



Victorian Daze?

*Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens,
Birmingham*

For the third year running, members of Green Man's Morris & Sword Club have been participants in a two day educational event. Children from Castle Vale Schools dress up in costume of the Victorian period, & spend a morning or afternoon in activities appropriate to that period. Among the activities that they can experience is morris dancing.

This photograph, from the *Birmingham Evening Post & Mail*, shows some of the participants enjoying the dancing. Let us hope that the memories of this enjoyment will stay with them, & that some of them will feel moved to participate as adults.

Jim Pennells of Green Man's Morris & Sword Club is to be thanked for sharing the record of this event with the wider morris world.

The Squire

My Diary 2002

On January 1st, I was dancing with my own side, *Shakespeare MM*, at Temple Grafton just outside Stratford upon Avon. It was a glorious day with blue skies – a good omen, perhaps, for the new year. Then to Somerset, the following weekend, for the Wassail evening (January 5th) in my home village. As a small item of interest, the Drayton Wassail was the second entry noted down by Cecil Sharp (September 1903) in his massive collection of folk songs.

The middle of January always foreshadows the *Figs Instructional* at Sutton Bonnington hosted by *Dolphin MM*. From the Friday evening to the Sunday midday there is no respite from the dancing under the eagle eye of Bert Cleaver and his team of in-

structors. Hopefully there is no lasting harm done although Albert Wilkins of *Winchester MM*, was still hobbling when last seen in mid February. What was heartwarming was the presence of half a dozen or so young people who were so positive about the Morris and who launched into dances with such energy and style.

A busy time the following weekend: attending the *Woodside MM* Feast, on the Friday... this is a slightly different format to the usual in that it is a feast of dancing although they do stop for a while to have a bite to eat... then the *Ripley MM* Feast, on the Saturday... the usual rumbustious celebration... and then a visit, on the Sunday, to Winstan to meet representatives of the Side. Next to Winchester MM Feast to enjoy the cuisine (North Indian this year) and the good company of the host of sides present.

Coming up soon... more Feasts at *Kennet MM* and *Oxford City MM* and an Archive Group Meeting at Bradford

The ARM, March 1 – 3.

This is election year and there is great interest as to who will be the next (32nd) Ring Squire. There are three people standing: **Bob Cross**, **Bob Pierce** and **Cliff Marchant**, and all the information about them has been circulated. The fact that we have three such excellent candidates who want to do the job surely reflects on the good health and standing of the Ring. I wish them well... the decision is up to Member Sides so please make sure that you vote

Aside from the election, it promises to be an excellent weekend with a full Agenda. One item for serious consideration, "*Promotion of the Morris*". After Daniel Fox has reported on the joint ventures in train with the EFDSS, the Morris Federation and the Open Morris, it will be open discussion for general comment and ideas which, hopefully, can be turned into concrete action. Recruitment is always at the forefront of this

agenda and is, indeed, of major concern. But, as mentioned above, I have observed increasing numbers of younger dancers at Ales and Feasts on my travels and I am reasonably optimistic for the immediate future.

I look forward to a thought-provoking and interesting session under this item (No 9 on the Agenda)... over to you.

The Queen's Golden Jubilee, 2002

Everyone is being encouraged to engage in actively celebrating the 50 years anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II as Sovereign. The Summer Party will take place on Monday June 3rd, and I would urge all Sides to be part of the celebrations by joining in with local festivities.

This is an excellent opportunity to be seen in your own particular community eg. , residential homes, village halls etc. , to build up good relationships and to promote the Morris

Looking ahead

There are some 5 months before I leave office and I am looking forward to meeting as many Sides as possible at the forthcoming Feasts, Ales and Days of Dance. In particular I look forward to your company and seeing some excellent dancing at the Ring Meetings organised for this year, at Richmond on Swale, Thaxted, Silurian, Bristol and Hartley. I shall be dancing out at Bristol, Sunday July 28th. Many thanks for all the correspondence and I promise to reply as soon as possible.

