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## Newsletter No. 107

October 2017

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## **Future Events**

### **2017**

27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> October     **Annual Fools and Beasts Unconvention, Church Eaton, Staffs**

*Booking form on page 7.*

18<sup>th</sup> November     **Jigs Workshop, Dorking**

*The Morris Ring Jigs Instructional crew are supporting a one-day jigs instructional hosted by the Orchard Morris Project. See [www.orchardmorris.com](http://www.orchardmorris.com) for details.*

### **2018**

19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> January     **Morris Ring Jigs Instructional, Sutton Bonington**

*Details to follow.*

10<sup>th</sup> March     **Annual Representatives' Meeting, Oak Farm Lodge, Hatherton**

*Application form attached as Appendix 1, see also page 5.*

19<sup>th</sup> May     **JMO Day of Dance, Peterborough**

*Hosted by Crosskey Clog (Open Morris), details to follow.*

1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> June     **Thaxted weekend of dance**

*Please apply directly to Thaxted Morris Men.*

23<sup>rd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> June

**Save the date - Helmond Ring Meeting**

*Details to follow when confirmed.*

29<sup>th</sup> June – 1<sup>st</sup> July

**Whitchurch celebration weekend**

*Whitchurch's **70th** anniversary and a celebration of the Morris for all morris sides including Open and Federation. A similar format to a Ring Meeting with Friday evening meet and greet, Saturday tours in and around the Vale of Aylesbury and the Chilterns. Formal Feast in the evening, with speeches and party pieces with dancing. Sunday: Church service and mass morris with the departure after lunch.*

*Based at the world famous Stoke Mandeville Stadium, the Birthplace of the Paralympics, just on the outskirts of Aylesbury. Accommodation will be single sexed, dormitories with full bedding supplied. All facilities include showers. (HOT and cold). We can accommodate up to 180 for the weekend and a further 200 for the day including feast.*

*We hope to be able to operate with a pick and mix system where attendees can pay for what they have. Separate day attendees on Saturday and/or Sunday will be equally welcome to those attending the whole event.*

*All Ring Sides are invited to apply and in addition Whitchurch MM will be sending invitations to other sides with whom they have close connections. Further details will be available towards the end of the year. If you wish to make a reservation please contact [www.whitchurchmorris.org](http://www.whitchurchmorris.org).*

25<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> August

**Saddleworth Rushcart Ring Meeting**

*This is open to all; no need to apply via the Bagman, please inform the Rushcart Secretary of your interest directly.*

**Any clubs seeking to host a Ring Meeting in 2018 or 2019, please contact the Ring Bagman urgently.**

## **Ring Massed Dances**

Please will sides practice these dances through the winter season and in advance of any Ring events they are attending; please only get up to perform dances you are confident of doing and remember the overall impression is what is important for massed morris, rather than one side's particular interpretation.

<b><u>Adderbury</u></b>	Lads-a-Bunchum Black Joke
<b><u>Bampton</u></b>	Bobbing Around
<i>(finish on rounds)</i>	Rose Tree Quaker
<b><u>Bledington</u></b>	Young Collins William & Nancy
<b><u>Brackley</u></b>	Jockey to the Fair
<b><u>Fieldtown</u></b>	Valentine Balance the Straw
<b><u>Headington</u></b>	Getting Upstairs Constant Billy (short sticks) Blue Eyed Stranger
<b><u>Lichfield</u></b>	Vandalls

## **Morris Ring ARM, Oak Farm Lodge, Hatherton, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

The ARM will be at its now customary location of Oak Farm Lodge, Hatherton (Watling St, Cannock WS11 1SB). Application forms for attending are located in Appendix 1 of this document. Please be prompt in applying as places for accommodation are limited.

### **Elections**

At the 2018 ARM we shall be electing a new Squire of the Morris Ring, a new Treasurer of the Morris Ring and several Area Representatives are due for triennial election/re-election.

For the posts of Squire and Treasurer, the Constitution requires the following:

1. A biographical statement, 250 words maximum, ideally with some general information about the candidate's history and general philosophy regarding Morris in general and the Ring in particular.
2. A photograph of the candidate.
3. A supporting statement of 250 words maximum, submitted by the nominating club on their headed paper or from their Bagman's email address. Any additional supporting documentation will not be published.

**The above documentation must be submitted to the Bagman of the Morris Ring before 30<sup>th</sup> November 2017.** This is also the date for all proposed alterations to the Constitution, motions and formal resolutions to be discussed at the ARM (all submissions to the Bagman please).

