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The Newsletter No.51 September 2007

Hi All,

I hope that you have all had a successful and enjoyable summer - even though it has been rather damp in places. On a personal level I have enjoyed the variety of the meetings of the Morris Ring as each was different in its own way. My only regret is that more of our membership cannot be tempted to try the experience.

I am rather disappointed that so few people are tempted by the fame awaiting star reporters. In other words I cannot produce a newsletter if you do not supply me with news - trust me, you do not want simply to read about where I have been and where Leicester Morris Men have danced, even though we have had a fantastic time both on our own patch frequently with our neighbouring sides and away as guests of the Jockey Morrismen etc. at the Big Morris Caper in Brum, Forest of Dean Morrismen in the Forest, Leeds Morrismen in the Dales, Coventry Morrismen in the West Midlands, the Lobster Potties in Sheringham and all sorts of people at Bromyard. So if you don't want a regurgitation of my diary then send me your news, appeals, adverts for future events - anything that is Morris-related that you think might interest other members of the Morris community.



Three Generations of Garlands dancing a Jig at the 312th Tonbridge "Geoff Metcalf" meeting of the Morris Ring

To business - I will start with news of the ARM. Hosted by Waddard the 2008 ARM has been booked for the weekend of 29th Feb, 1st & 2nd Mar 2008. The venue is Hopehill Scout Camp site. <http://www.hopehill.org.uk/>.

For this ARM we need nominations for our next Squire of the Morris Ring. Also due for election / re-election are the posts of Treasurer of the Morris Ring and Area Reps for the West Midlands; North West and South West & Wales.

The current post holders being:

Treasurer of the Morris Ring:	Stephen Adamson BfB
Area Rep.: West Midlands	Kevin Downham
Area Rep.: North West	Duncan Broomhead
Area Rep.: South West & Wales	Dudley Binding

A nomination form for all these roles is included with this Newsletter or downloaded from the Morris Ring website. I can also provide information about what all of these honorary roles entail but if you are interested why not talk to the current incumbent.

With the paper version of this Newsletter you will receive paper copies of the Draft Minutes of the 2007 ARM. They are also available on the Google site.

Morris Ring Google Group: A reminder that I no-longer email the electronic version of this Newsletter -I simply put it onto the Group Site ⁽¹⁾ and all Bagman (and others who have signed on) will receive notification that the Newsletter is available. I hope that each Bagman will email it on. Don't worry - I am still posting out a printed copy for hand distribution to UK-based sides and any individuals whose subscription entitles them to receive them ⁽²⁾. With the printed copy of this edition Bagmen will receive (or will have received!) two documents from the insurers of the Joint Morris Organisation (JMO)

- Advice to Bagmen regarding insurance
- Ceilidh & Folk Band Liability Insurance

These are welcome up-dates providing invaluable information - please ensure that the Officers in your side at least have carefully read through them. I will take the opportunity to remind you neither Steve Adamson nor I are allowed to discuss, comment upon or give advice about any insurance matters. This is not us being awkward or difficult it is the law. All questions must be directed through Michael Stimpson whose contact details are on the leaflets.

(1) **Morris Ring Group Site.** http://www.themorrisring.org/google_group/
All Member and Associate Side Bagmen, Morris Ring Officers, and others by request are now signed up to the Ring Group. If you want to find out more John Maher has provided simplified instructions on the Morris Ring web site. However - a plea - general communications with the Squire, Bagman and Treasurer and other individuals should be still be carried out via individual emails, the phone or even snail mail and not via this Group.

(2) *Further details of publication subscriptions for individuals are available from Steve (BfB) - contact info above.*

Charity Status I have been asked about this several times in recent months so to clarify. The Morris Ring does not have a charity number as we (in common with the Morris Federation and Open Morris) cannot be a registered charity due to the complexity of the various sides who are members. To be a charity we would need to share a common side constitution, have centrally held audited accounts, have a common goal, etc. and whilst we all have a lot in common it is not close enough for the Charity regulations.

Geoff Sutton. Oakworth Village MM A wonderful chap with an irrepressible sense of humour died earlier this month after a long battle against cancer. At his funeral service on Monday 10th September Geoff's wishes for people to come in Morris kit but with NO BELLS was honoured - he had said that he did not want to be disturbed!

John Butler Fool of Ripley Morris. Leicester MM were as gutted as everyone else over John's tragic death. He was a lovely bloke - we have shared many days of dance with Ripley over the years and he figured large in all of them - especially in our battle to get off the bus on the Lutterworth Days of dance to reach the bar first.

His funeral, held at St Wilfrid's Church, Kirkby in Ashfield on Friday 3rd August with Morris friends in kit was a celebration of John's life. The wake was held in John's local - The Duke of Wellington. The church was packed - people standing four or five deep around the walls and queuing outside. A real tribute to the popularity of the man.

Jim McCaffrey of 'Richmondshire on Swale Morris Men' died in hospital last month. Jim was always the life and sole of any Morris event he attended and has been sadly missed by all over recent years. This is a link to the write-up of his funeral in the Northern Echo:

http://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/search/display.var.1545877.0.dancers_gather_for_fitting_send_off_to_morris_fan_jim.php

John Burke - an up-date. John was taken ill and found to be suffering from a rare and virulent form of pneumonia which has caused problems with his breathing and kidney functions. He has been receiving substantial medications and his condition is now improving. He is cheerful and cracking jokes, but his body almost gave up on him.