Food for thought: Spotted on a card I received over Christmas the caption (together with a picture of a dancer)

"They Who Dance Are Thought Mad By Those Who Hear Not The Music"

What a wonderful vision of the Morris!

Here's to a successful year ahead and enjoy your dancing

Gerald

Correspondence

I enclose photos of medals that were available for awarding to the teams of girls' carnival morris dancers, sometimes referred to as "fluffy morris". Usually, they were given to a team just for being

present in the procession & performing in the competition. I bought these at the erstwhile Co-op Jewellers in Burnley about 30 years ago & the photographs were taken by Alan Seymour. One looks as though if taken from a photo of a Cotswold dancer &

someone may possibly recognise it. The other two belong more to the artist's imagination: certainly the double bladder is intriguing.

All good wishes,

Julian Pilling.



The "Pursuit of Happiness" Tour - which nearly didn't happen

"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Thomas Jefferson

ST ALBANS MORRIS MEN was the first visiting morris club to dance in USA following the tragic events of September 11th 2001. Indeed, only a couple of American teams had contemplated dancing out in public in the intervening fortnight before we arrived, such was the shock to the American nation of the loss of the World Trade Centre towers and part of the Pentagon. In the event, and despite many qualms, it went off exceedingly well! We and our hosts had, of course, taken soundings from local residents and various Washington authorities immediately after September 11th, as to whether our visit was going to be wise or even acceptable. The advice was initially "It's risky, but don't abandon plans yet."; progressing to "Yeah! Go for it. America needs some joy and beauty at this time." S.A.M.M. willingly agreed to contribute to the "joy" bit!



Shepherdstown at Harper's Ferry

Paraphrasing Jefferson, we had christened our tour "The Pursuit of Happiness Tour" some weeks earlier - and yes, we'd had the polo shirts embroidered with an appropriate badge and legend. But we wondered if it was still an appropriate name at that point in history. After much heart-searching about this (as about other aspects of our trip), we felt that the Pursuit of Happiness was an appropriate objective for us, for our potential audience,

and for The Morris. So the name stood.

Of course, the broad tour arrangements had been in place for weeks before the tragic events cast doubt on our plans. We had hosted Foggy Bottom Morris Men and Rock Creek Morris Women in July 2000, when they spent some time touring in UK. So a return trip to the Washington DC area had been rapidly negotiated in the Autumn of 2000, before anyone could forget what fun we'd had together.

From the moment the decision was made to go to the States, all the arrangements progressed nicely, and we had agreed with FBMM that the central date of the visit should be Saturday 29th September - which was "Open Day" at the National Cathedral in Washington. Why at the National Cathedral? Well, partly because it is collocated with St Alban's Church, which was keen to welcome a morris club which had actually been started by lay clerks of their "mother church" (St Alban's Abbey, UK) way back in 1930. Also, of course, because we could be sure of a good ready-made audience to start our dancing on that day! In view of these religious connections, FBMM wittily

coined the term "EpiscopAle" for the weekend's activities - though no church services were involved, to the relief of some.

As we explored potential activities for the week leading up to the EpiscopAle weekend, FBMM arranged for us to visit their neighbouring West Virginia team(s) for a couple of days, namely Shepherdstown NW Morris and its Border offshoot "Hicks with Sticks". Coincidentally, these excellent and friendly folks were

planning a visit of their own to UK in August this year. And so it was that we found ourselves willingly hosting a return visit from them before the visit to them. Is this another unique aspect of our USA 2001 tour - a return match

Which of us will forget the guided tour by Nick Blanton of his workshop, where hand-made hammer dulcimers come off the production line at about ten a year? Or his exposition of the history of James Rumsey, who invented the



Foggy Bottom performing a stick dance at the National Cathedral

before the original one? In any event, the pleasant experience of socialising with them in UK made us look forward all the more to the September visit.

