

~ the morris ring ~
founded 1934 ~

THE
Circular
Edited for the Morris Ring by Eddie Dunmore
72 Mayfield Road, South Croydon, Surrey CR2 0BF

Number 34





The Squire

The headline of the year must be that it did not rain at all in Saddleworth for the Rushcart weekend. The sun shone as it has done most of the summer.

This year's dancing season has been most enjoyable. The first big event after Easter was Horwich Prize Medal's St George's Day. It is events such as this that make me realise what a privilege it is to be Squire of The Ring. As a member of a Cotswold side, I would not have normally been invited but I had the pleasure and the privilege to watch North-West all day in Horwich. This was swiftly followed by a joint meeting with the other Morris organisations to discuss matters of common interest. It is important that we keep lines of communication open with the Morris Federation and the Open Morris and also with EFDSS.

The summer has been taken up with Ring meetings and days of dance. My apologies to Winster

and Greensleeves that last minute changes in my work schedule meant that I missed their events. The first Ring meeting was at Thaxted. Past Squires of The Ring had warned me that it was something special to walk down the hill from the church into Town Street leading 150 Morris men into a crowd of 2000 people. I had been part of the procession for twenty years but I now know what they meant. Despite the rain at the first show, it was yet another good meeting. The theme of the speech that proposed the health of Thaxted at the feast and was carried on into Father Richard's sermon on the Sunday was "year after year after year".

Then into July and down to Sussex for Long Man's first Ring meeting after 21 years as members of The Ring. The sun did shine and Long Man are to be congratulated and thanked for a most successful first meeting. Any side wanting to run a Ring Meeting for the first time

could do worse than speak to Long Man about their planning and organisation. This was swiftly followed by Silurian's meeting based on Ledbury. The Past Bagman had told me that it would be like Thaxted. Well up to a point. It did not rain. The sun shone all weekend and it was again a most enjoyable weekend.

And now the summer is almost over. Leicester Morris Men will be hosting their Ring Meeting in two weeks time (as I write) and I look forward to that. My diary is beginning to fill up for the rest of the year with ales and feasts to which I look forward. There are still a few gaps.

One of the forthcoming events I am looking forward to is the Centenary celebration of Cecil Sharp's meeting with Headington Quarry Morris Men "in the forenoon of Tuesday 26th December 1899". HQMD will be dancing on December 26. I hope that all sides will be able to dance at some time on that day and make particular reference to that chance meeting one hundred years ago that led to the revival of folk music generally and of Morris dancing in particular. The first dance that Cecil sharp saw was Laudanum Bunches. I hope that all sides, well all Cotswold sides, can dance at least that dance on Boxing Day. I give Ring members advance notice: it will be one of the mass dances at Ring meetings in 2000.

Looking a bit further ahead, the ARM at the end of March – the meeting itself is on All Fools' Day! – will be the occasion for electing my successor. I am told that there are at least two men who have asked for nomination papers. I hope that there will be an election. It is a measure of the health of an organisation if its officers are elected. It will also be the time to debate the issue of the role of women musicians. During the next few weeks Area Reps will be letting me know how many Ring sides have women musicians and also what the issues are that this raises. As I have said before it is up to the members of The Ring to decide.

One other development that I hope to see to completion before my term of office ends next year is the microfilming of all the log books and the early account books of The Ring. I would also like to find some way of making them more accessible to sides. Any suggestions will be gratefully received. Volume one is available from the Ring shop. I have had the opportunity to look at later volumes and they make fascinating reading.

The practise season is almost upon us. It is also a good time to recruit new members. If you have had a successful recruiting drive, let us know how you did it so others can benefit.

Continue to flourish.
Wassail

*Daniel Fox, Squire
September 1999*

THE DOUGLAS KENNEDY MEMORIAL FUND

Is your club planning a trip abroad in 2000? The Douglas Kennedy Memorial Fund exists to help clubs represent England abroad by making a modest, but helpful,

contribution to your travelling expenses.

Douglas (to those of you too young to remember) was a former Squire of the Ring and Director of the Society from 1924 - 1961. As he would have wished,

preference will be given to clubs with a young membership.

Applications should be made by 31st January, 2000, to the Clerk to the Trustees, Robert Parker,

40, Nightingale Road, Hampton, Middlesex TW12 3HZ. Successful applicants will be notified as soon as possible.

*Ronald Smedley
Chairman of the Trustees*

Where are They Now? (continued)

Dear Eddie,

The Godstone photo, and my subsequent letter seems to have jogged a few memories. I have also had a 'phone call about it from Thames Valley Morris Men.

With regard to Bob Tatman's comments re. "Dancing Marathons", I can remember that in the 50's, most of our members were then in their twenties and much slimmer and fitter although not necessarily more expert than they are now.