Christine, his wife, wants to thank all those who have sent wishes for John's speedy recovery. He is now on the road to recovery, but suspect that this will be long and arduous!

The Olympics 2012. In the last Newsletter I quoted Paul Reece when he said:

"The Cultural Olympiad in this country will start on 24th August 2008 to coincide with the handover ceremony in Beijing. A UK-wide festival will start then in the build up to the games and will continue beyond 2012 as a legacy of the games. Eight Regional Olympic Officers are supposed to be in post by the end of this July and most local authorities have already an assigned officer who may be able to give support to your training and recruitment for your Morris projects towards this long term event on a local, regional or national basis involving yourselves or a group of sides"

"Torch routes, long distance Morris, and a focus on ports are some of the ideas that may form a starting point for Morris involvement to complement the showcase Morris events being planned between now and 2012 by the Joint Morris Organisations."

Traditions such as the Morris are being represented in discussions with "the organisers" by Steve Heap. You will get a flavour of the current situation from this letter that was circulated back in July:

Dear Colleagues,

The National Campaign for the Arts recently organised a meeting with Tessa Jowell and others to discuss the current position and movement within the Olympics and Paralympics planning groups. I attach here the questions and answers from that meeting and a list of interested parties.

FolkArts England were unable to attend but we were able to send a question which was not asked at the meeting but which has been forwarded to Tessa Jowell since she took up her new role as the minister for the Olympics and London. I'll let you know if we get a response. The question was, "could the minister confirm that London would not break with the modern Olympic tradition by including the traditional heritage and culture of music, dance and song of the host nation."

Hope you find this useful. There are lots of things starting to happen, some of which are noted in these papers, not least of which announcements on June 21. I am hoping to achieve a meeting with senior members of LOCOG in the near future and will keep you informed.

Best Wishes

Steve Heap
Director. Folk Arts England

This is a topic that seems to create a lot of interest but few answers. We have received very little response to his request:

"If you have ideas or plans to use this to put the Morris on the map and engage youngsters let us hear about them."

We ought to play some part in the fringe cultural events at the very least but if we don't have suggestions / ideas to put forward as a foundation for further discussion we don't stand a chance. It is no use putting it off because it is years away or that it is someone else's responsibility or in 2012 there will be a lot of wailing and gnashing of teeth and people members of the Morris Ring saying "if only we had.....".

Please discuss it with your side. What do you / they think we might offer to do? Then let your Area rep, (or even Paul, Steve or myself) know what you think. Be honest - if you think we should simply keep out of it, fine - but let us know so that a. We don't spend hours working on ideas and schemes that you want nothing to do with or b. even more embarrassing we don't make arrangements for Morris Ring sides to do this, that or the other only to find that you have changed your minds.

Another reminder from Newsletter No 50.

The Great Caper. This Caper West project aims to train up youngsters to dance the Morris not just for the 2012 Olympics but beyond. The Great Caper is an attempt to roll out this programme across the country moving first to the southern counties. Help with this project was requested and needs the ongoing

support of the Morris Ring - all our futures depends upon the promotion of the wider Morris and recruitment.

The **Junior** event is taking place this weekend in Bristol (Sat 22nd Sept). The version planned for Sat 3rd Nov. in Christchurch, Dorset has had to be postponed but look out for rearranged date

Adults have their chance with **Creating the Leaders, The Future of Morris** at Kingswood, nr Bristol, on Sat. 17th Nov. Aimed at those already working with young people to give them a chance to see the different types of dance, have a go at some of them and hopefully take their new found enthusiasm back to their groups and try Morris with them.

Too late for the 22nd Sept. but if you as a side or as an individual would like to get involved and assist with the Great Caper national project contact Kim or Paul directly on 0117 940-1566

Further details for the entire above see: www.thegreatcaper.co.uk

Honesty? Let's be honest here - whilst many members of current Morris Sides (not just Morris Ring Sides) are the wrong side of fifty and therefore not presenting the image of youth and vigor that the Olympians of 2012 might seek - amongst our numbers resides a vast store of knowledge and experience of the Morris that we are honour-bound to share. The youngsters deserve the chance to experience the pleasure that so many of us have had from the Morris over the past decades. It is not just about a few potential recruits to 'your' side or whether there might be girls in the group - we have to be bigger than that and think of the greater good and, yes, the future.

Handbook. I reported in the last Newsletter that the Handbook had been updated with far fewer addresses of companies etc. as they had not been endorsed by users. And that it was available by email or post upon request. I received three requests. It is now available via the Morris Ring website. Please do let me know if you use the various contacts and services - to ensure that they are still worthy of inclusion in the future.

Morris Ring Directory (Contact list) We are constantly up-dating this electronic directory but it is still only as accurate as the information we receive. Please ensure that as we hit the main season for AGMs and changes of side Officer / contact you keep the Morris Ring informed of changes. A hard

copy can be provided where a Bagman does not have access to a computer but it will be out of date. An up-to-date excel copy is almost instantly available to Bagmen by email.