So it was that eleven S.A.M.M. dancers and musicians, a baker, a sword-and-cake-bearer, a barker, and six spouses (and not to mention Harry the Hart) set off at different times and by various routes to converge on Shepherdstown. Those arriving on Wednesday 26th September were treated next day by our hosts to a programme of sightseeing, and/or canoeing, inner-tubing, etc. in the beautiful West Virginia countryside.

steamboat nearly twenty years before its "official" inventor, Robert Fulton? Visitors to Shepherdstown shouldn't miss a visit to the boathouse where a half-scale model is kept in working order by the Rumseian Society. Who will forget the erudite and heart-rending expositions by Jim Surkamp, given on the Antietam battlefield itself, of the horrific loss of life in the Civil War's bloodiest day of battle?

But then it was on to morris dancing. The first show took place late that afternoon at Hilltop House Hotel in Harpers Ferry, a magnificent setting high on a bluff over-



St Albans dancing Room for the Cuckoo (Wheatley) at the National Cathedral



SAMM Sword & Cake Bearer at The National Cathedral

looking the junction of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers, and with beautiful views of Virginia, West Virginia and Maryland. St Albans, Shepherdstown NW, and Hicks with Sticks danced for a small, bemused, but admiring crowd. The dancing showed few signs of jet-lag, even by the newly-arrived, and it was a very relaxed, comfortable start.

Then it was on to dance in Shepherdstown, which is a very pretty college town, quite old by US standards and with lots of character. In front of the original Shepherdstown College building, we put on a second show in the gathering dusk before eagerly moving on to "Ed's Bar and Delicatessen" - an establishment offering a selection of very palatable micro-brewed beers and an atmosphere almost like an English local pub. Eschewing the delicatessen side of the business, our evening meal was to be an excellent "Thanksgiving" dinner and party laid on by Shepherdstown at the house of their Squire. Thereafter, most set out for their billets, whilst night-owls headed back to Ed's where a couple of Shepherdstown members were performing in a late evening non-folk gig. They were delighted by our support, and extended their play-list by songs such as "Wild Mountain Thyme" which they knew would be familiar to us. This was a lovely gesture on their part, though much to the amusement of their regular audience, to whom this style of music was totally unfamiliar!

Friday was a day to ourselves (we just had to visit the quaint "O'Hurley's General Store"), before driving to meet our Washington hosts at the Episcopale evening ceilidh in a barn near Frederick, MD. Despite unexpected road works throwing some navigators into disarray, everyone

arrived eventually, we linked up with our individual Foggy Bottom hosts, we sang, we danced and drank a little, then we drove to Washington for a good night's rest.

Saturday was the big one: three major shows in the centre of Washington (at the National Cathedral, the US Capitol building, and the Jefferson Memorial) featuring Foggy Bottom Morris Men, Rock Creek Morris Women, Shepherdstown NW, Hicks with Sticks, and St Albans MM. It was a beautiful early-autumn day, and we were relieved that the temperatures were not in the 90s, which had been the case the year before. At all three events, as in West Virginia, we were welcomed by the audiences - time and again being thanked for making the trip in such difficult times. Comments showed that our presence was re-

the Sunday morning of a typical Ring Meeting!!

A large crowd clearly enjoyed some first-class morris dancing. St Albans danced pretty much "by the book", i.e. collected dances with only slight variations. Our American friends had much more of a mixture, with collected dances and their own "in the style of..." repertoire. Shepherdstown NW have a nice dance incorporating many contra- and square dance figures, specially written for them, and performed to appropriately American tunes. There wasn't much massed dancing, just Highland Mary (in a variety of styles) and the March Past from Eynsham. March Past is a great dance for a mixture of Cotswold and Northwest sides, and Shepherdstown had eagerly learned it from us in August.

After a picnic lunch, we set off in

from a considerable distance - making life difficult for our "Town Crier"!

