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Newsletter No. 136

January 2025

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Future Events – 2025 - <https://themorrisring.org/calendar/upcoming>

- 18th Jan 2025 **2025 Jigs Instructional – FULLY BOOKED, WAITING LIST OPEN**
The Morris Ring Jigs Instructional will be on 18 January 2025, as last year in Sutton Bonington near Loughborough. This is open to anyone from any of the JMO clubs who is confidently performing set dances from at least one tradition, an opportunity to work on your dancing skills and your performance skills. Expect a very intensive day looking at Cotswold jigs and how to dance them well. We'll provide expert tuition, great music and all meals for a very modest cost. There is limited indoor camping available for both Friday and Saturday nights. The pub sessions, particularly on Saturday evening, are outstanding. Contact jigsinstructional@themorrisring.org for more information.
- 1st Mar **Annual Representatives Meeting 2025**
The AGM for the Morris Ring will be held as in previous years at Oak Farm Hotel, Cannock.
<https://themorrisring.org/event/2025/mar/annual-representatives-meeting-2025>
- 26th April **JMO Day of Dance 2025 - Stockport**
56 teams booked to attend as of Dec 25th 2024, going to be busy! Adlington Morris Men have stepped forward to organise the Day of Dance for 2025 on behalf of the Morris Ring, The venue will be in Stockport, a council that was very keen to support the event. More details will follow, but save the date and watch this space.
- 30th May – 2nd Jun **Thaxted Morris Weekend**
All the usual goings on, email Rob Evans revansandson@sky.com for details and to confirm attendance
- 19th July **Anker Ring Meeting in Nuneaton**
Save the date, details to follow
- 22nd-24th Aug **Saddleworth Rushcart Weekend**
Save the date, details to follow
- 13th Sept **Ripley DoD Celebrating 100 years of Morris Dancing in Ripley**
Indications of interest in attending the day are invited from all member sides of the Morris Ring, Morris Federation, and Open Morris. To assist in planning sides are requested to indicate interest by email to ripleymorris@hotmail.com with the subject Ripley 100 by January 31st 2025.

Squire's Musings

This is going to be my last Musings as it's now less than two months to the ARM when I hand over to Emma and become a former officer. The time seems to have flown by; anyway, again I wanted to give you an idea of what's been going on since the last newsletter which took us through to the end of September.

But first I hope you all had a good Christmas and New Year. I'm writing this as the country is creaking back into life after the long break. The main thing to tell you all about how we marked the Ring's 90th anniversary. It's in a separate piece that you will find below. Otherwise, it's the typical mixture of indoor and outdoor events at this time of year.

It was great to get back to Rutland for their DoD on 12 October. This has been a feature since my early days of dancing and it was nice to get back there again. Rutland is a lovely county and there are so many nice places to visit. So the tours began in Oakham, at the Castle where we danced inside surrounded by horseshoes. We left for three coach tours just as the rain started, but thankfully it had mostly stopped by Preston, our first stop; our companions on the bus with Devil's Dyke MM were Dolphin and Rose and Castle and a splendid day was indeed had.

The next events were all indoors. I was honoured to be the guest of Cambridge MM on their 100th feast on 26 October which very nicely took place in Christ's, my Cambridge college. I've been going to the Anker Ale (9 Nov) for many years now and it's always a good one; I even sang a song. The 15th–16th November was very busy—I attended the Wath feast on the Friday and as soon as I got home the next day I was off to the Brackley Ale. Wath was different to many such events in that it is a family event, with no dancing, but did it have singing! While I sing little, I tend to be not unfamiliar with the typical songs that one hears at feasts, sessions and the like, but of the songs at Wath, I hadn't heard any before—there is clearly a very strong local vein of folksong, and it was all the more entertaining for it. A good mix of sides were at Brackley, including my second meeting with Oxford this year. We staying at Hinton-in-the Hedges, which was a nice touch (and a lovely place).

I was invited to come along to the Original Welsh Border MM events in December, practice on the 7th and the tour on the 21st. I've not really had a go at Border before and it was great fun, and also a privilege to dance in towns and villages that before have only been names to me (White Ladies Aston, Pershore, Upton-upon-Severn etc). Fun days doing something different, even though it was a long journey, with that big storm also causing an unscheduled overnight in Birmingham! My last event of the year was to go out, as done for a number of years, with Letchworth on Boxing Day at Willian, and Helen and I were made most welcome.