In those days we took on at least 4x8-stop Saturday tours each year plus regular Monday evening outings and 4 Ring Meetings – every side being entitled to attend the Spring meeting at C# House, Thaxted and meetings held in July and September, as there were less sides about then. East Surrey also had our Whitsun week-end tour of the Rye area which is still going strong.

The side consisted of about 10 men, so 5 dances per stop was the norm for each of us. As I remember, transport was what you could find, usually motor bikes, the occasional car, public transport and an open lorry which we hired locally (with Mr Cross, the owner/driver) for 12/6d (62½p) per hour.

That meeting in 1960 was memorable for several reasons. Firstly our founder and teacher Ken Constable, a man of few words, wrote to us announcing his retirement from the Morris as he had reached 60. With his best wishes for the weekend, he enclosed £5 for us to have a drink on him – in fact, it bought over 50 pints in those days!

The finale of the weekend was an invitation to most of the sides present to give a display at Lyne House, the home of Capt. Evelyn Broadwood – Lord Lieutenant of the County – to celebrate the centenary of the birth of Lucy Broadwood. Nibs Matthews, the newly elected Squire of the Ring, was in charge and several EFDS "big-wigs" were on hand. Douglas Kennedy gave an address and Pat Shaw sang some of her col-

lected songs. We all danced and hoovered up the cucumber sandwiches and beer provided.

I led one tour which included Jockey, Winchester and Mendip. We danced, among other places, at Croydon – on the site which is now the main underpass – and we then called in on my Mum who had prepared packed lunches for all the tour (she didn't like to think that her boy might go hungry). This form of catering was picked up by Jockey at their Ring Meeting the following year.

In the evening I remember leading a tour including Benfleet and Oxford and negotiating an impromptu demo fee of 3 crates of light ale for dancing at a private function in a pub where we were performing to a nil audience outside.

Happy days indeed! Would that I could re-live them!
Wassail,
Bob Davies

Dear Eddie,

Having just received from my Bagman a copy of The Circular, No. 33, I am reminded that I promised to send you my copy of the Souvenir Programme of the Reigate Ring Meeting. Here it is! Please do with it whatever you think best.

Thanks for printing my letter to you in full (most editors muck my letters around so much that all sense of the argument gets lost). But I bet you get some letters from some smart-arse like my mate Gordon Ridgewell (did you know that he was the original London Rodney fool?) to the effect that I said that 30 guest sides were present whereas your cast list covered only 20. Whatever happened to Northampton, Offley, Oxford City, Ravensbourne, St. Albans, Stafford, Thames Valley, Westminster, Winchester & Woodside? Did they flip over the end of your floppy thing?

Bob Tatman

From: "Wedgwood, Adrian (Brewers)" <Adrian.Wedgwood@Brewers.Bass.com>

To: "Eddie Dunmore (Morris Ring)" <eddie.dunmore@tesco.net>

Date: Mon, 21 Jun 1999

Returning from a tour of the Antipodes in February to the better beer of Burton upon Trent I was astonished to discover my picture on the front cover of The Morris Dancer.

Taken thirty nine years ago at a Ring Meeting tour to Godstone, Surrey, the Burton-upon-Trent Morris team is (l-r) Cedric Insley, Gerald Insley, David Page, Mike Lacey, Adrian Wedgwood and, up aloft, Peter Page.

Most of us haven't met up for years. A combination of moves around Britain and the demise of the Burton Morris Men in the late 60's have allowed us to drift apart. But a few phone calls and the old team got together at the Bass Museum in Burton for a re-

union, with our partners, and the re-creation of the photograph taken nearly four decades before. Helen Manning, whose late husband George founded the Burton men, joined us and helped us reminisce.

We are in exactly the same order on the latest pictures as before. Most hadn't danced for years. Gerald Insley danced most recently with Greensleeves and me with Stafford, Bathampton and Uttoxeter Heart of Oak. Some old Burton baldricks & hats were recovered from lofts and cupboards and we enjoyed several pints and lots of happy memories. We did manage to lift Peter but we were soon back in typical pose and hadn't lost the knack of enjoying a pint!

Our thanks to the lady in Croydon, Bob Davies of East Surrey Morris Men and to you for creating the opportunity for this reunion of the Burton Morris Men.
Adrian Wedgwood



Correspondence

2 July 1999

Dear Eddie

What a shame Brian Collins ("Playing for the morris", Circular 33) had to indulge in diatribe against fellow morris musicians where a constructive critique would have provided a better read, and have been of much greater value to many who play for the Morris.

The particular brunt of his personal prejudice (leaving aside "bloody church bell ringers" whose own traditions and skills he clearly has neither time nor respect for) is the accordion player. Yes, Mr Collins, we can all think of accordionists we would rather not listen or dance to, worse still have to play alongside; but it is equally possible to find players of the concertina, melodeon, pipe and tabor (not you Bert), and (dare I suggest) whistle, whose playing leaves just as much to be desired.

