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Special Newsletter – Squire Election Candidates

January 2024

Please find statements from both candidates below.

Please circulate these to your sides and discuss who you wish to vote for. If you are sending a delegate to the ARM, please ensure they are aware of who the side wishes them to vote for, and that only one vote per side will be accepted. If you do not have delegates attending and wish your vote to be counted, please follow the proxy vote procedure as laid out below.

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.
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 administrate 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 1 – Emma Melville, Anker Morris Men



I am Emma Melville, a member of Anker, First Class Stamp Appalachian, Dolphin, Knightlow and Hinckley Bullockers. I have been involved with morris and The Ring for nearly fifty years – as a spectator until I went to university and then I got involved.

I joined Portland Poklers North West team – first to play, then as dancer and eventually foreman. I also learnt step clog, joined Touchwood Appalachian and became a musician for Dolphin Morris Men. Moving to Nuneaton, I joined Anker Morris and Hinckley Bullockers as musician and First Class Stamp as a dancer.

I organised Anker's Ring meeting in 2015 and, for four years, have been Anker's squire. I am now their Bagman.

I teach the dance at First Class Stamp and run Appalachian workshops at the festivals they attend. I was instrumental in the team moving to the Ring. They danced in in 2019 – the first mixed side to become full members. I also play for Knightlow and have recently taken over running Hinckley Bullockers.

I was part of the Squire's commission looking into constitutional change and relevance. I believe the Ring should maintain traditions and standards while evolving to survive in the modern world and engaging the next generation. Co-operation and positive relationships with the JMO are important and something I can maintain.

Morris, to me, is entertainment, joy and fellowship – a community and family which is a major part of my life. I feel this immersion and enjoyment makes me ideal to lead the Ring into the future.

Nomination of Emma Melville as Squire of the Morris Ring by Saddleworth Morris Men

As a side we have known Emma since she started to attend Saddleworth Rushcart with her parents Mike & Cynthia Garland and Brother Adam in the 1980's. Since then she has been a regular attender both as a spectator and musician for Anker MM, Dolphin MM, and others, and more recently Knightlow MM a side local to her that she has helped from its inception. She has also helped organise and lead the band of Morris musicians at the Rushcart Sunday Church service

We believe it is as Squire of Anker MM and organiser of Anker's 2015 Ring meeting, as a dancer with First Class Stamp (an Appalachian team who joined the Morris Ring in 2019 as full members) that Emma has shown her qualities: a supporter and facilitator of sides in her region, an ambassador for Morris Ring membership in the wider Folk dance world, and an engaged and committed supporter of the values the Morris Ring works to promote - most recently shown as a member of the Squire's commission on Constitutional reform.

The Morris world is ever changing and evolving, the challenges presented by Covid being the most recent pressing issue. The qualities that a person brings to being Squire, and to those challenges, is what matters most.

Saddleworth believe that Emma has the right experience, skills and grounding in the Morris Ring to meet the challenges and we nominate her for Squire of the Morris Ring.

Saddleworth MM – October 2023

Candidate 2 – Clayton Francis, East Surrey Morris Men

Dear Morris Ring,

I am declaring my candidacy for Squire of the Morris Ring. As current Treasurer, I have dedicated the past five years to upholding the values and traditions of Morris dancing, and am confident that my experience, expertise, and unwavering commitment to our shared passion will enable me to lead the Morris Ring during my tenure.

I have successfully spearheaded significant transformations, including the implementation of a web-based subscription and administration platform. Furthermore, I played a pivotal role in securing the waiver of membership fees during the COVID-19 pandemic.

My vision for the Morris Ring is one that blends reverence for our rich heritage with a proactive approach to adapting and expanding our reach. I envision a future where the vibrant spirit of Morris dancing permeates many communities, attracting new enthusiasts for this great tradition.

Collaboration is paramount in achieving these goals. By strengthening our ties with the Open Morris and Morris Federation through the JMO, we can harness our collective strengths and magnify the impact of Morris dancing on a broader scale. By pooling our expertise and resources, we can elevate the visibility of Morris and introduce its enduring beauty to a wider audience.

I am confident that we can preserve the essence of Morris dancing while simultaneously expanding its reach and impact on generations to come.

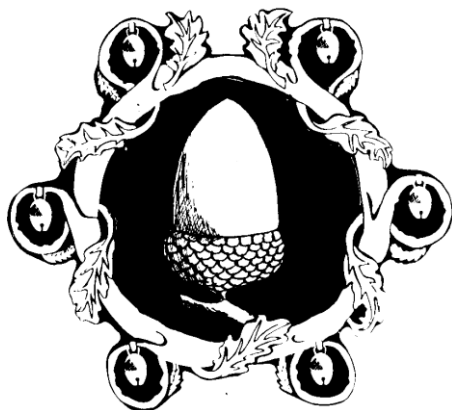
I am honored to have served the Morris Ring and hope to further the legacy of this cherished dance tradition.

Yours sincerely,

Clayton Francis

ESMM





Greensleeves Morris Men

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10th December 2023

Peter Austin
Bagman
The Morris Ring
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Dear Peter

On behalf of Greensleeves Morris Men I am writing to propose Clayton Francis of East Surrey Morris Men as next Squire of the Morris Ring.

Greensleeves and East Surrey have been associated for many years, dancing together regularly at their Peasmarsh Weekends and other occasions, and as a consequence have got to know Clayton and his colleagues well.

Having danced with East Surrey for over 20 years Clayton has high standards of dancing and a strong affection and awareness of the morris traditions and history, and he is keen to continue working together with the other morris organisations to showcase these and take them forward. His time as Club Bagman and Ring Treasurer has given him wider experience and knowledge, and with his personality and communication skills we feel he has the attributes and dedication necessary for this important position.

Neil Barrett

Squire

Greensleeves Morris Men