The next thing I write will be my report for the ARM, but I hope I may see as many of you as possible between now and 1 March—I'll be at a few forthcoming events: the Jockey Plough Tour and Stafford Feast, the Ripley Ale, and the Winchester Feast. And I wish you all the best for 2025

From the Bagman's Desk

Freezing wet December then... Bloody January again!

A Happy New Year to all our readers. I'm writing this in a moment's lull of post-Christmas activity with a mug of tea.

This will be my last proper newsletter before I hand over to my successor. As you will see elsewhere we have 2 candidates to replace me, so for the first time in living memory we have an election for the Bagman role. Please digest and discuss in your sides who you'd like your representative to vote for if you have one attending the ARM. The proxy voting procedure is also attached if you cannot send a rep.

2025 is shaping up to be a really good year for events, so please make sure if your side wishes to attend an event that the relevant organisers have been informed asap. Those who organise events will appreciate the need for numbers sooner rather than later where possible.

Finally, a moment of personal reflection. It's been a honour to sit in the Bagman's seat for the last 4 years. I've had many great moments, many of them thanks to the hard work of teams who organise events on behalf of the Ring or the JMO. It would be impossible to thank everyone here, but if you invited me or the other officers to an event please know we really do appreciate it. We're only human, and occasionally will put our foot in it inadvertently or otherwise, but your understanding and patience is always gratefully received.

With a new Squire and Bagman taking up post at the ARM, I ask you all to bear with us during the transition as these things can, despite our very best efforts, occasionally have a bump. We don't anticipate any issues at this time, but Murphy's Law as usual applies...

Good luck to you all for 2025, and galley right!

Peter



A moment of Christmas cheer during the Original Welsh Border Tour, mulled wine in White Ladies Aston
Photo by Robin Aitken of Faithful City

Notices

Notice of the ARM

Notice is hereby given that the Morris Ring will hold its Annual Representatives Meeting (ARM) at Oak Farm Hotel, Cannock, on Saturday 1st March 2025. We are hoping to offer a workshop between the business meeting and the feast, so if any individuals or teams would like to help with this section please email bagman@themorrisring.org

Positions Vacant in the Morris Ring

Overseas Bagman – Ed Worrall has indicated his desire to stand down at the 2025 ARM. The role is primarily act as a primary contact point for our overseas members and for international morris teams visiting the UK. All expressions of interest to bagman@themorrisring.org

The Morris Dancer Editor – Matt Simons has expressed a desire to pass the reins of this occasional publication on, please contact Matt directly matt.j.simons@icloud.com or via the officers if you're interested in taking on this enterprise.

Morris Federation Morris 18-39 Workshop weekend

The Federation is inviting all morris dancers aged 18-39 to a weekend of workshops in Storrington, West Sussex in March. The weekend is all about workshops and is deliberately designed in such a way as to not impinge upon the Morris 18-30's event organised in October.

<https://www.morrisfed.org.uk/event/18-39-workshop-weekend-2025/> . Register for a place by 24th January.

The 90th anniversary of the Morris Ring

Celebration on the 20th October 2024

The Ring has no serious tradition of marking each ten year anniversary, preferring on very sensible logistical grounds instead to do something on the half and quarter centuries. Thus there was a 50th meeting in 1984, and Barry Care mentioned at the 2024 ARM that he's still getting over it! The 75th (2009) was marked by the setting up of the Youth Fund.

Nonetheless, I felt it was worth doing something in this case as a number of us can't be sure we'll be around in 2034! I looked at significant dates in 1934 for inspiration for a celebration, and three seemed particularly important: the Ring can be said to have been instituted on 11 May, when the first Squire and Bagmen took up their duties; there was a meeting of the interested clubs in Thaxted on 2 June during the Morris Weekend; and the inaugural meeting of the Ring took place on 20 October. There was just no time to organise anything in May or June, and anyway, the June anniversary is marked at the Thaxted Morris Weekend by leaving flowers at the house on Newbiggin Street where that meeting took place. This year I was asked by Daniel Kenning, Squire of Thaxted MM, to accompany him when this took place—this very nicely happened to be on Sunday 2 June. This left 20 October as the only choice.