My own side (East Surrey Morris Men) has 6 musicians playing 2 accordions, English concertina, fiddle, melodeon and whistle. Typically we dance to between 2 and 4 musicians, sometimes more. Our music, from the dancers' point of view, is always at its best when we have accordion, concertina, fiddle and whistle playing together. As a side we dance from a wide range of traditions (in itself demanding skill from the musicians), but focus on those that require skill in the variation of expression and tim-

ing of the music. How, then, do we succeed with up to six musicians (including two accordionists, heaven forbid) when such a combination, according to Mr Collins, should lead us to harmonic violation? A good starting point is that our musicians have no need to feed their egos, but important factors are:

- They all danced to a high standard with East Surrey before playing for the dance. Thus they have that intimate feel for the "East Surrey style" that the vast majority of non-dancers would never grasp.
- They are all privileged to have played with, and learned from, Martin Jolley. Martin was an excellent fiddle player and his playing for Morris had a magic of its own.
- They have a skill specific to musicians, missing in many players of musical instruments - that of playing in sympathy with each other.
- They carefully watch the dance.
- They keep it simple.

What then of the groups of musicians who, as Brian Collins quite rightly states, often violate the music for massed dances? The underlying problem, I believe, is musicians who are unprepared to respect any speed or style other than their own, and weak musicians who accelerate in speed. A group of musicians inevitably takes the speed of the fastest. The rule for musicians should be "when in Rome..."

However whilst excluding all but appointed musicians might improve massed music, this would run strongly against the spirit of massed dancing. The balance I favour is to allow wide participation, but to encourage playing in sympathy to an appointed lead musician.

Massed music will rarely be exceptional, but neither is dancing to any musicians who do not know your dance style.

Yours Sincerely
David Shires

Foreman, East Surrey Morris Men

The Future of the Ring

Pete Thomas asks some interesting questions. Unfortunately the answers will not be very encouraging. The Morris Ring is, in my view, dying on its feet. It is populated by ageing misogynists who act like this is 1899 rather than 1999.

We have people wittering on about the prehistoric origins and innate spirituality of the Morris like it's some New Age religion. Much like the sort of people who choose to believe that we are descended from aliens or that the pyramids were used by ancient Egyptians to sharpen razor blades. The same sort of people who like philosophical debates about how many Morris men should dance on the head of Keith Chandler.

They bang on and on about The Tradition. What is this tradition they harp on about, and who really cares? We will never know for sure when Morris started, why it started, where it started, who invented the first dance, how it was danced, how much they collected, and what

they spent it on. And even if we did know, unequivocally, what earthly difference would it make to 95% of dancers or potential dancers today? In short the Ring is an irrelevance to most modern thinking people.

Pete asks about quality. This brings me on to Fag-Paper Morris - so what's that then?

It is a style of dancing prevalent in Ring sides and very popular with the older dancer. It is easy to learn and effortless to perform. All you do is dance so close to the ground that it is impossible to slide a fag paper under your feet even when capering with all your might. Accompany this with music played so fast that you can hear the crack as your feet break the sound barrier. Regularly blag the punters with references to fertility, crops, and good luck. Collect like crazy and drink the proceeds. Sorted!

You can't go wrong; how about a catchy slogan - crops "R" us? You never know, this might attract fit young men into the Morris. And if it did what would we do? Well, on the evidence I have seen we will immediately teach them to dance like old men.

Even if the Ring were prepared to change - and I see no evidence that it is - it is probably too late anyway. The future lies with the Federation and the Open Morris and perhaps that is how it should be. The Ring was right for the time and the culture in which it was formed but is now an anachronism long past its sell-by date.

Cheers

Nigel Cavendish
Wyre Forest Morris Men

The Editor

The Guardian, 3-7 Ray Street, London EC1R 3DQ
E-mail: the.editor@guardian.co.uk
Fax: 0171-713 4722
Direct line: 0171-239 9651



Dear Eddie,
I read about The Circular and The Morris Dancer in Esquire a while ago, and wondered if you could send us the most recent issues? We'd be v. grateful,
Milly Jenkins

Photo Credits

- | | |
|---------|-------------------------------------|
| p.1: | Eddie Dunmore |
| p.3: | John Hawkins & Hilary Blanford |
| p.4: | Gordon Ridgewell |
| p.5: | Gordon Ridgewell & Malcolm Appleton |
| pp 8/9: | Steve Burgess |
| p.10: | Duncan Redpath |
| p.12: | Steve Burgess |

On revisiting the Cotswolds

In June 1999 the Travelling Morrice celebrated its 75th anniversary by revisiting the area of its first tour, when the intention had been "to take the morris out of the classroom" and back to its home territory. During that pioneering week the young men had met up with survivors of defunct morris sides, learned much from them and given them much pleasure by rejuvenating their much-loved traditions.

