!!! However, the pyromaniac evening progressed with the ceremonial burning of one straw hat that was well overdue for replacement – it proved extremely difficult to ignite – perhaps the candlelit Morris would have been safe!!

The following night Gloucestershire Morris was subjected to a second visit on there final night of their season. A most hospitable welcome as usual – and that Trunkles again [and with mind on autopilot – I forgot the “distinctive” third corners despite discussing the same a moment before!!!]. The final Bonny Green appeared to include everyone in the audience – certainly there was no audience left that I could see. The singing was excellent. Also guesting, and in good voice, Peter Contrastano of Black Joker of Boston – he commutes between us & the US!!

Later that week a visit by Offley to the former mine host of their post practice pub – who now runs Bedford’s post practice pub [although he has now moved on again!!!]. With a few Bedford Men, I visited our home ground as Offley’s guests on a cool night – but we acquitted ourselves well in emptying their ceremonial brass beer jug.

Joined East Suffolk for their 40th Anniversary gathering. The Starr Report was featuring in the papers that day; it was droll to find ourselves dancing outside Clinton Cards and opposite the Tool Shop!! The weather was not kind – but additional dances were performed in the pub. Various jibs were danced with various degrees of competence – your Bagman showing the least. [Reminder – Bagman to visit the Jigs Instructional for some coaching!!].

Rather better weather for the Peterborough Day of Dance. After dancing in town the Tour embarked on a Long Boat [complete with barrels of real ale] for a cruise to the lunch dance spot. Whilst waiting for a lock to fill, we danced Cuckoo’s Nest, Bledington on a 6 foot wide pontoon; dancing on a Bouncy Castle is kids’ play compared to keeping one’s balance [and avoiding a ducking] on a narrow pontoon!!

We returned via another riverside pub spot, for a final spot in Peterborough and cakes and tea to sop up the ale. Also in attendance and fine fettle: The King’s Morris [with songs from their musician, David Jackson]; and Milton from near Cambridge.
Family duty [moving daughter’s fitted wardrobe] meant I missed Letchworth and Woodside dancing at Knebworth. Fortunately, I arrived in time for a chat and a pint or two [from a choice of ten real ales]. Letchworth’s Fool, Roger Comley, managed to sell an old Bedford booklet [at double our normal price] to a passing Australian – we split the profit!!!

Dancing with Bedford on home ground, for the Bedford Beer Festival, provided a photo-opportunity when ex England Rugby player, Mick Skinner, turned up to do a report for Rugby World prior to the Bedford-Quins match. Bedford was recruited to teach him a dance. A Bromsberrow Heath stick dance was rapidly walked through, and performed, much to the amusement of all, and the fright of your Bagman, who had a partner twice his size wildly waving a large stick!! Two photographs featuring the happening appeared later in “Rugby World”.

The evening was spent in a calmer state at the Anker Feast. A most enjoyable evening and a calorific Feast – the Morris Tart is apparently not a pudding item – but an enthusiastic Musician/Fool who will accompany any Side overseas!!! Those present included Past Squire, Roy Yarnell, Past Treasurer, Richard Sinclair and representatives from Jockey, Green Oak, Letchworth [a thank you to Fool Roger for providing door to door transportation!!!], Coventry, Shakespeare, Southport Sword, Packington, Earlsden and Man Friday. A little excitement was caused, for some, by the beer-taps, which pointed forward and not down, and tended to shoot straight over the proffered tankard with disastrous effect on the breeches!!

A convenient brace of meetings in Bristol and Wells meant I was in Mendip territory on their practice night. Some 20 plus Men spent an energetic evening of Lichfield, Adderbury and Bledington dances – Mendip’s Bledington’ised version of “Mrs. Casey” being most enjoyable – even if it strained the brain somewhat!! A reviving jar, or three, at the adjacent hostelry followed. They asked that Circular readers be appraised of the fact that in the report on the Exeter Ring Meeting, the portrait of Tim Sercombe [see photograph captioned “Tim” on page 16] was presented by Mendip and not Ripley. Having promised to correct the record, they ensured that I was returned safely to my hotel and that drinking limits did not have to be observed! Thank you Mendip.