The Inaugural Meeting in 1934 took place at the recently built Cecil Sharp House (CSH) in London, and this seemed logistically the best solution. Via my contacts in EFDSS I was able to book Storrow Hall for the early evening; this is rather small and immediately indicated the need to restrict the event to no more than 50 persons. The six founding sides came to mind, all of which are still in existence. A few emails later, I had a very positive response from all those sides (Thaxted, Letchworth, Cambridge, Oxford, Greensleeves and East Surrey); I was particularly delighted in the response from Oxford as they have not been Ring members for some time, but they were very keen to come along. This is why the whole event was kept very quiet, as more sides could just not be accommodated.

I worked on a format with Lewis Elliott, our London and SE area rep, and we felt that what fitted in best was two walking tours around the Camden area of North London with an evening event at CSH. Lewis kindly reccy'ed several excellent venues and dance spots.

The weather on the day was pretty good, representatives of all sides showed up and there was good dancing and camaraderie very evident. At the final event at CSH, Matt Simons kindly spoke a few words about the founding of the Ring and I looked at where we've come since 1934, and each team did one or two show dances. It was good to see those original sides in fine form. I thank EFDSS for allowing us to book CSH and Lewis for his attention to detail in preparing the tours, and our Treasurer (who was of course there with East Surrey) for underwriting the costs.

But I cannot end without mentioning another initiative. Matthew Turvey (Shakespeare), who is a bellringer as well as our West Midlands area rep, proposed that quarter peals be

rang around the country in the course of the last part of the year to mark the 90th anniversary. I thank him very much for doing this, and below is his account of it.

Nigel Strudwick



Cambridge/Thaxted at the Spread Eagle



Greensleeves at Cecil Sharp House



Outside the Albert



Letchworth at The Queen's



East Surrey at the Lansdowne



Oxford at Cecil Sharp House

Quarter peals in celebration of the anniversary

Firstly, let me introduce myself to those of you who don't know me, I am the West Midlands Area Rep and member of Shakespeare Morris, and also a bellringer in Broadway, Worcestershire and surrounding towers. I had thought this might be quite a niche crossover of hobbies, but over the last few years I've come to meet more and more people who ring big bells as well as the little ones! Having rung for many commemorative events over recent years, when The Morris Ring's 90th Anniversary came up in conversation at an Advisory Council meeting, I started to wonder if it would be possible to ring a peal at a suitable location to mark the 90 years.

After several conversations with ringing Morris dancers I knew locally and via Facebook/email pleas, it became obvious that ringing Morris dancers who could ring a peal were too spread out to form one band, but there were enough Morris dancers to form quarter-peal and rounds and call change bands across the country, and so the 'Ring for The Morris Ring - 90th Anniversary' campaign was born! It took numerous conversations to get these bands together but with the help of a number of determined ringing Morris dancers we have now managed to ring (including 9 quarter peals for the 9 decades) at these 15 churches across the country in 2024, in chronological order:

St Eadburgha's, Broadway, Worcestershire (quarter-peal)
St Peter's, Frampton Cotterell, Gloucestershire (quarter-peal)
St Nicholas', Abbots Bromley, Staffordshire (quarter-peal)
St Michael's, Clapton in Gordano, Somerset (quarter-peal)
St Giles', Horspath, Oxfordshire (quarter-peal)
St James', Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire (rounds and call changes)
St Nicholas', Chearsley, Buckinghamshire (quarter-peal)
St Michael's, Buckland, Gloucestershire (quarter-peal)
St John the Baptist's, Thaxted, Essex (quarter-peal)
Holy Trinity, Hawley, Hampshire (rounds and call changes)
St Peter's, Barnburgh, Yorkshire (rounds and call changes)
Holy Trinity, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire (quarter-peal)
All Saints', Harbury, Warwickshire (rounds and call changes)
St Leonard's, Bretforton, Worcestershire (rounds and call changes)
Abbey Church of the Holy Cross, Pershore, Worcestershire (Grandsire triples)

There have been many highlights for me throughout the course of this campaign. I have rung in nine of the events above but particularly memorable were Broadway, my home tower, so a particular achievement for me; Thaxted, the place where the Morris Ring was constituted 90 years ago in 1934; and Stratford-upon-Avon, a town key to Morris dancing's survival into the 20th century with Cecil Sharp's and Mary Neal's dancing workshops, and also my team's home town which was celebrating its own 65th anniversary (see previous newsletter).