A welcome beer-break ensued at the "Hawk and Dove", a bar usually frequented by politicians, etc., but not on a Saturday. The beer was good, if expensive, but the place was crowded and the atmosphere convivial as FBMM led the singing from their impressive repertoire. Then we left by bus again for the Jefferson Memorial. Jefferson, the third President, is commemorated by a huge bronze statue in a "Classical" rotunda (at the top of lots of steps), at the west end of the Mall and on the edge of a large body of water known as the Tidal Basin. We danced on a terrace, with the audience mainly sitting on the steps above us, looking out past the Washington Monument to the White House. Visiting morris men - especially those arriving from a pub - should know that the toilets here are reached by climbing all the steps and then taking an elevator down into the bowels of the monument. All very impressive in spotless stainless steel: but you really need to predict rather early when the urge might come upon you.

By now, we were well settled into our dancing, and the show went off very smoothly. We discovered that the steps of the Memorial are a favourite setting for wedding parties to take photographs after their ceremonies elsewhere. One party showed some interest in the strange people leaping about, so we politely mobbed them, and St Albans invited the bride to join them in Brighton Camp "for good luck". She was not too sure about this, but after the chief bridesmaid and the groom had joined in, she decided she'd go for it too - with barely enough time for us to



SAMM dancing Brimfield at The Capitol

garded as a gesture of support to a nation feeling atypically vulnerable, alone, and under siege; and thanks for Britain's support in general were frequent. (This was a recurring experience across the country for those of us who extended our US trip for holiday purposes.)

The Cathedral is an amazing Gothic building, all of six years old! It actually took most of the 20th century to build, and stands on Mount Saint Albans, the highest hill in Washington. Our morris performance took place at the start of their Open Day, and there was to be lots of music, dance and other entertainment in the Cathedral's extensive grounds. We processed to dance outside the South Door, in what felt to us like a very traditional setting, and the Winster was done with all the skill, precision, and musical co-ordination which one finds on

chartered school buses to the Capitol building. Here we danced on the Terrace, with the Mall and the Washington Monument to the west. The space was vast and the audience thinly spread - high-lighting just how few tourists there are in DC at present. Extra security was in evidence. Well, sort of - a cop in a SWAT-style suit drove up on a motorcycle! We spent some time chatting amiably to the solitary Capitol policeman who was bemused but accepting of our strange ways! This was the only "security" we saw all day! But of course much of the police attention was focussed on the Peace Demonstration on the other side of town.

Once again, the dancing was good, with Foggy Bottom donning their leather-and-straw masks to appear as "Mason-Dixon Border". And the audience seemed to enjoy the show, if only



Brighton Camp, with volunteer, at Camp Jefferson Memorial



Albemarle dancing at Fells Creek

manoeuvre her into position (and the other two out of position!) for "the lift". Seeing the challenge presented by her shiny white satin dress with five yards of satin train, men not dancing were quickly recruited for the hoist, in case of slippage! In the event, we reached the end, and with a concerted effort managed to get the bride up to about shoulder-height without mishap. Everyone was greatly entertained (fortunately!), and somewhere in the DC area, there is a family with a guaranteed unique wedding album. We hope to supplement it with one of St Albans' commemorative scrolls: "I've been uplifted by St Albans Morris Men!"

From the Memorial, it was back to the Cathedral area for a tasty Mexican feast in St Alban's Church hall. Some singing, dancing and skits, then time for fond farewells to Shepherdstown folk.

On Sunday, FBMM, RCMW and SAMM went to Fells Point, Baltimore MD, where we were joined by Albemarle Morris Men from Charlottesville, Virginia for an afternoon's dancing. A key figure in the latter group is Jim Morrison, who was at the forefront of 1960s teaching of morris in USA, and it was good to hear Jim's excellent fiddle playing and experience his affable nature.

Sadly, the weather turned grey and cool, and the tourists were thin on the ground. As a result, we danced largely to each other, although we did have a few enthusiastic spectators. It was our first sight of Albemarle, and mightily impressive they were. They specialise in Bledington and Bledington-derived dances, which they perform excellently. Their style is upright and active, very precise and a pleasure to watch. We understand that they will be visiting UK next year.

We danced two longish spots, separated by a beer/food break, mainly in Bertha's bar, a favourite watering hole of Foggy Bottom's. FBMM treated us to a rendition of their song "Eat Bertha's Mussels" and we joined in choruses of this and many of their rousing shanties.