A word about our title: THE 'MORRIS' RING from Steve (BfB). "I know that we all verbally refer to ourselves as THE RING, but in text and all publicity material I believe that it is important that we strive to get our proper term and title correct. **THE RING** was a film made in 2002 and released in this country in 2003 and we are not 'THE MORRIS RING OF ENGLAND' as this will upset, amongst others, Banchory-Ternan and Isca Morrismen - not to mention our 'Colonial' sides."



Skagen Folk Festival 2007

It started with a love story! In the mid - 1970's two members of the Shakespeare Morris Men visited Denmark where they met two girls and were so enamoured that they stayed. So in 1977, they formed the first and only English Morris Dance group in Denmark, the Silkeborg Morris Men.

The Silkeborg MM joined the Morris Ring and held a very successful Ring Meeting in 1996 with well over 100 dancers from UK attending. This was so successful that they decided to celebrate their 30 year anniversary by joining forces with a long established Folk Festival in the very tip of Denmark at Skagen (pronounced *skane*) in Jutland and by inviting a limited number of teams to attend from the UK.



So, the 102 men Shakespeare MM, together with Benfieldside MM, Bristol MM, Coventry Mummings, Exeter MM, Kings MM, Ilmington MM Thaxted MM, & Victory MM and even one man from Santa Barbara MM in the USA, travelled by car, ship & aircraft to Denmark for the Skagen Folk Festival, which was

held between 6 & 8 July 2007. But Jim Chapman of Ilmington MM & Jack Neal of Bristol MM didn't get there the easy way: they set out from the UK on the previous Sunday and arrived on their bikes on Thursday evening! They arrived tired, thirsty & hungry but, surprisingly, not complaining about sore bottoms! Most of the men flew out to either Aarhus from Stansted or Aalborg from Gatwick. It was quite a sight at 5.30am at Stansted to witness lines of men in Morris hats and sweaters queuing for their flight.

The teams were treated royally by the Danes, who collected us from various ports of entry, and more than adequately fed & watered for 3-4 days; quite a feat of organization for the festival volunteers in a small town like Skagen, with less than 10,000 inhabitants.

Despite the rain, which persisted for many, many hours over the 3 days, the Morris and Mummers did their level best to entertain the crowds whenever the rain reduced to a drizzle! Much interest was experienced from the festival crowds, drawn from all over Scandinavia and Northern Europe all speaking perfect English! It was a pleasure to dance on the quay amongst the tall snapping masts of the multitude of leisure, commercial and naval craft that crammed every inch of the harbours.



Some of the teams were seen to be dancing on the sandbank at the very tip of Denmark where the Skagerrak meets the Kattegat (the North Sea and the Baltic Sea to the uninitiated). The trick was to avoid getting your feet wet from the tidal rip around that point - some of the dancers were even successful!

Naturally, the local Brewery found it had some additional trade, although at prices between £6 & 7 per pint, the most popular places that were frequented were the Musicians Festival Bars, where the beer was considerably less expensive! It was noted that some men sampled some very strong dark bottled beer from the island of Fur, much to the delight of that Pub's landlady, who originated from there! But at the equivalent of £8.50 per pint, this delightful experience was not often repeated, partly to avoid falling over!!

Despite being fed at the Festival, most of the men found sufficient appetite between meals to sample the fresh fish & chips at the many fish restaurants that lined the quays of Skagen harbour. The food was not cheap but it was yummy!

Some of the Shakespeare men managed to drum up enough energy during one evening when the rain had almost stopped to hire bicycles and to explore the environs of Skagen, the tip of Denmark and the half-buried church in the shifting sand dunes, the Tilsandkirk.

Unfortunately, just as the sun began to shine in earnest, most of the teams started on their way home, although two individuals could not tear themselves away from the bar and hence missed the bus (and the plane!)

We all came away with pleasurable memories of a very enjoyable weekend and reeling from the hospitality showered upon us by our hosts. Long may the Silkeborg MM reign to show off their English dancing to Denmark!

Mick Dunn. Bagman Shakespeare Morris Men

SCOUTS CENTENARY 2007

Apart from Icknield Way Morris Men have you got involved with the Scout Centenary? If you or your side did get please let me know -and how about sending a report and photographs to Harry for the Circular. It is all about involvement of youth!

'English Dance & Song' Autumn 2007 issue [full colour, 48 pages]

Contains a wide selection of features, including ...

The Imagined Village is the name of a concert tour and CD scheduled for this Autumn, featuring Martin Carthy, Eliza Carthy, The Gloworms, The Young Coppers and Chris Wood, as well as Benjamin Zephaniah, Sheila Chandra and Billy Bragg. Alan James's feature article explains what it's all about.

The regular 'Singer, Song and Source' features Ed Rennie, former member of the Bismarcks, now performing with Housewives' Choice and forging a career as a solo singer. The song is 'The Trees they are so High' from the Devon singer James Parsons, known to Sabine Baring-Gould as 'The Singing Machine'.

Martin Graebe writes about James Parsons. You can here Ed singing the song on <http://eds.efdss.org>

There is also a piece on the Baring-Gould Folk Song School by Marilyn Tucker. This issue's tunes feature comes from Shropshire, and is entitled 'The Shropshire Hero'. Neil Brookes explains the existence and contents of five tune books from north Shropshire. Listen to Neil Brookes and Tony Weatherall playing the featured tunes on <http://eds.efdss.org>

Robbie Thomas suggests that there are lessons to be learnt from Cecil Sharp House's regular Scottish dance events, The Ceilidh Club.