This year's tour overlapped with the very week of the 1924 tour, and thus also with the week when Cecil Sharp died. It was interesting to ruminate on the changes that had taken place since then. It was in 1951 that I myself first danced in the Cotswolds. The greatest impact in the preceding quarter-century had of course been that of the motor car, and in its wake macadamised streets and street lighting. With all the dust and mud, how on earth (literally) did those early dancers manage to keep their white flannels clean? I don't know if morris historians have addressed this!

In 1951, as in 1924, the dancers still travelled from place to place by bike, accompanied by just one car to carry the impedimenta. The sensation of cycling

into a village and being greeted by a waiting group outside the 'local' was little short of magical. Alas, genuine local pubs and people have now all but disappeared: village inns have been converted to eating houses, of-

Customers of such places are not easily winkled out of their seats to watch a rustic display outside. The social changes of fifty years have been truly dramatic. You are very unlikely nowadays to find many peasants

Has the morris itself become just a facet of **English Heritage**? It felt like it, in such places as Bourton on the Water or Stow on the Wold, where we ourselves (let's face it, no longer in our earliest youth) were begin-



The Travelling Morrice dancing at Sherborne, June 1999

fering the now standard traditional fare of scampi Provencale and chilli con carne.

in places like Fieldtown, and there are few whose memory of their own village goes back more than a dozen years or so.

ning to wilt in the afternoon sun for the benefit of coach loads of Autumn Club members and Japanese tourists.

Having said this, the villages themselves are as beautiful as ever – perhaps more so – vying with each other for the honour of being voted 'Best Kept Village of the Year'. With 'conservation a priority, it is hard to imagine any form of future change. The tidy hand of **English Heritage** is everywhere apparent: even, ironically, to the extent of repainting Giles Gilbert Scott's telephone kiosks (which had originally been given stone colouring in deference to the local building material) in 'traditional' red.

Did this sort of thing ever enter the minds of the early revivalists, one wonders? The last survivor of the 1924 tour died just a few years ago, so we cannot find out. Not for many years has the morris been taught in schools – more's the pity perhaps, we do need young dancers. It is nice to think that our own traditions will remain truly alive, unlike many of the villages we visited. Happily, revival sides now flourish in several Cotswold towns and villages; we were privileged to dance with a few of them. In one sense at least the aims of the original TM may be said to have been fulfilled.

John Hawkins



TM at Willesey, about to dance Constant Billy, Headington (photo: Hilary Blanford)

Thaxted, 4 – 6.vi.1999: the 277th



Squire of the Ring, Daniel Fox, leads the procession to the Massed Show: pipe & tabor accompaniment by Past Squire Bert Cleaver & Mike Cogan.



The Abbots Bromley Horn Dance



Past Squire Ivor Allsop filming, with the Thaxted Junior side in attendance



Bidford Princess Royal by Lord Conyers Morris

Meeting of the Morris Ring



Past Squire Bert Cleaver accompanying Bonnets So Blue (Bucknell) for Peter Contrastano of Black Joker Morris

The illustrations of the Thaxted Meeting on these two pages are an eclectic selection of the detail in fourteen photographs taken by the indefatigable Gordon Ridgewell.

The remaining memento of Timothy's Progress was supplied by Dudley Binding, from the camera of Malcolm



Highland Mary (Bampton) as performed by Utrechts Morris men

Appleton of West Somerset Morris.

May Day 1999: Bank Holiday Weekend Celebrations in Jersey



Past Squire Mike Chandler & other members of the orchestra for Laudnum Bunches



Past Squire Tim Sercombe continues his International Tour – Helier Men provided excellent hospitality & weather to visiting teams from Exeter & West Somerset.