More meetings in the South enabled a visit to King John’s at Southampton [not St. John’s as I managed to call them in the ARM Minutes!!!]. I was worked very hard, from an initial comprehensive warm up, through Cotswold, Border and North-West dances. On the subject of warm ups – these are very worth while – and whilst we might like to be macho etc etc, on cold evenings and concrete floors, the more we can do to stretch muscles and warm up the better – it can save some nasty strains and pulls. Many thanks to John Burke for both accommodation and the further legal advice that he continues to provide to the Ring on matters regarding “Street Collections”; “Drinking in the Streets” and other like topics. If you have a problem with the sword through your cake being classed as an offensive weapon – you will find that he has already advised the Ring!!!

Mid November and as publication date approaches a flurry of activity. The Advisory Council convened in Birmingham [a Report on Election Procedures is given elsewhere] was followed that evening by a choice of events. The Bagman and Treasurer attended the Rutland Feast. The Squire was at the Whitchurch Feast.

KIT MANUFACTURE
**Dudley Binding** – and **West Somerset** need a source of purple baldrick material – this is to provide a lighter weight “summer” kit than their tabards when they make trips to hotter French climes. [Have you tried William Tolson Ltd. – see Useful Addresses in the Ring Directory?]

More urgently, he also needs to find “a professional purveyor of inexpensive baldricks” who can turn this material into said baldricks at a reasonable price – to save imposing on their Squire’s mother-in-law. If anyone can help, please contact Dudley Binding [Tel: 01984 631476].

**THE DIRECTORY**

Amendments are listed on a separate sheet – they come in fast and furious at this time of AGMs.

Remember to communicate any changes of Bagman [or any other changes] to me, and to copy this information to your Area Representative. A form was provided with the last Newsletter.

Our humble apologies to **Alford Morris** and **Wyvern Jubilee Morris**, both of whom were edited out of existence in the present Directory and Mailing List. Welcome back. Hopefully they have now both received a large parcel of back number Newsletters.

Well done to Ring Treasurer **Steve Adamson** for tracking down these errors – well let’s be honest – he was after the money!!! If anytime your Side stops getting mailings – ask why!!!

**PUBLICATIONS SCHEDULE**


**IN CONCLUSION**

Many thanks as usual, to all those who have written in with news and contributions – keep it up.

Meanwhile a very happy Christmas to you all, and well-filled bags on Boxing Day, Plough Monday and whenever else in the New Year.

**Wassail,**

John Frearson
Bagman, The Morris Ring
The Bagman’s Newsletter - No. 5 – Nov 1998 - SUMMARY

The Fifth 1998 Newsletter includes:

THE SQUIRE’S CHRISTMAS GREETING.


VOTING ARRANGEMENTS - new guidelines have been circulated.

RING MEETINGS – The applications for 1999 Ring Meetings are summarised – has your Side applied yet.

THE WEB – www.TheMorrisRing.org – is up and running. Some quotes from the web dealing with our image are reported. Chris Metherill is making Morris Archive material available on the site. We now have Email redirection for the Officers via this number.

OTHER MORRIS ORGANISATIONs’ ARMs – The Bagman attended both the Morris Federation and the Open Morris AGMs as the Ring’s observer. Notes for Marketing Morris in the Millennium were laid down and agreed by The Morris Organisations and are included with a contact number to register for grants for events to celebrate the Millennium. A first regional event, in York for Yorkshire sides is already being organised.

FOOLS AND BEASTS UNCONVENTION - A report of this event hosted by Plymouth.

NEWS - includes reports of Stockton; Helier [Channel Islands]; Vancouver [Canada], Offley and Peterborough visiting Germany; and Stafford. Also the Headington Ale when the ex-Squire’s Medal for the late Jim Phillips medal was presented to his son, Roger Phillips.

ARCHIVE NEWS - Simon Melvin, Bedford, has converted archive film from the 1960s to video. These include colour [no sound] shots of Padstow, Minehead, Abbots Bromley, Headington, Brackley, Bampton, Chipping Campden, and Abingdon. Also a black and white sequence of a rapper instructional [probably at Cecil Sharp House] featuring Bedford.

OUT AND ABOUT – the Bagman visited Exeter for Roy Horton’s funeral; a report with some words from “Shag” Graetz of Pinewoods Morris, USA is included. The Bagman has also visited:- Datchett, Kennet, Gloucestershire, Offley, East Suffolk, Peterborough, Letchworth and Woodside, Bedford, Anker, Mendip, King John’s, and Headington

FIND OUT MORE - ask your Bagman to show you the full Newsletter!!!

Wassail,

John Frearson
Bagman, The Morris Ring