Christine Rogers examines the Dances in Jane Austen's novels.

In 'Lewes Favourites', Gavin Atkin explains why this small Sussex town has so many folk song, music and dance activities.

There's a feature on a nineteenth century painting, Rush Bearing, which is reproduced in print in full colour for the first time.

Gold Badge citations for The Yetties and the late Frank Purslow are printed in full. There's a full list of the recipients of the Anniversary Awards - including many Morris Ring luminaries, and a feature about Sam Lee.

For further information about English Dance & Song magazine, contact the editor, Derek Schofield, on eds.editor@efdss.org

2007 SDU Longsword Tournament will be held in Derby on October 13th 2007 and will feature some of the Old Trophies from past Whitby competitions, the Snark Trophy and a newly awarded EFDSS cup for youth teams.

"There is a trophy for 'Morris dancers who dance Longsword as an extra' That's a bit of a difference eh. It's like a handicap race where the poor kid in his dad's size 10 plimmies gets a head start.... The real dancers have to try and catch up!"

Further information from pcheat@btinternet.com

Phil Heaton



West Somerset Morrismen Presenting cheque to Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance in Dunster

Submitted by Dudley Binding

International Sword Spectacular The Fifth International Sword Spectacular Festival will be held in Yorkshire on the 23rd-26th May, 2008. The aim of the weekend is quite simple - to bring together the biggest and most varied collection of sword dancers ever seen. The organisers will welcome both individuals and teams. Further information from:

Andrew Kennedy Em ;Andrew@north-british.co.uk
or Stuart Higson em: Stuart.Higson@virgin.net

Record attempt. "We had a good day on Saturday 1 September at the Moreton in Marsh Show. Thanks to thanking all those Sides who came and took part. There were 87 dancers and 10 musicians - not a vast amount but at least a start and it does give others a 'record' to aim at. Thanks also to the Sides who bothered to reply to my somewhat persistent e-mails, I hope that if we try the record again many more will be able to join us." Pam Hathaway

Rain Several people contacted the Morris Ring Officers when they saw the devastating pictures of those well-known Cotswold villages under water enquiring whether we had any plans to raise money for the flood victims. While it might have been appropriate for us as an organisation to repay in some way what they (or at least their ancestors) have given us we decided that we do not have the mechanism for such an appeal - as mentioned earlier the legal restrictions surrounding charitable appeals are beyond our scope of our small umbrella organisation.

Leeds in the rain The Leeds Morris Men did a tour of the cotswolds 'that weekend'. The original plan to travel down on Friday night was abandoned as we were advised by the campsite owners(Cotswold View near Charlbury) to stay away.

So after a very early start we arrived in Woodstock on Saturday morning and danced at Woodstock, Great Tew and the Hook Norton Beer Festival. We had also planned to dance at Ascott-under-Water and Bledington. We managed to get to Bledington at the second attempt only to discover the pub was shut and so had to divert to Oddington for refreshment before continuing. The proposed evening dance out in Charlbury was also abandoned because of the rain. More dancing ensued on Sunday at Chipping Norton and Adderbury. A great time was had by all despite the weather.

Derek Matthews

The John Gasson Memorial Jig Competition Here are the results from the Sidmouth jury - of, reproduced from the Sidmouth FolkWeek Newsletter.

Solo: 1st Emma Darby (Oyster), Peter Derby Musician.

2nd Tracy Seelig (The Outside Capering Crew), Mark Rogers Musician.

3rd Jack Worth (Ditchling), John Bacon Musician.

Double: 1st Ben Moss, Dom Moss (Great Western), Cat Radford Musician.

2nd Fiona Bradshaw & Jess Arrowsmith (Pecsaetan), Richard Arrowsmith Musician.

3rd Jack Worth & Neil Woolley (?), Nick Cooke Musician

Audience Appeal: Simon Pipe (The Outside Capering Crew) & Lawrence Wright Musician..

Best New Entrant: Ben & Dom Moss (Great Western) & Cat Radford Musician.

Best over 40: Tracy Seelig (The Outside Capering Crew) & Mark Rogers Musician.

Judges: John Braithwaite, Sue Swift, Jill Griffiths and Barry Goodman.

Sponsors were Pete Collinson, Daryl Hurtt, Chris & Tracy Rose, Trefor & Rhiannon Owen and Janet Dowling.

This was the 20th year and an excellent competition with over 50 people competing with a 50 year age range. John would have been impressed that at least one entrant who entered the first competition was still fit and able to dance so well in this competition 20 years on. The aim of the competition is to get and then keep the standard of jig dancing high. We are certainly achieving that. Congratulations to all the entrants - you were brilliant. For details of next year's competition, email tracyrose (followed by a number 7 - no space) @btinternet.com.

TREASURER'S RAMBLINGS.

This time of year sees us, your elected officers, sorting out any aftermath of the previous years Morris Ring meetings whilst paving the way for next years events. 2008 has five Morris Ring meetings for you to choose from.

Comprehensive portrayals of each meeting will appear in the October Bagman's Newsletter, along with the ever popular annual demand for members and associates subscriptions (deadline 30th Nov.). Please do try and keep your excitable anticipation under control.