Rural Rhythms Piano Duets

Dorothy Pilling

21st June 1999

Dear Eddie,

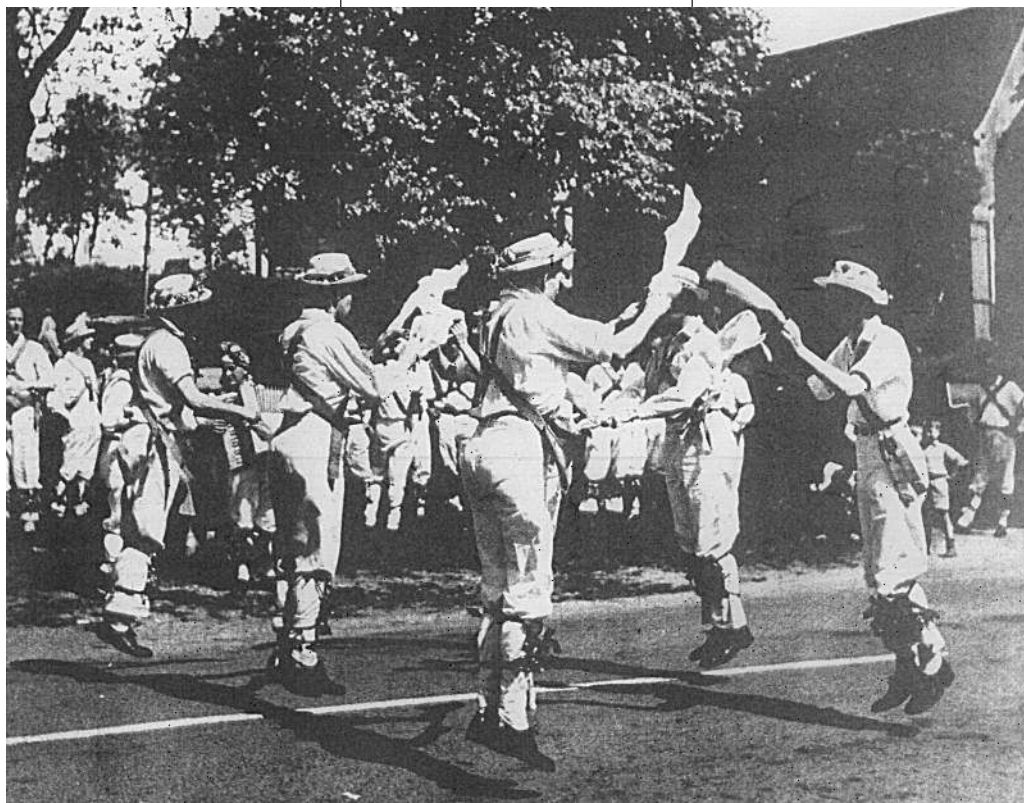
I mentioned to you about there being a photo of a morris side on a music cover: I have now unearthed it. There are two copies, one on an ordinary photocopier & the other on a laser. I don't know whether they are worth reproducing, i.e. how clear they might be.

The original is a pale green, presumably to emphasise the rurality. Some of the chaps standing in the background & the accordionist could perhaps be recognised – and also maybe the situation/event. The music was published by the Manchester music shop (still in Deansgate) in 1936.

Dorothy was responsible for a lot of uninteresting piano music for front parlour students. The current item has no relation to traditional music.

Good wishes,

Julian Pilling.



Above: The Bagman & friend (hiding The Squire)
Left: How to feel small

I must go for a tinkle – Silurian ‘99

by Tarquin Gooser (former critic “Upper Dicker Echo”)

It can hardly be described how excited my friend Lucien and I were to receive an invitation to explore Silurian’s ring. The news that there would be indoor camping was the cherry on the cake. As a thrusting journalist I wanted to do it properly and so I put the question to a large group of my friends, “If I were going morris dancing for a whole weekend what would I need?” Most of them said “Help” but one or two offered more constructive advice. I equipped myself with some facial hair and a sort of tin cup for my gin and it, and set off to ease myself into the men of North Wood Morris.

I was particularly taken by a dance I had seen them do in the past which they called ‘Leap-frog’. It involved men bending down in front of you while you tried to jump over them. They don’t do it any more but that didn’t stop Lucien and me practising it at home at every opportunity. I turned up to practices for several weeks and enjoyed the exhilarating thrill of standing with my substantial stave held proud and erect in front of me. I never did any dancing.

A generous offer came from Hartley Morris to share their vintage ‘bus for the journey to Ledbury. Of course there were arguments about who would go on top and the fact that it was a single decker did nothing to diminish those arguments. We set off at lunchtime on the Friday having used Hartley’s home pub as a meeting point. North Wood felt that in return for such hospitality they had no option but to purchase beer whilst waiting.

I am not an expert in mechanics (although I do believe that a little grease helps things go in easier) but I was surprised to find that the coach required a polypin of beer on the back seat as ballast. It was also vital that the ballast was gradually lightened as the journey proceeded. A responsibility from which no man shirked! A brief moment of kerb-crawling procured a hitch-hiker just off the M25. I think the driver was taken by his moustache, slightly reminiscent of the Village People. Coincidentally, he happened not only to be going to Ledbury but also to be a member of North Wood. There were a number of ‘comfort stops’ on the way and the one thing I learnt was never to pick blackberries from an A-road layby!

The weekend itself was a triumph of splendid weather and beautiful countryside. North Wood’s Saturday tour saw them joined by Men of Wight, Thaxted, and three members of the host side. The first stop at Ross-on-Wye featured a pub with no beer but some lovely hanging baskets. So having done a dance or two each, the sides moved up the road to the old market. It appeared that this was much more acceptable to the dancers. Atmosphere, an appreciative audience, a convenient well-stocked pub, and a 1 in 4 gradient! A good stop watched by a number of Croydon ex-pats. After about 30 minutes they finished some forty-five minutes before they were due to start – apparently.