I offer particular thanks to Steve Bowley, an experienced ringer from Elmley Castle who has called a number of the quarter-peals and been a real encouragement in getting this campaign off the ground and in my ringing more generally. I also wish to send huge thanks to all of the ringers who rang and made this achievement possible, and as a token of thanks from The Morris Ring, a handmade leather badge will be making its way to all of the ringers involved over the coming days – see the design on the attached photo.

Matthew Turvey
West Midlands Area Rep



1. The band at Thaxted (L-R) Callum Hayes - St Albans Morris, Charlie Smith - Thaxted Morris Men, Richard Hayes - St Albans Morris, David King, Steve Bowley, Emily Harris - Fenstanton Morris, Matthew Turvey - Shakespeare Morris (photo: Matthew Turvey).



2. Samantha Falconer - Hook Eagle Morris at Hawley (photo: Samantha Falconer).



3. The band at Harbury (L-R): John Mayo - Kirtlington Morris, Lynne Cooke - Hereburgh Morris, Douglas Bates - Hereburgh Morris, Avril Smoulders - Hereburgh Morris, Henry Jones - Hereburgh Morris, Timothy Watkin - Shakespeare Morris, Matthew Turvey - Shakespeare Morris, William Jones - Hereburgh Morris (photo: Dave Shuttleworth).



4. The commemorative leather badge made by 'The Badgesmith' - email: badgesmith2022@gmail.com for commissions, many designs possible. (photo: Roger Hunt)

Notice of election for Bagman at ARM 2025

As previously advertised, the post of Bagman will be vacated at the ARM in March. We have 2 candidates standing for the post, and their statements and nomination letters are posted below. Please read and discuss within your teams with a view to instructing your representative how the side wish to vote at the ARM. For those who cannot attend, read the following passage for proxy voting.

Proxy voting procedure for sides unable to attend the ARM

Please read carefully to avoid invalidating your proxy vote.

1. A side unable to attend the ARM must apply to the Bagman of the Morris Ring by email for a proxy voting form, which will be sent by return email.
2. The side will nominate a proxy who will be in attendance at the ARM. Sides may NOT nominate the Bagman of the Morris Ring, who will administer the process, or Peter de Courcy (Web Editor) who will be Returning Officer.
3. Please obtain the agreement of your chosen proxy and ensure that they will be attending the ARM.
4. The side must complete the proxy voting form and send it to their nominated proxy with the instruction on how to vote. The side must then email the Bagman of the Morris Ring with the name of the person nominated on their behalf. Please do not communicate your voting intentions to anyone other than your nominee.
5. On the day, a voting paper for the side will be issued to the nominated proxy on presentation of the form and they will vote on behalf of that side. One person may be nominee for multiple sides. The Bagman of the Morris Ring will check proxy names against those supplied by sides.
6. In the event of a side having nominated a proxy and subsequently being in attendance at the ARM, the proxy will be cancelled, providing notification of this has been received by the Bagman of the Morris Ring at least ten minutes before the start of the meeting.
7. In the event of a nominee being unable to attend the ARM, any proxy votes they carry can be transferred to the Squire of the Morris Ring to cast, providing this is achieved at least 24 hours before the ARM commences.

Candidate No. 1 - Jonathan “Jono” Millward - Harthill Morris

Fifteen years ago I attended Harthill Morris’ annual Boxing Day performance where my friend’s father (and Harthill Squire) introduced me to a then-future Squire of the Morris Ring, telling me “talk to him, you’re now a member.” The rest, as they say, is history. Still dancing with Harthill and Lord Conyers Morris, both members of the Morris Ring for over 40 years, I have also danced and drummed for an Open Morris Border side and a Morris Federation North-West side, have had the opportunity to dance Cotswold, North-West, Border and Longsword (and learning Rapper!) around the country, and been part of a Mummers group performing The Derby Tup. Currently Squire of Harthill Morris for a second time, I have also served as Publicity Officer and Webmaster for well over a decade, and proudly took on the role of North Area Representative for the Morris Ring from 2018 until 2021.

Outside of the morris I work and have worked as IT and media support, data validator and Business Support Manager, finding my niche in technical and administrative supporting roles.