I am delighted to report that, apart from the unfortunate mishap at the Birmingham JMO bash (see N/L No.50 p.14), the Morris Shop has experienced

some very successful events this year. As well as the usual Morris Ring meetings, these were at Saddleworth Rushcart, Abbots Bromley and Bromyard Folk Festival. All of these had their equal share of both hard work and fun. In the centre of this newsletter you will find the latest goodies available to you.

The Bells - tell tale rumours There have been lots of rumours about 'Bells' - and to repeat my plug from the last Newsletter, not simply the new novel by Jo Varity available from the Morris shop at £6.99 (sorry about that). Back to the plot. During my travels it has been brought to my attention that there is a tale doing the circuit that I am attempting to take over the bell supply to the Morris world. If you happen to hear any of this, please do your best to correct it at source. In an effort to secure future bell supplies, I have formed a collective named '**Bells R us**'. This consolidates the buy power of The Morris Ring, The Morris Federation, Kress Drums, Folk Sales, Pete Grassby & The Music Room. I can now report that this has successfully secured the future supplies of our two piece Morris bell but..... at a price. The costs of retooling the presses, increased base metal prices and plating, has invoked a considerable increase in the wholesale bell price.

As I see it, we have two choices: (a) pay more for the traditional two piece bell or (b) opt for the cheaper one piece (claw type) bell from the far east. The censor will not allow me to accurately describe the appearance and sound of the latter. I will be in a better position to report further towards the end of the year.

Happy 40th Grimsby Morris Men. On Saturday 22nd September I had the pleasure of sharing a celebratory day of dance with a walking tour of both Grimsby and Cleethorpes. The day was further enhanced due to the fine weather and the company of Green Oak Morris Men, Poacher Morris, Raving Maes, Green Ginger Morris & Green Ginger Garland. Here's the next 40 years!
Steve Adamson (BfB)

Morris 18-30 Weekend (See Newsletter No 50 for explanation / definition) Ebor have very generously 'volunteered' to host us this year, so we will be in sunny, nay temperate, York this year, 12-14th October. www.morris1830.org
Please tell your 'youngsters'.

Dan Corcoran Bagman Morris 18-30

Archive Matters In answer to a question raised elsewhere the Morris Ring Archive is willing to accept Morris /Sword / Mumming related material from anywhere. The Archive is open to all and so we receive from all. We have a particularly rich collection of material collected by non-Morris Ring sides.

Robert Saunders was 100 on August 24. He was the second nomination at the pre Morris Ring meeting back in April 1934 at Ringstead Mill should Walter refuse when he woke up. Does any other club claim to have had a centenarian?

John Jenner

Morris Movie Magic (M3)

Earlier this year the Morris Ring announced that we are looking to develop some short videos for distribution via the Web and other media, aimed at raising the profile of the Morris, especially amongst youngsters. We're looking for those clever chaps in our ranks that can come up with some nifty storylines and art work that will stimulate interest and encourage others to join their local Morris side.

A Google Group has been set up specifically to enable ideas to be voiced and developed, so it doesn't matter where you are, you can take part from your own home computer. Email Clive Du'Mont (cdumont@blueyonder.co.uk) to either join the M3 Google Group or just to find out more.

Clive has a number of computer wizards and an artist or two on board already, but we need more - especially writers and others with good ideas. Individuals with the necessary imagination and skill are obviously needed, but there's no reason why whole sides shouldn't participate too if they'd like to.

Talk it over in your own club and lets see if we can't get together to produce some really cracking mini-movies and so help make the Morris rock!

Clive Du'Mont

Morris Ring Workshops / Instructionals

Following discussions at the ARM I would like to clarify a couple of points.

1. Any side is at liberty to invite whomsoever you wish to their own events but there is an historic expectation that a Morris Ring event will be male only. Where the invitation is an open one that must be made clear in the publicity and application process. Where accommodation is provided 'appropriate' arrangements must be made - if all are sleeping in one hall than that needs to be made clear but there does need to be separate toilet / washing facilities.

2. Regarding minors attending. Clearly we all want to make every effort to encourage youngsters and to help them to improve their standard of dance but each need to be accompanied by a 'responsible adult' who is in loco parentis. If they are not the parent/guardian then you as the host side need to be certain that their own side can verify this status.
3. "Could the Morris Ring set up the facility to seek clearance for any men acting as instructors for the Morris?" The answer is no. Registered organisations can apply for checks to be made and whilst schools, scouts and similar organisations have the size and resources to originate such checks it is beyond our capability to either administer or police.

Lichfield: Green Man Morrismen have volunteered to host a Lichfield Workshop in Autumn 2007. I still await details - they will be posted on the Morris Ring website as soon as they are available.

Musicians' Instructional. This postponed event will now take place from 9th to 11th November at Wilstone Village Hall, near Aylesbury, Bucks. The main aim of this Instructional is to give Morris musicians a chance to explore the musical needs of the dance and dancers, and to help promote and develop individuals' skills in delivering their best possible performance. Based on the well-proven formula of previous instructionals, those attending can look forward to a weekend of activities that seek to expand and extend their knowledge and understanding in an atmosphere of good natured fun and mutual support. *There is an Application Form included with this Newsletter.*

Jigs Workshop The Sutton Bonington venue is provisionally booked for 18th - 20th 2008.
Geoff Jerram

Bledington Workshop Notice to sides in the sunny south to let you know that Winchester Morris Men will be running a workshop on the Bledington tradition on 6th October 2007 at Soberton. Full details on the FASH website.