The weekend finished with dinner at the BBC, the Baltimore Brewing Company. Here a room had been reserved for the "Foggy Bottom Horsemen" - it seems that the phone line might not have been too clear when the booking was made. Good food, good beer, two very short speeches, some more dancing by Albemarle - to make their 300 mile round-trip for an afternoon's dancing worthwhile! - lots of bonhomie and good fellowship. Breaking up was VERY hard to do!

So that was the Pursuit of Happiness tour. It was St Albans' second such venture (we'd been to the To-

ronto Ale in 1999) and we've also been represented at the London (Ontario) Morris Ale and Bassett Street Hounds' "Dog Days" Ale in New York state. Whilst there may be no such thing as a typical North American Ale, they differ from Ring Meetings in a number of ways and are interesting to experience as well as being tremendous morris weekends.

Are we glad we went? You bet we are, and we'd do it again (or something like it) - particularly if we are fortunate enough to be invited by such great hosts as the Shepherdstown and Washington teams. There's a lot of morris out there over the Pond, and most of it seems to be well worth watching. By good fortune, they seem to like watching us too. Looks like a win-win to us.

**John Price
& Sandy Glover**



Rock Creek Morris Women dancing at Fells Creek

Disclaimer

Guardian Weekend, 2nd February 2002, page 34: Shyama Perera.

The passage quoted below is taken from an article which rehearsed the perils of dating on the internet. It caught the eye of my majority shareholder, & formed the subject of

an obvious query:

'But back to the dating, to find the perfect partner from a much larger and well-honed pool of prospective love interests than can be found in real-life situations. After months of trial and error including a fling with an Iraqi dissident and an amusing relationship with a scholarly sailor - I thought I'd found him. He was called Eddie4270. We'd "whisper" (instant emailing) for hours. We wrote in different character voices and built up an extraordinary virtual world. His wit was razor-sharp. It brought out the best in me. We dazzled each other for hours. Finally, I could no longer stand the tension. We were clearly meant for each other. I looked at the photo he'd posted a slim, dark-haired, young chap, laugh-

ing as he posed on a stool - and swooned. We talked. Ignoring both his curious reluctance and odd speech pattern, I pushed him into a meeting. I was hooked.

I didn't recognise him, despite the fact that I was parked right where he was standing. He, meanwhile, was expecting me to walk into view. When I didn't, he called to ask where I was. It was only as I picked up my mobile and saw the portly, grey-haired man in front of me synchronising his words with the voice on the phone that I realised this was my date. Over a pint, he admitted that the picture was more than 10 years old. "But I look the same," he said without irony. Then he talked morris dancing and tree felling. I kept waiting for the punchline. It never came. After three

hours of his monologues, I could stand it no longer. "I don't understand why you're not funny in real life," I said glumly. "You make me crease up when we're online."

"Because that's not the real me on the website. It's my other self," he replied. And then, as a dark afterthought, "I thought the same would be true of you."

I feel that I should point out that "portly" is not an attribute I possess. Nor is "tree-felling" likely to occupy a significant part of my conversation, although "morris dancing" may very well do (& frequently does). Just to set my readers' minds at rest (& Margaret's), I can categorically assure you all that the male described is not your editor.

Eddie Dunmore



Dancing With Giants



This November three intrepid members of Gloucestershire Morris Men travelled to Arbúcies, a remote village in the Montseny Mountains in Catalunya, Spain. We were to perform at the 17th **Festa del Flabiolaires**, a festival dedicated to the traditional instruments: the Flabiol i Bombo, the local equivalent to the Pipe and Tabor. In fact the invitation to participate in the Festa came as result of the visit by three Flabiolaires - Carles Mas, Rafel Mirjans and Teresa Soler, to the Gloucester International Pipe and Tabor Festival in 2000. Last year I attended the Festa with my wife. The warm welcome and the interest in our tradition convinced me that a larger contingent would be go down well this year. Tales of red wine lakes, and gorgeous Spanish ladies, persuaded fellow taborer Gwilym Davies, and our Squire, Tony Poulter, to join me. As well as taboring, Gwilym brought the added skill of languages - he speaks both Castilian and Catalan.