I am excited for the chance to support Emma in the landmark role of first female Squire of the Morris Ring, and to face the challenge of building on the great work already done in the areas of recruitment and equality, diversity and inclusion by both the Morris Ring and the wider JMO. My time in the morris has been one of great enjoyment and companionship, and it is important for me to be able to support this and the Morris Ring in continuing for everyone for many years to come.



Nomination letter from Wath Morris

Wath Morris
c/o 26 Fitzwilliam Street
Wath-upon-Dearne
Rotherham
S63 7HF

Thursday, 12 December 2024

The Bagman
Morris Ring

Dear Bagman

Nomination of Jonathan Millward for Bagman of the Morris Ring

Wath Morris would be delighted to nominate Jonathan (Jono) Millward for the position of Bagman for the Morris Ring. Jono is currently squire of Harthill Morris with whom we have had a long relationship going back almost 50 years. In that time, we have attended each other's feast, danced together and were delighted to have them at our Ring Meeting. Harthill are an excellent side both in dancing and socially and Jono is an admirable leader. We feel sure that he will be an asset to the Ring if elected and are more than happy to formally nominate him.

Yours sincerely

Tim

For All Wath Morris

Tim Binns
Bagman
Tel: 07884433324
E: wathmorris@aol.com

Candidate No. 2 – Rob Evans - Thaxted Morris

The Morris Ring is a wonderful organisation steeped in history and tradition - and rightly aims to promote fraternity between its members and friendships between sides.

My morris story started as a musician, joining Lassington Oak Morris to learn to dance. I later joined Thaxted and Cambridge Morris Men. As Bagman of Thaxted I've gained essential experience in running a side as well as organising the historic Thaxted Morris Weekend. I've built up extensive expertise in the power of connection - whether in social media, or through more complex work with the Ring supporting other sides and addressing historical issues.

At Thaxted we work closely and dance with other Ring sides, and Federation sides - as well as developing positive communication with Open Morris. This has been fruitful without having to compromise our side's Ring culture or identity.

My professional background has built on my extensive skills in communication, organisation, emotional intelligence, and in working cooperatively and effectively. I've worked in a broad range of sectors including running my own business restoring listed properties, school teaching, floristry, and working for Thaxted parish council as Guildhall custodian.

If elected my priority would be the daily running of the Ring, alongside building positive relationships within the JMO that respect the culture, heritage and esprit de corps of the Ring. I also would aim at empowering member sides to get more involved in the Ring at grassroots level, making us more representative and more welcoming to sides old and new.



Nomination letter from Chalice Morris Men



The Chalice Morris Men

5 Blackmoor
Bideford Road
Worle
Weston-super-Mare
BS22 6LB

12 December 2024

Dear Peter,

Nomination of the Morris Ring Bagman

On behalf of The Chalice Morris Men I have pleasure in the nomination and support for Rob Evans of Thaxted Morris Men who we consider will carry out the duties of Bagman and be an asset to The Morris Ring.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Martin Chapman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Martin Chapman

Squire of The Chalice Morris Men

Minutes from 2024 ARM

Minutes of the 2024 Morris Ring Annual Representatives' Meeting, 2nd March 2024

The meeting opened with the Squire welcoming representatives from the other JMO members. Nigel remarked it was a very attended meeting.

1. Attendees and apologies

Sides represented:

Anker	Golden Star	Ravensbourne
Benfieldside	Green Man	Ripley
Big Jigs	Handsworth	Royal Preston
Bristol	Harthill	Rutland
Bury Pace-Eggers	Hinkley Bullockers	Saddleworth Men
Cambridge	Traditional Ilmington	Saddleworth Women
Chanctonbury Ring	Jockey	Shakespeare
Chester City	Kemp's Men	Stafford
Colchester	Kennet	Taylor's Morris
Dartington	Kingston Spring Grove	Thaxted
Devil's Dyke	Knightlow	Thelwall
Dolphin	Lassington Oak	Traditional Bampton
Earlsdon	Leicester	Trigg
East Suffolk	Letchworth	Uttoxeter
East Surrey	Lord Conyers	Wath-upon-Dearne
Exeter	Mersey	Westminster
First Class Stamp	Morris 18-30	Whitchurch
Flowers of Ilmington	Moulton	White Hart
Fools and Beasts	Original Welsh Border	Winchester
Gloucestershire	Plymouth	Yateley