The other stops were generally unencumbered by spectators. During lunch the chaps saw off a barrel of Timothy Taylor Landlord, sang songs accompanied by the flying fingers of North Wood’s (late Rutland) Brian Collins, and, virtually to a man, lusted after a young waitress. Lucien and I couldn’t understand the fuss. This was followed by impromptu dancing above the septic tank in the garden. Really they were just going through the motions. Throughout the day I was a little unsure as to the job of the three Silurian men. It appeared to be first off the bus, first to the bar, stay there, last back on the bus. They carried it out with dazzling efficiency!

On our return to Ledbury, we found that our hosts had absconded with the hall key. There was no alternative but to repair to the local hostelry and wait. Relief was brought about by one team with a junior member. They discovered a small opening round the back into which a young boy could be comfortably inserted. It was turning into a very educational trip.

Saturday night’s feast was an enjoyable affair. There were complaints from North Wood that the waiting staff had clearly learnt from previous Ring meet-



The Treasurer in conference with the hosts

ings as they all wore long skirts and sports bras. The après-feast singing struck me as rather flat (emotionally not harmonically) but enthusiastic sessions in pubs around the town later more than made up for it.

On Sunday morning I had the familiar urge, I was aching for a mouthful of hot, plump sausage but it was time for breakfast. Lucien took the opportunity to dip his bread then off we went to process to the church. I took my place with East Surrey up my rear. On arrival a number of the more committed Pagan-types joined Lucien and I in thinking that we weren’t ready for salvation. Instead we were introduced to a photograph of a girl’s tattooed buttock by ex-Squire Tim: we had to go and drink coffee. By 10am we had convinced the landlord to open the bar. Then came the massed dancing by the ancient shed-y thing in the middle of the town, during which every team gave of their best in an orgy of colour and movement. The most ecstatic of the wild applause was reserved for the dancing-in of the new bagman and for the home side, Silurian, who brought proceedings to a close. All that was left was lunch, a strippergram, and the journey home. Safely back with Lucien in our pied-a-terre I reflected on the heady excitement of the weekend and gulped down a large, stiff one.



The North Wood Morris in typical pose

Review: Mainly Martin

East Surrey Morris Men: Martin Jolley (fiddle); Keith Gamble (accordion); Ron Nunn (concertina); Bob Hobley (whistle).

This recording of morris tunes comes on a recordable CD. Displaying commendable foresight, my CD-ROM drive didn't like it from the outset but my old Sony deck was less fussy. Even so, some tracks skipped, not necessarily in time to the music, and the last one, advertised as the melody for the Wheatley Processional Dance – the nicest of the processional tunes, to my way of thinking – wasn't there at all according to both LCD readout and ears. Some CD players are being specifically advertised as capable of reading recordable discs; I'm far from being technophobic but I seriously wonder how many machines I must have to play all these different media. To be fair, though, the notes have a caveat to the effect that all copies of the CD will not necessarily be the same.

The disc is a tribute to East Surrey's Martin Jolley (1909-1996), hence its title, and consists (I'm quoting the inkjet-printed insert) of recordings made in 1985 and 1989. We're not told the original recording medium

but the hiss suggests a portable cassette machine. It is a pity, then, that one of the readily available programs that will clean up old analogue recordings (I've seen them advertised for as little as £13) was not employed in the production. And why, when the emphasis is on the music of the morris, do the sleeve-note graphics depend on a drawing of a dancer? There is no picture of a musician, let alone of Martin himself, although he does appear in a cartouche on the back of the case. In the nineteenth century the musician was often imported and paid for his services; does the lack of representation suggest an ongoing suspicion of professionalism within what is, essentially, an amateur pursuit?

I have to come clean: I don't get a lot out of listening to tunes divorced from the dances with which they are associated. I feel the same about listening to opera – only half of a performance is represented. (I can, though, understand a side wishing to pay their respects to an admired musician and that makes me feel like something of an intruder, listening to instrumental performances which

have strong emotional relevance for a particular group of people whose privacy I have invaded.) Some of the first 22 tracks of the listed 45 are made more credible in that they are actually danced by Dick Larque while the music is being played. These jig tunes occasionally involve other players apart from Martin Jolley and, if proof were needed of my suspicions about morris bands (*Circular* 33 p. 8) here it is.