Albert Wilkins Bagman Winchester MM

The Gate to Southwell: 7th June 2008. Once again, there will be a Folk Festival held in Southwell on the weekend 6th to 8th June 2008, and there will be concessions for sides attending the 'Gate'. Please put this in your diaries. Further information from Chris Gigg. Dolphin Morris Men

Does your side have a Fool or a Beast? If so send them along to the annual **Fools and Beasts Unconvention** on 19th-21st October 2007 at Seavington, nr Yeovil. Hosted by Wyvern Jubilee. They are guaranteed to have a cracking time and if they are experienced they can share the secrets of their success and if they are just setting out on the road to foolery and bestiality they are bound to pick up a few tips as they battle through a weekend of workshops, displays, dancing and drinking for the cost just £40 (plus beer money).

Note: This event is open to Morris Ring; Morris Federation and Open Morris members.

Application forms and further information from Robert Chisman, e-mail triggertrotter1@aol.com or the Morris Ring Web site.



LEYLAND MARK THEIR 40th ON A HIGH

The Leyland Team was reformed in 1966 and first danced out in 1967 so that 2007 marks their 40th anniversary. The team was delighted to hear that Roy Smith was given an award from the EFDSS on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the merger of the Folk Song Society and the English Folk Dance Society. Roy has been a dancing member of Leyland since it was reformed and for many years has been the team leader and archivist.



On May 1st, as part of BBC Radio Lancashire's feature about May day, the team gave an interview and short dance display. While the team could not be seen the clogs, bells and sticks were there for all to hear and we were able to present a positive image of the tradition of Morris dancing.

The highlight of our year has clearly been our involvement with the BBC and their filming for a costume drama starring Dame Judi Dench. The team responded to a request for a NW Morris team to feature in the drama to be called 'Cranford Chronicles' based on novels by Mrs Gaskell and set in Cheshire. After much discussion and visits by the BBC's choreographers to see our dances we spent two days filming scenes at the Ashridge estate near Dunstable.

Weather conditions were far from ideal for filming a May day celebration with long johns being an advantage. These however were not provided by the BBC only the costumes we wore which are shown in the photo - Roy is our leader wearing the hat.

We were fortunate that on one of the days Dame Judi was on set and she kindly consented to having a photo taken with the team.

We are looking forward to the finished product which we understand will be shown before Christmas this year. Will our 'two days' of film scenes be screened as a few seconds at most of Morris dancing?

Two long days of travel/filming but a memorable occasion to mark our 40th and we got paid for enjoying ourselves.

Mike Bailey Leyland Team Secretary.

Photo wanted. Do you have a picture of Alex Helm? Alex was very active in Manchester EFDSS, and co-author of several folk reference works, including "A Geographical Index of the Ceremonial Dance in Great Britain". Peter Millington is looking for a photo to use in the Introduction to a new updated electronic edition of "English Ritual Drama" that he is working on. He has found some pictures on Flickr of Helm calling country dancing at the approved school in Congleton where he taught - stills taken from a documentary film but he only appears in the background, and the quality poor. (See

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/57331414@N00/sets/72157594253205131/> and <http://www.flickr.com/photos/57331414@N00/sets/72157594253205131/?page>)

If anyone has or knows of a suitable photograph that Peter could use please get in touch with the Morris Ring Bagman.

Helmond Morris Men Letter of appreciation Helmond danced at the SHAPE Summer Fete in Mons, Belgium (for the second year running) and received this attached letter of appreciation. I feel one should stand to attention when reading it! Submitted by Antony Heywood



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A Heywood,
Rietstraat 15
5562 RA Geldrop
The Netherlands

12 June 07

Dear Antony

I write to convey my appreciation for the participation of the Helmond Morris Men at this year's Great British Summer Fete, held here at SHAPE last weekend. We have a truly international community here, drawn from 26 nations, many of whom will sadly never have seen Morris dancing before. Our community has, for the last two years, been treated by one of the most polished Morris side's I have seen, both within and without Great Britain. We try very hard to portray a typical British fete and were delighted with the entertainment you provided us.

What really stood out about your performance was the obvious desire you all have to entertain. To "wander" as you did and spontaneously perform, shows your dedication to your pastime and is a marvellous advertisement for Morris dancing everywhere.

Not only did you help by providing the international community at SHAPE with a splendid day out last Saturday, you also helped raise over €7000 for our local Tommy Temple Charity and the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Forces' Benevolent funds. These last three aim to assist both serving and retired members of our armed forces who have fallen on hard times.

Our National Military Representative here, Brigadier David Eccles (late Royal Tank Regiment) also asked me to pass on his personal thanks and good wishes to you all. We really hope to see you all at next year's fete.

Once again many thanks to your
unique input to our Day!

JWS

Phil Jones

Nexus of folklore theater "First of all let me introduce myself , I'am Mohammad Alsaggar from Ramtha Jordan ,The general secretary of the Nexus of folklore theater Ramtha-Jordan .