### **Area Representatives** (year of re-election in brackets)

North Midlands, Ben Robinson (2018)

South Midlands, Roger Comley (2018)

Northern, Paul Cross (2018)

North West, David Loughlin (2020)

North East, Brian Pollard (2019)

West Midlands, Peter Simpson (2020)

Eastern, Nigel Strudwick (2019)

South Wales and West, Paul Reece (2020)

South East, Cliff Marchant (2018)

## **Blacking Up – an update**

Please see the guidance below; a version of this should be used as a public information sheet from this point forward, please. Also attached as Appendix 2 as a single page.



## **Why the black face-paint in Border Morris?**

In recent years, the black face-paint worn by some Morris sides has caused some controversy.

The usual explanation for the blackened face is that it was for *disguise*, when out-of-work labourers and farmworkers sought to supplement their income by a bit of anonymous dancing and begging. It was traditionally done using soot.

Whatever the theory, modern Border sides certainly do not attach any racial significance to the blacking of their faces and accept the explanation of “disguise” for the tradition.

Following an incident in January 2017, Sajid Javid, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, made clear that he saw no racial connotations linked with this tradition, and [tweeted](#) -

**“ Proud of traditional Morris dancers from Alvechurch  
(in my constituency).**

**“They are as racist as I am [#PloughMonday](#)**

Eddie Worrall (Squire of the Morris Ring)

Nicki Pickering (Chair of Open Morris)



# **Fools and Beasts** **Unconvention 2017**

**Hosted by Stafford Morris Men**

**Church Eaton, Staffs**

**27th-29th October 2017**



*Open to all budding or experienced Fools, Beasts and Morris Characters from any team from the Ring, Open or Federation. A truly JMO event!*

This year's Unconvention will be based at Church Eaton Village Institute, ST20 0AG and will involve workshops, Saturday bus tour to somewhere interesting... The Feast will follow either at the Institute, or at the Royal Oak... On Sunday we will have the AGM of course - your chance to have your say. Accommodation is indoor camping; there may be provision for outdoor camping and Motorhomes, to be confirmed. Please indicate at time of booking. Dogs are be allowed, but not in the kitchen!!

We have been able to keep the cost at £65 per person, which includes all meals except Sunday lunch, plus coach trip etc.

**Closing date for Applications 15<sup>th</sup> October 2017.**

Yours,  
Robert Chisman, Scrivener and Convenor

Delegate:1).....email\*.....Fool/Beast/Other.....

2).....email\*.....Fool/Beast/Other.....

Team:.....

Address for correspondence.....

.....:

Tel:Day:.....Eve:.....

Any Special Dietary needs.....

We anticipate having ..... further applicants, if places available.

Return this form with cheque for the full amount (£65 pp) payable to "The Illustrious Order of Fools and Beasts" to Robert Chisman, Fools and Beasts Convener, 1, Treverbyn Road, St. Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4EU Tel:01726 68178 mobile 07970063922. OR pay by BACS - please ask for details.

E-mail: [triggertrotter1@aol.com](mailto:triggertrotter1@aol.com)  
Follow Trigger on Facebook and Twitter!



Trigger Morris-Horse



@TriggerMHorse

*\*Provision of email address indicates willingness to be included on IOFB e-mail list. If you DO NOT wish your email address to be included, please tick HERE .....*

## **Calling all Foremen**

The Morris Ring is looking to develop guidance on good practice at being a Foreman for teaching and practising dance, possibly in conjunction with a wider project involving the other Organisations. To this end, the Bagman is seeking to collect data from foremen as follows:

One email per foreman, with the title of “Foreman’s Handbook,” stating

- name
- side
- dance style(s)

to [bagman@themorrisring.org](mailto:bagman@themorrisring.org), before the end of October, please.

The email should contain brief answers to the following four questions:

1. State up to three things you *always* try to do when teaching and practising dance
2. State up to three things you try *never* to do when teaching and practising dance
3. State the one thing you feel has the greatest impact on the quality of dance of your team
4. Describe briefly the teaching style or approach you find most effective with your side?

The Ring Bagman reserves the right to ignore any essays, polemics, philosophical treatises and over-long responses. There may be opportunity for more detailed input at a later stage in the process. Please demonstrate your experience and expertise through the brevity and efficiency of your responses. Sides with multiple Foremen may submit one each.

I have extended the end date to improve the response rate. Thanks in anticipation, *Jon*.