Plus Jen Cox, Liz Scholey (Open Morris), Pauline Woods-Wilson, Eliza Russell (Morris Federation) and Fee Lock (JMO Secretary), Tim Sercombe (past Squire), Adam Garland (past Squire), Steven Archer (JMO Treasurer and past Treasurer)

Apologies from King Johns, Lincoln and Micklebarrow, Earlsdon, Green Oak, Leyland
Also Cliff Marchant (past squire) and Mike Chandler (past squire)

2. Minutes of the 2023 meeting available on the Morris Ring website

https://themorrisring.org/files/docs/bagmans-newsletter/bagmans-newsletter-no-130-april-2023_0.pdf

3. Matters arising from the minutes

No matters arising

4. Officers' reports (the reports are located in the appendix below):

a. Squire of the Morris Ring

- Nigel added that since his report was submitted he's presented Lord Redesdale with a photograph of the JMO London event, very gratefully received

- Michael Stimpson is standing down as the JMO's insurance broker. Chris Dent of Peterborough is going to shadow and eventually take over in due course
- Peter Copley, Stafford – do members need to need to pay subs to be insured? Pauline confirmed that if a person is declared a member of a side, they are covered.

Accepted, proposed Peter Copley, seconded Charlie Corcoran

b. Bagman of the Morris Ring

- i. Peter Austin declared to the meeting his intention to stand down next year, after 2 terms and a change in circumstances it was time to step back

Accepted, proposed Jono Millward, seconded Steve Holder

c. Treasurer of the Morris Ring

The Treasurer presented a summary of the accounts –

Accounts have not been audited yet

£4200 refunded to sides to card readers

£1000 to Doc Rowe documentary fundraiser

- i. Question re reserves from Mersey

Sarah Roberts – on behalf of Andy Wooles

What is the MR policy on cash reserves? Cash reserves are normally held to meet the short term and emergency funding needs of an organisation. The current MR cash reserves of £62k appear excessive for that purposes, and perhaps some could be used to fund specific Morris development projects?

Clayton – No policy as such, reserves kept and prior treasurers have maintained the reserves for harder times. Not much call for funding. Ideas have not been forthcoming. Looking into setting up grants. 3 levels, up to £1000, £1-3000, and £5000.

Money has to be for projects above and beyond the day to day running of sides. No more than £10000 given out in any given year.

Charlie Corcoran – loans made available for rebranding, would this be an option? Has funding a new production run of bells been considered?

Clayton – Morris Shop, sizeable stock of bells available but not currently accessible

Nigel S – we are working to resolve the shop

Nigel Cox, Whitchurch – back to grants, any chance of loans? Need help funding baldric material run. £1500 needed for Whitchurch.

Clayton – separate conversation to be had

PdC, Kennet – less availability for sides of baldric material.

Robin Springett, Dartington, Past Squire – are we going to develop the idea of grants further, guidelines needed before any further information available. Other things done in the past on similar lines.

Clayton – initial thoughts only, further discussion needed

Accepted, proposed Steven Archer, seconded Jon Melville

d. Chairman of the Advisory Council

Nothing to add

Accepted, proposed Colin Andrew, seconded, Matthew Turvey

e. Morris Ring Archive Group

Nigel S – Duncan Broomhead stepping down, very grateful for his work as keeper of the photographic archive. New volunteer needed to manage photographic archive, plan is to submit it to Essex County Records office to join the rest of the archive.

Chris Wildridge – Duncan is irreplaceable

Accepted, propose Robin Springett, seconded, John Edwards

f. Webmaster and publications

PdC – nothing to add, happy to carry on as web editor

Matt Simons, Cambridge, Editor of The Morris Dancer – took over TMD from Mac McCoig, unfortunately personal circumstances mean I must stand down, anyone who'd like to take it over please get in touch

Peter Austin – thanks to Martin Jones for his continuing work in hosting/running the website

g. Overseas Bagman

See report – nothing to add

5. Elections

a. Squire election

Final count

Emma Melville - 44

Clayton Francis - 28

Congratulations to Emma, office to be taken up next year

Postscript – current Ring membership has 138 Full member sides with voting rights, putting turnout at 52.17%, 37 votes were by proxy