I would like now to give you a glance about our folk dance group (Nexus Of Folklore Theater), it founded 1999 and its a local folk dance group follows to the ministry of culture in Jordan , our main job is to re-present our folklore and heritage in Jordan Esp in the north of Jordan , reflex the life for the farmers in the north of Jordan ,and the way the people in our area of their celebration .

We have participated in many International festivals all over the world and we proudly feel satisfied of what we presented until now and we still look to work more and to cooperate with all folk dancers in this world, and our main message to this world that we wish one day to live in a world which is clean with wars and violence and to share our folklore and heritage with all people all over the world.

Dear friends as we have our main goals in our job we started our own International folk dance festival in Feb 2007 by our personal efforts and the first edition was too much nice and successful we hosted 4 groups from 4 countries (Greece, Romania, Syria, Jordan) .

Our second edition will be from 10-18 Feb 2008 and this time we insist to do more and more and we make a big team for our second edition.

We appreciate the good reputation of the English folklore therefore we honored to ask you to nominate for us a folk dance group from UK to participate and to join our festival.

If you are interest in my offer I will provide you of the official invitation and all conditions of the festival soon." (Contact <mohsaqqar@yahoo.com)

Translators? John Maher has just received a translation of "The Morris Tradition" booklet into Spanish for the Morris Ring website from our very good friend Juan Urbeltz. He hopes to get it onto the web soon. He is now looking for someone to translate it into Chinese though he will settle for Italian Polish or Russian!

MORRIS RING PUBLICATIONS

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"Morris Dancer". As reported in Newsletter No 50 this is to be an occasional publication from the Archive group as and when appropriate. A message from the new editor:

"I am happy to announce its rebirth 'The Morris Dancer'. I have an editorial brief to make The Morris Dancer an important vehicle of academic excellence once more - a worthy flagship journal of the Morris Ring.

The plan is that each edition of The Morris Dancer will have as a theme a regional variant of the Morris. In addition each area of the Archive will be asked to report on their recent activity and highlight some aspect of the collection that they hold.

As ever the success of this will depend on people who are prepared to contribute articles. Please take this as a call for articles. In the first instance contributors are invited to offer a brief outline and to seek a copy of *Notes for Contributors* and a response from the Editor. Through this approach I hope to encourage many more people to contribute because contributions will be able to be worked up into something of real value. Don't be shy. If you have an idea for an article please feel free to put forward your ideas even if only in embryonic form because they can, given the expertise of The Morris Ring, be worked up into something of value to the Morris Ring membership.

The first edition with this revised brief is planned for publication in January 2008 and I look forward to receiving possible outlines of contributions in good time.

To contact me in the first instance please send an email to themorrisdancer@tradcap.com

David Thompson

CONCLUSION

Please remember that nominations are required for the various vacancies in time for the ARM in March. On the next page are the dates and venues for the planned meetings of the Morris Ring for the next few years. Full details of the 2008 meetings will be circulated with Application forms in October - I hope that the host sides to produce information that will entice habitual non-attendees to apply. You will notice that there are some gaps in the not to distant future - how about your side acting as hosts?

Almost as a Post Script have a look at this.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FGj56PLYUSI>

Stay with it - it only lasts for 30 seconds There is a distinct sting in the tail.

Charlie

Bagman of the Morris Ring



**Austin really appreciates
Morris Ring 'Bling'.**

Future Dates:

2008

29 th Feb- 2 nd March	ARM - Hosted By Waddard MM
30 th May ~ 1 st June	313 75 th Anniv. Thaxted Morris Ring Meeting
4 th - 6 th July	314 Whitchurch MM 60 th Anniversary Morris Ring Meeting
11 th -13 th July	315 Mersey MM 80 th Anniversary Morris Ring Meeting
25 th - 27 th July	316 Long Man MM
5 th - 7 th Sept.	317 Dartington MM 40 th Anniversary Morris Ring Meeting

2009 *THE MORRIS RING'S 75th ANNIVERSARY*

6 th - 8 th March (?)	ARM Hosted By TBA
TBA April	'3 orgs.' Event. Hosted by Open Morris in Nottingham
29 th May ~ 31 st May	318 Thaxted Morris Ring Meeting
TBA	Harthill Morris Ring Meeting
24 th - 26 th July	Exeter Morris Ring Meeting
21 st - 23 rd Aug	Men of Wight Ring Meeting
4 th - 6 th September	Bathampton MM 75 th Anniversary Morris Ring Meeting

2010

5 th - 7 th March (?)	ARM Hosted by TBA
4 th June ~ 6 th June	Thaxted Morris Ring Meeting

2011

4 th - 6 th March (?)	ARM Hosted By TBA
3 rd June ~ 5 th June	Thaxted "Centenary" Morris Ring Meeting
TBA.....	Bristol 60 th Anniv. Morris Ring Meeting

2012

3 rd - 5 th March (?)	ARM Hosted by TBA
25 th - 27 th May	Chipping Campden Cotswold Olympic Morris Ring Meeting
1 st June ~ 3 rd June	Thaxted Morris Ring Meeting
27 th -29 th July	Hartley 60 th Anniv. Morris Ring Meeting

THE MORRIS RING MUSICIANS' INSTRUCTIONAL – 2007

LOCATION: Wilstone, Bucks
DATES: 9th – 11th November 2007
TUTORS: Mike Chandler (Whitchurch); Clive Du'Mont (Mendip);
HOSTS: Whitchurch Morris Men
ACCOMMODATION: Indoor Camping
NUMBERS: 16+
COST: £45
MAIN CONTACT: Clive Du'Mont, 21 Langthorn Close, Frampton Cotterell,
 Bristol, BS36 2JH.
Email: cdumont@blueyonder.co.uk (preferred)
Tel: 01454 773895 (only if writing won't do, please)

We are pleased to announce that the next Morris Ring Musicians' Instructional will be held from 9th to 11th November at Wilstone Village Hall, near Aylesbury, Bucks.