Listen no further than the second track in (Bledington: *Ladies' Pleasure*): fiddle and box are lamentably out of sync, especially in the once-to-yourself when the solo jigger is psyching himself into the dance. Just who is he supposed to believe? And do we need all of those chord changes in the augmented music? Sherborne: *Go and enlist* (track 18) fares little better even though the 4-squaredness of the melody and its augmented variant should facilitate playing together. All of this is such a shame for these jig-tracks present a fine catalogue of tunes from a wide range of traditions. Several were new to me and I wish that they were more often danced out if only for the

strength of the melodies. I felt on much more secure ground in the set-dances that constitute the second half, as it were, of the recording. But, however good or interesting Martin's playing and however wide, again, the variety of traditions, these are extracts only and only serve to emphasise the esotericism that I referred to earlier.

This all sounds a bit negative but I did find aspects of this disc appealing. I especially liked the 'cock-ups' (and they are actually referred to as such in the sleeve notes). I suppose that in TV-speak they would be "out-takes" but I prefer the traditional term. We musicians have all blundered now and again by playing the wrong tune, or the wrong-village version of it; after all, how many morris tunes start with the same anacrusis rising fourth? It's easy to get misled. The worst crime of all is when the mind goes completely blank and one is not able to remember the tune at all. That's happened to me on more occasions than I like to think about and I've needed a reminder from the dancers. But we have to let them win sometimes, I suppose. They need to practise much more than we do.

Brian Collins

BRITAIN'S "MRBASS" TO RETIRE IN 2000

Adrian Wedgwood, director of Burton's world renowned Bass Museum, is to retire in January 2000 following a successful, distinguished career in the brewing, media & tourism industries. During his six-year leadership of the internationally renowned Bass Museum of Brewing he has raised its reputation & profile to being widely regarded as Britain's national brewing museum and Burton's biggest attraction.

Creating new attractions, establishing the Museum Brewing Company, becoming the only brewery in the World licensed for marriages and growing visitor numbers to well over 100,000 each year, he has broadened the appeal of the Bass

Museum to include the history of the British brewing industry. Its vision now is to be recognised formally as Britain's National Museum of Brewing. Recent steps in that direction include winning the 1997 Museum of the Year Award for the Best Education Service in Britain and the Heart of England Training for Tourism Award 1999, which now puts the Bass Museum as the East & West Midlands entry in the national "England for Excellence Awards".

Adrian's hobbies include Rotary, walking, CAMRA and Morris Dancing in which he is a national officer of the Morris Ring.



Review: Absolutely Classic

THE MUSIC OF WILLIAM KIMBER



One would have to be more than unaware to be ignorant of the centenary which is being celebrated this coming Boxing Day. Despite the blemishes that hindsight allows, that chance meeting at Sandfield Cottage, Headington Quarry is the reason why virtually all of us are involved in the morris. Many of the tracks on the CD can be found on previously published recordings from HMV: these have been supplemented from recordings by Christopher Chaundy and by Peter Kennedy. Of particular interest, in the light of the Squire's question at this year's ARM, is track 24, on which Kimber relates an anecdote concerning his attitude to women dancers.

The audio recordings can be listened to via a simple CD player. The majority of tracks are republications of the HMV recordings of Kimber from 1935 to 1948. Track 29 was recorded this year and features John Graham playing for HQMD: Track 32 seems almost an afterthought and features John Kirkpatrick multi-tracking. Scattered in amongst all these are recordings made privately by Christopher Chaundy or Peter Kennedy. They are all well-chosen although, in the light of the Squire's question at this year's ARM, I would suggest that Track 24 should be listened to particularly carefully.

For a complete appreciation of the contents an Internet browser is necessary (Internet Explorer 4 will do: IE5 is better). This will enable you to browse the Photographic Gallery (from whence my two plates come). In addition, it is possible to see a print of Anthony Morris' painting of the 1899 meeting and to explore its components. The transcriptions on my copy consisted of Trunkles & Double Lead Through. There was no sign of the promised Jockie or Bacca Pipes, not even when I searched the Resource folder. The most fascinating section is the Film Archive: only a couple have a soundtrack but they are all worth watching. Peter Kennedy's 1956 film of Kimber playing Country Gardens focuses intently on his knees at one point just to add to the interest.

In conclusion, I would recommend anyone with an interest in morris to buy this CD. The included booklet gives valuable background to the early years of the Revival and the content of the disc is enjoyable and instructive. Buy it.

Eddie Dunmore.