6. Full membership nominations

Nigel noted 2 new associate sides have joined recently, Saddleworth Women's Morris and Bald of Guv'nors. Welcome both.

a. Golden Star

i. Accepted by majority show of hands

b. Flowers of Ilmington

Pete Simpson spoke on behalf of Flowers, they are a good local side of the type the Ring should consider an asset

i. Accepted by majority show of hands

7. **Area Representatives** (year of election in brackets)

East Midlands, Charlie Corcoran (2019)

Nothing to add

South Midlands, Roger Comley (2003), replaced by Geoff Pitt

21 years as area rep

Headington Quarry – celebrating the life of John Graham who passed away last year, 17th March will be a memorial service for him

Whitchurch – went for a weekend in Norfolk in Letchworth, to be repeated

Scallop dance will be presented later – at this point there was a general outbreak of good natured groaning

Northern, Darren Nugent (2021)

4 sides present, 2 sides mentioned TRS

Archive – fascinating discussion had, would be nice if archival policy/guidance/template from the Ring was available

NS – Archive group to produce some guidance

Northwest, David Loughlin (2008)

Nothing to add

Northeast, Brian Pollard (1994) replaced by Nick Appleyard

Nothing to add

West Midlands, Matthew Turvey (Shakespeare) (2021)

Nothing to add

Eastern, Matt Simons (Peterborough) (2023)

Archives – plans and activities discussed, Cambridge archive currently being catalogued at Ely. Archivist has been cataloguing since September, aim for online access after Easter. Rutland archive about to be deposited at Leicester and Rutland Archive in Wigston

South East, Lewis Elliot (Westminster, Greensleeves et al) (2023)

Question marks over proxy vote process, abstention as an option would be nice

South Wales and West, Paul Reece (2017)

What we should archive was discussed.

Ratified by the areas.

8. Area Representatives' Reports

- East Midlands – report in appendix
- South Midlands – report in appendix
- North West – report in appendix
- North East – report in appendix
- North – report in appendix
- West Midlands – report in appendix
- Eastern – report in appendix
- South East – report in appendix
- South West and Wales – report in appendix

9. Future events

- 13th Apr Joint Morris Organisations' Day of Dance 2024 (Newark)
- 27th Apr Cambridge Morris Men, Centenary Spring Day of Dance (Ring Meeting 368)
- 31st May - 2nd Jun Thaxted Annual Weekend of Dance
- 10th Aug Stratford-upon-Avon Day of Dance (Provisional Ring Meeting 369)
- 23rd – 25th Aug Saddleworth Rushcart (Provisional Ring Meeting 370)
- 28th Sept Peterborough Morris Day of Dance (Provisional Ring Meeting 371)
- 11th-13th Oct Fools and Beasts Unconvention, Birmingham

10. Any other business

- a. *Question re full voting rights for joint members from Order of Fools and Beasts*
 - i. *Discussion to be had on if and how it can be changed*
- b. *Colin Andrews, Morris Dance Database – available for questions today if anyone has them*
- c. *Robin Springett – 90th Anniversary of the Ring, centenary celebrations should start to be thought about now.*
Barry Care – I organised the 50th and I'm still recovering
Nigel S – We'll mark the 90th anniversary throughout the year at the events highlighted
- d. *Joe Oldaker, Anker – Heart of England Longsword practice set available to a good home – immediately claimed by Wath Morris*

11. Date of next meeting

March 1st 2025

Meeting closed at 15:27

Morris Ring Publications

bagmEditor of the Morris Dancer
Position Vacant, please contact officers if interested in filling the role

On-line Links:



The main MR website with millions of pages stuffed to the gunnels with all you need to know about the MR: <https://www.themorrisring.org/>

The Morris Ring Google Group (MRGG). Private Forum for debate or announcements. <https://groups.google.com/group/the-morris-ring>

Contact the Morris Ring Bagman to register to use.

Morris Ring Facebook site: <https://www.facebook.com/TheMorrisRing>

Morris Ring Twitter: <https://twitter.com/TheMorrisRing>

Call for Contributions

Any items of urgent Morris-related news, please send to me at bagman@themorrisring.org for inclusion in the next Newsletter.

If you have any photographs, you can send them to Duncan Broomhead, the Morris Ring Photo Archivist (duncan.broomhead@btinternet.com).

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).