The main aim of this Instructional is to give Morris musicians a chance to explore the musical needs of the dance and dancers, and to help promote and develop individuals' skills in delivering their best possible performance.

Based on the well-proven formula of previous instructionals, those attending can look forward to a weekend of activities that seek to expand and extend their knowledge and understanding in an atmosphere of good natured fun and mutual support.

Details continue overleaf ...

✂-----
 Please complete the booking form [in **BLOCK CAPITALS**] and email or post it to Clive Du'Mont

THE MORRIS RING MUSICIANS' INSTRUCTIONAL – Wilstone 2007

Club Name:

Bagman / Correspondent:

Address:

..... Post Code:

Tel: Day Evening:

Email:

Names of Applicants:	Instrument(s)	Experience/Role*	Diet Needs
1.	s c b q f
2.	s c b q f
3.	s c b q f
4.	s c b q f

Fee for musicians at £ 45.00 each: **TOTAL** £

A cheque for the full amount, made out to **The Morris Ring**, must reach Clive by **22 October 2007**.
Please Note: This deadline is crucial to confirming that the Instructional is viable.

The Instructional will include ...

- **essentials of playing for the Morris**
- **playing in massed bands** – especially targeted at avoiding ‘mushy’ sounds at Ring Meeting performances

As many in The Morris Ring and beyond will know, previous Instructionals were led by the late Jim Catterall of Thaxted Morris Men. Jim died shortly after the Thaxted Ring Meeting in June this year and his passing has left a chasm that none of us can readily span. As a tribute to Jim and to continue in the spirit that he would doubtless have wanted, Mike and Clive have determined that this Instructional will proceed as planned. Unlike previous events, however, there will be no special arrangement for “seasoned” players this time. Rather, musicians of all abilities are invited to take part in the general sessions identified above. Mike and Clive will present the tutorials using Jim’s tried and tested material and featuring video excerpts of Jim himself gathered from earlier Instructionals.

Seasoned players are still welcome to join us and are invited to either assist less experienced players in the general sessions, or perhaps together explore aspects of playing for the Morris separate from the main group. Alternatively, they may be inclined to go and play in the local pub and join with the others as they will. Attendance by those who have known Jim and benefited from his mentoring will be especially welcome to come and add to the tribute this weekend will afford.

This Instructional is not aimed at instrumental tuition per se, however previous events have often attracted a number of absolute beginners who may not have been able to get the most out of the weekend, due to their lack of expertise. To help such individuals, arrangements will be made, where possible, for elementary instrumental tuition ... please ask before booking.

It’s not unknown for some dancers to suggest that musicians must be able to dance; or for the odd musician to suggest that dancers should be coached in maintaining a rhythm (hark at that sticking!). Whatever your point of view, one fact is inescapable ... they both need each other and must understand each others needs if they are to achieve their mutual best. So, Foremen and Squires are especially welcome to come along too to help hone their own understanding. If you’d like to know more, please get in touch.

The weekend will also include a dash of dancing (bring full kit, please) and the sampling of some luscious local ale! Both breakfasts and the Saturday Feast will be prepared at the direction of Whitchurch MM’s Chef Celebre (and bottle washer) Nigel Cox, whilst lunches will be available at separate cost in the local pub, The Half Moon.

Whilst primarily aimed at members of the Morris Ring, others are welcome to apply, however we regret that single-gender sleeping accommodation only can be provided at the hall. Ladies attending shall, as last time, need to make their own overnight arrangements at their own cost. Also, as a Morris Ring event hosted by Whitchurch Morris Men, the Saturday evening Feast is restricted to male participants only. Exceptions will be at the discretion of the Squire of Whitchurch Morris Men. (A small reduction in the fee will be made for individuals unable to partake of all facilities and activities.)

Travel directions and other details will be sent out after 22 October.

***Experience/Role ... please ring on form overleaf as appropriate ...**

‘s’	‘seasoned’ player	someone who has attended a previous Ring musicians’ instructional
‘c’	‘competent’ musician	someone who hasn’t previously attended a musicians’ instructional and can scratch, squeeze or blow at least one dance tune, or part of one, or someone who wishes to repeat the basic sessions previously attended rather than join the ‘seasoned’ players.
‘b’	‘beginner’	one who is not yet ‘competent’ and who would welcome some <u>elementary</u> tuition in playing an instrument for the Morris, if available. (NB: This really does mean <u>absolute</u> beginner, please)
‘q’	‘Squire’	those ‘in charge’ who would welcome the chance to learn something of the art of Morris musicianship, toward improving practice and performance
‘f’	‘Foreman’	