Left: Kimber ca. 1912

Above: William & Arthur Kimber at the unveiling of the plaque on Sandfield Cottage on boxing 1959

Media Watch (or: Mainly Gordon Ridgewell)

1.ii.99	The Times	p.10	National Identity	GR
v.98	Hertfordshire Countryside	p.22	Greeks, Romans & Morris Dancers	GR
22.iv.99	The Mirror	p.10	Patriot Games	GR
23.iv.99	The Sun	p. 2	Pole Axed	GR
2.v.95	The Independent	p. 18	May Day in Oxford (from CD-Rom)	GR
2.vii.99	Daily Telegraph	p. 28	Crisis? What English Crisis?	GR
7.v.99	Hertfordshire Independent	M 10/11	Crowning Glory	GR
1.vii.99	Daily Mail	p. 6	How police led morris a merry dance . . .	GR
8.v.99	The Times Weekend	p. 30	You go all the way to Australia . . .	GR
2.vii.99	The Sun	p. 11	It's their culture innit?	GR
6.v.99	Newmarket Journal	p. 9	Millennium wood springs into shape	GR
17.v.99	The Guardian	p. 16	The rite of spring	GR
18.v.99	The Guardian	p. 17	King Willow loses his crown	GR
22.v.99	The Guardian	p. 12/13	War of the rosettes	GR
14.iv.99	The Guardian	p. 12/13	Morris men, your days are numbered	GR
12.v.99	Bucks Herald	p. 4	Morris men	GR

continued on page 12 (top)

Editorial

Part of our holiday in Turkey was a "Turkish Evening" in a cave in Cappadocia. Part of the entertainment, apart from the mandatory belly-dancer, was a dance group. What they did was fairly obviously a pastiche of regional folk-dance, involving many changes of costume. Because they were uniformly young, the dancing was fairly athletic, although a seasoned eye was able to identify the less-experienced members of the group.

The experience prompted me to wonder how many of us carry on dancing for too long. As time passes I am becoming increasingly aware of my knees complaining of years of abuse and that keeping fit is much harder than it really ought to be. I hope I will be able to recognise the point at which I should retire gracefully from active participation.

Trevor Stone wrote to suggest that I should supply more details of my photographs from Antwerp that were included in Circular 33. The cover photograph showed the Lange Wapper team standing in a circle around the Basque dancers from Markina in Northern Spain. At the top of the back page are the team from Quevaucamps hoisting their "wolf". The musicians shown in the bottom photograph appear as "Little Noise": all these groups were the guests of Lange Wapper at their customary Half-Lent display, which this year was the 30th. Many thanks to Trevor for pointing this omission out and supplying the missing information.

As I am sure you are all aware, this coming Boxing Day is the centenary of the famous meeting between Cecil Sharp and the Headington Quarry Team. At the time of writing I have very little material to hand for the centennial edition of *The Morris Dancer*. I would welcome articles, particularly those which consider the differences between then & now. The social

Media Watch

(continued from page 11)

20.vi.99	Sunday Express	p. 8	Giant gets a facelift	GR
1.vi.99	E. Anglian Daily Times	p. 4	Broad programme of entertainment	GR
3.vi.99	Herts & Essex Observer	p. 12	Blooming medieval!	GR
5.vi.99	The Independent	?	Andrea reveals the secrets of lap dancing	GR
10.vi.99	Herts & Essex Observer	p. 14	Morris minors join the ring!	GR
28.vi.99	Cambridge Evening News	p. 14	Let the good times roll . . .	GR
14.vii.99	The Express	p. 13	Beware the road to hell paved with . . .	GR
7.vii.99	News Shopper	?	Police nab stick from performer	RT
27.vii.99	The Independent	?	The Joys of Modern Life No 55	WT
3.ix.99	Croydon Advertiser	3	Wild & weird, but masked morris men . . .	ED

Informant

GR	Gordon Ridgewell	
RT	Bob Tatman	Hartley Morris Men
WT	Will Taylor	Cambridge Morris Men
ED	Eddie Dunmore	

circumstance of 1899 were vastly different to those obtaining today (although the contemporary concern with job mobility is reminiscent of some late-Victorian attitudes, as is the continuing commentary on education). If intending authors could inform me of their intent I would be grateful. To meet a publication schedule of mid-January 2000 I would like contributions submitted by December 1st, please.

In the meantime, I would guess that most of you are considering the winter practise schedule, just as we are, and maybe considering modifications to the performance repertory. We have tentatively decided to revive some mumming and maybe even introduce a longsword set (the ankles can no longer be trusted for rapper).

May our performances for the centennial be worthy of the occasion: don't forget to include me on your mailing list with accounts of your Boxing Days for the next Circular which should be with you next April/May.

Morris on!

Eddie Dunmore.

The Page One Picture

This year's Late Spring Bank Holiday (31st May) saw an historic handshake.

Francis Shergold on his way home from watching his side paused for a word with Son Townsend who was sitting in a

commandeered wheelchair. On command of the current Squire, Laurence Adams, I took this photograph of the two of them.

I will confess to a twinge of sadness that it hadn't happened while Arnold was alive.

Eddie Dunmore.



I thought this photograph of your Editor dancing a jig at North Wood's Day of Dance might amuse some of you. It was taken by Steve Burgess of NWMM on his solid-state camera.

Jack-in-the-Green

Hastings:

April 28–May 1st 2000

Grand Procession on Monday May 1st.

For details, contact Keith Leech at

KLeech@hastings.ac.uk