## **Another Morris Ring initiative**

The Bagman of the Morris Ring receives many emails. Increasing among them are the ones of this type:

*"We would like to start a morris dance troupe in our area. We have seen our local troupe but they are all old and we want to do something different. We've learned the basic moves from YouTube and now we would like some advice on getting gigs and festival bookings."*

This sort of thing worries me – material on YouTube is not subject to quality control, and one lousy side at a fete, fair or festival can impact on bookings for many.

It would be nice if potential new sides of young people had an offer of support in their early stages, to learn the basics properly before they do their own thing. Picasso was an excellent draughtsman first, after all.

To this end, I would like to co-ordinate an offer of support to any potential nascent morris sides, or to individuals looking to form them, by putting them in contact with local individuals or teams prepared to help out with an instructional, a workshop, loan of a musician etc. to get their enterprise off the ground. The idea would be to have volunteers across all the regions and dance styles prepared to support the formation of new teams and give them a quality start. I know lots of sides do this already on an *ad hoc* basis, I'm looking to co-ordinate communication better.

The Ring is also looking at ways to support new teams with discounts at the Morris Shop on bells, books and DVDs.

If you would like to offer your services in this initiative, please email [bagman@themorrisring.org](mailto:bagman@themorrisring.org) with name and contact details (as an individual or a side) and the dance style(s) or music type(s) you are prepared to offer support, demonstration and tuition in.





Thanks again in anticipation, *Jon*.

## Morris Ring Display Boards

Are you making full use of this asset?

If you have any opportunity to make use of one of the five sets we possess please contact your Area Rep or the Ring Bagman.

If you want to use them, even if a set is not currently in your area, arrangements can be made to get a set to you.

<p><b>the morris ring</b></p> <p><b>The Morris Ring</b></p> <p>The Morris Ring is an organisation for men's clubs. Every year our members can be seen dancing out during the summer, either on their own or in the company of dancers from other clubs who have been invited along to share a day or a weekend of dance. We hold a number of special meetings of the Morris Ring each year at which clubs from all over the country come together to dance. The most important of these is the annual meeting in early June in Thaxted in Essex, the town where the Morris Ring was founded in 1934.</p> <p>You can find out more about the Morris Ring by visiting our web site at: <a href="http://www.themorrisring.org">www.themorrisring.org</a></p> <p>On our home page there are links which will enable you to find the Morris clubs in your area.</p> 	<p><b>the morris ring</b></p> <p><b>Morris Dancing</b></p> <p>Morris dances are the national folk dances of England and have a recorded history going back six hundred years. In this display you will see examples of the various styles of dance which have developed over the centuries and which are performed today in all parts of the country. Why do we do it? That is an easy question to answer. It is because we enjoy it and for the fun and friendship which comes with being a member of a Morris dancing club.</p> 	<p><b>the morris ring</b></p> <p><b>A Potted History</b></p> <p>Over the centuries the popularity of Morris dancing has waxed and waned but by the latter part of the 19th century dancing had died out in many parts of the country. By great good fortune in 1899 there was a chance encounter between Headington Quarry Morris Men in Oxford and Cecil Sharp, a professional musician. Following this meeting, Sharp devoted the rest of his life to the collection of English folk songs and dances. As a result of his work and the work of others who were inspired by him, there was a great revival of interest in our folk traditions in the 20th century and especially in the 1960s and 1970s.</p>  
<p><b>Fools and Animals</b></p> <p>Often the dancers are accompanied by a fool, whose job is to engage the audience with humorous banter and ensure that they are paying attention to the dance. Many clubs have made an animal head which is mounted on a pole and attached to a cloak. One of the dancers entertains the audience by going among them underneath the cloak and grasping the animal's jaws together.</p> 	<p><b>Regional Styles of Morris Dancing</b></p> <p>Most people are familiar with the Cotswold style of dance which comes from the counties of the West Midlands and which is characterised by the use of sticks and handkerchiefs. Other styles of dance have evolved in other parts of the country. There are sword dances from the North and the rapper, or shortsword dances from the North East. In the North West there are the processional dances, which are often performed in chaps. The Border style comes from the counties bordering Wales and there are the Molly dancers from East Angles. Mummers' plays come from all parts of the country.</p>	<p><b>Looking to the Future</b></p> <p>There are probably more people Morris dancing today than at any time in the past and our clubs are always keen to recruit new members. Many Clubs are involved in teaching young people to dance through programmes with schools, the Scout organisation and other youth groups.</p> 
<p><b>The Joint Morris Organisation</b></p> <p>The Morris Ring is one of three organisations representing Morris dance clubs. The other two are the Morris Federation and the Open Morris. Once a year we all get together for a combined day of dance to celebrate the Morris as a dance for everyone, irrespective of age or gender.</p>		<p><b>How about you ?</b></p> <p>Would you like to try Morris dancing to see if it does for you what it does for us? Many clubs hold special sessions for potential members to come along and try it out. Find your local clubs by following the links on our web site and go along and meet the dancers. Before long you too could be a Morris dancer!</p>
<p><b>founded 1934</b></p>	<p><b><a href="http://www.themorrisring.org">www.themorrisring.org</a></b></p>	<p><b>founded 1934</b></p>