We arrived in Barcelona on the Friday and spent the evening with Black Horse Morris. Established by Phil Lamble four years ago, this side is based at the Black Horse pub in the centre of the city. They have been going through a rocky patch and are struggling for

numbers, but we were impressed by the way Phil has recruited native Spanish dancers. The side includes four delightful young ladies who dance very neatly. Such is the Spanish way of life, we did not start dancing until 11pm, and when we three Brits left to re-

turn to our hotel at 1am, the evening was just getting going. The morning drive up into the mountains was spectacular and we arrived in time for the Flabiol symposium, a small conference that taxed our grasp of the language.

After the symposium, the main concert took place in a theatre at the retired men's club. Here Tony (61) discovered with delight that the Catalan word for a retired person is a 'Jubilat'. The guest artists this year were a group from Pamplona in the Basque country. Watching it reminded me of last year, when I was 'honoured' with this spot. The thought that a theatre full of people might sit for an hour listening to me play the pipe and tabor was mind boggling - my dog puts up with not more than 2 minutes before complaining. Fortunately, they proved once again to be an attentive and responsive audience.

The big event of the day was an informal session in the noisy Casino bar, where all the flabiolaires from across Catalunya had gathered. There were many superb performances, but we were really astounded to hear Bucknell Queen's Delight played en mass by 25 flabiolaires, with a few shawms and bagpipes thrown in. An incredible sound! This tune was featured in the Big Dub (massed performance) at last year's Gloucester festival, taken back to Catalunya by Rafel and Teresa, and has now become part of the Flabiol repertoire. We were to hear the tune many times over the weekend.



The next day we reported for duty at the Town Hall where they appoint groups of musicians to perform at places along the route for the Procession of the Gegants I Capgrossos (Giants and Bigheads). The Gegants are magnificent figures over 4m tall, beautifully costumed. They weigh about 50Kg and are not carried,

but danced. The Capgrossos are huge, gross, masks. This procession is a popular Catalan tradition where the figures are paraded through the streets.

As a sculptor and community artist I have made giants and hobby horses for English processions, and was looking forward to seeing my first genuine Spanish proces-

sion. To our great surprise and delight we were asked to play and dance in the procession itself. It was a real honour to be asked to take part in their tradition.

Joined by Phil Day, a Flabiol player from Surrey (probably THE flabiol player from Surrey) who also speaks Catalan. We played and danced up and down the streets with lots of jigs and the unique GMM one-man Winstler processional. We were accompanied by dancers performing the Ball de Pandorettes (tambourines) and the Ball de Bastons.

The Ball de Bastons is a dance that has great similarities to morris. It is performed in sets of 8 by dancers in whites and ribbons wearing bell pads. Each dancer wields two 'Bastons', or as we might call them - 'sticks'. The format of the dance is similar to morris, but they stick continuously, through figures and choruses, even whilst they are moving.

We entered the main square to a tremendous reception, and performed a programme of Morris tunes, songs and jigs. Inspired by the Bastoners, Gwilym and I borrowed four bastons and did an impromptu two-man version of Sherborne Constant Billy. It went down a storm, and afterwards the secretary of the association of Bastoners (their equivalent to the Morris Ring) came to talk to us and invite the side to the Ball de Bastons Festa next year. The association has over 100 member teams, and most of them attend

the Festa. That's some kind of Ring Meeting!

After taking part in the evening concert we all migrated to the Town Square, playing for the villagers as they roasted chestnuts on a big fire, and passed around the red wine, muscatel and ratafia (not the biscuit, but the strongly flavoured fortified wine from which they get their name). These drinks were poured down our throats from glass vessels with long spouts, held about a foot above the head. I think more splashed in my eye than my mouth. Then a late drive back to Barcelona, and a day of sightseeing rounded off the trip.