*This is what the complete set of three banners looks like.*

## **Morris Ring Publications**

**Anthony Foard:** Editor of the Morris Circular

33 Cunningham Drive, Bromborough, Wirral, CHESHIRE. CH63 0JX

Mobile Tel: 01513344566

thecircular@themorrisring.org

**Mac McCoig** Editor of the Morris Dancer

8 Redhills, Eccleshall, Staffordshire ST21 6JW

Tel: 01785 851052

mac.mccoig@btinternet.com

## **On-line Links:**



The main MR website with millions of pages stuffed to the gunnels with all you need to know about the MR:

<http://www.themorrisring.org/>

Follow the latest media reports concerning Morris Matters at <http://www.themorrisring.org/article/morris-matters>

The Morris Ring Google Group (MRGG). Private Forum for debate or announcements. <http://groups.google.com/group/the-morris-ring?hl=en&pli=1>

*Contact the Morris Ring Bagman to register to use.*

Morris Ring Facebook site: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Morris-Ring/158759257502840>

Morris Ring Twitter: <http://twitter.com/#!/TheMorrisRing>

## **The Morris Shop** *"the Bells and Whistles"*

<http://www.themorrisshop.com/store/index.php?route=common/home>

## Call for Contributions

Any items of Morris-related news, please send to me at [bagman@themorrisring.org](mailto:bagman@themorrisring.org) for inclusion in the next Newsletter. Longer pieces to Tony Foard, please, for the Circular.

If you have any photographs, you can send them to Duncan Broomhead, the Morris Ring Photo Archivist ([duncan.broomhead@btinternet.com](mailto:duncan.broomhead@btinternet.com)) and any articles, ideally accompanied with photographs, can be submitted to Tony Foard, the Editor of the Morris Ring Circular, details above.

Charlie Corcoran, the Keeper of the Morris Ring Log Book, is keen to receive stories about Ring events, both the formal and the quirky ([Charliecorcoran7@ntlworld.com](mailto:Charliecorcoran7@ntlworld.com)).



## The Morris Ring – Annual Representatives' Meeting Sat 10<sup>th</sup> March 2018

Name of Side: .....

Contact Name: .....

Names of other attendees:

...../.....

Email: ..... Tel No: .....

Address: .....

..... Postcode: .....

Saturday:                      Workshops:                      No of men: \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday ARM to Sunday morning incl. Sat night accommodation & Sunday breakfast (£25 per person shared twin room)	No .....@ £ 70	£
Saturday Breakfast (for campers* & early arrivals)	No .....@ £ 8.50	£
Saturday ARM - including feast (No accommodation)	No .....@ £45	£
Saturday ARM* - excluding feast (Morning Coffee / Lunch / Afternoon Tea)	No .....@ £25	£
Feast only	No .....@ £30	£
ARM only - no meals	No.....@ Free	£ 0.00
Sunday Breakfast (for campers/vans*)	No .....@ £ 8.50	£
TOTAL		£ .

\* There is very limited camping available (for which there will be a small charge). It is essential to book in advance through Peter Copley. There is space for up to five campervans at the venue at a cost of £15 for the weekend (2 nights) on a first come first served basis. Please book this directly with Peter Copley. There are 20 twin bedded rooms and 5 double bedded rooms. Book early to get a twin room!

Please specify number of non-alcohol drinkers .....

Please specify how many require vegetarian meals.....

Please indicate if disabled access is required Yes / No

Please print this form, fill it in and post it (with a cheque for the requisite amount) made payable to:  
**Stafford Morris Men (Misdemeanours) to:**

**Peter Copley, 5, Woodleighton Grove, Uttoxeter, Staffs., ST14 8BX**



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