The Catalan people are a warm and friendly race. They are as interested and amazed as we are at the similarities between our traditions. If anyone is thinking of taking a side to the area, or would like to invite some Bastoners to England, I will gladly pass on the contacts. If you know anyone living in Barcelona, encourage them to join the Black Horse Morris.

I am looking forward to welcoming more Catalans to the Gloucester Festival (27-29 September 2002), and a return to Arbúcies next November. In the meantime I have some wonderful memories and a shelf full of souvenirs, including a string of llama's toenails, but that is another story.

Steve Rowley

Taborer, Gloucestershire Morris Men



LAPLEY DAY of RE-ENACTMENT & DANCE

Stafford MM & friends danced on August 4th this year, to commemorate the 347th anniversary of the day the Stafford assize court judged the charges against the Lapley men & women of 1655 too insignificant for its attention. "Booked" by an over-ambitious puritan vicar, there is little evidence today in the quiet village of Lapley of those raucous events when:

"Men & Women from Lapley & about 16 from Stretton danced promiscuously, one man in women's apparel, another acting the fool, profanely cursing others with the plague. Selling ale without licence & harbouring tiplers in their houses by day & night with neither musicians

nor any other strangers being apprehended."

Stafford Morris Men danced to the memory of those of 1655, ably assisted by Jockey Morris & Green Man Morris. Held as a family event, local school children from Church Eaton & Brewood, who had spent the previous weeks under tuition by SMM, danced Garland. The event had been postponed due to local foot & mouth (cattle not the Morris Men) & with smaller numbers due to holidays. The true spirit of the occasion emerged as the children joined each other's dances, learning them on the spot!

Announced by Penkridge Town Crier Bevan Craddock, dancing started outside the Vaughan Arms

at 1.00 pm, & continued in Church Eaton around 2.30, in spite of some heavy summer showers. Then, with vintage 1655 transport (real, live horse) leading, & brought up by 2001 transport (real Land-rover from latest Bond film) all participants processed along the main street for refreshments at Church Eaton Village Hall, where an exhibition showed Morris dancers of those early years & more later ones, documents & family trees of those involved, with ancient maps & documents of the region. John Edwards (SMM Squire) gave an interesting & amusing talk about the conditions & background to the 1655 event. Commemorative 'pots' of the period were presented

by him to the descendants, & most kindly to myself, (as instigator of the 2001 event).

Stafford Deputy Mayor, Mrs Debbie Wakefield represented the local authority, whilst Mr Stephen Adamson, Ring Treasurer & Boar's Head Morris, represented The Morris Ring. I believe an apparition looking something like John Davies (Area Rep.) was also seen at the event. Two descendant families of the original dancers, traced by SMM, Mrs Gwen Bingham with grand-daughter Alison, & Gordon Brindley, were also present throughout the day. All expressed their opinion that a great day was had, both educational & fun!

Reported by Alan D&Y Bagman SMM

AONACH PADDY O'BRIEN

At the end of August, Coventry Morris Men went for a weekend in Tipperary (and, before anyone else says it, it is a long way: especially by minibus) to take part in the 10th Aonach Paddy

the latter name arrived) before proceedings were brought to a halt to allow communal TV watching of Tipperary getting into the All-Ireland Hurling Final. With the county colours being blue and gold, our baldrics of

Irish music sessions and we both played and danced indoors again. On Sunday, we woke up late before proceeding, as usual, to Larkins' for the first of our shows and lunch. The weather was clearing up by this time and the main

dance short spots to cover other groups setting up and finish off the session. These included the Ampleforth sword dance after which Simon Ehlers, our Gerry Adams look-alike, was called to the stage with the swords to offer



O'Brien. Paddy was an influential Irish accordion player and since his death in 1991, he has been commemorated annually by a weekend of music, song and dance. Pete Grassby from CMM had met one of the organising Committee previously and he had suggested our involvement to boost the open air entertainment and, possibly, as a sort of novelty item. It is, of course, well known in those parts that the English have no folk traditions.

The bulk of the side arrived on Friday 17 August to find the luxurious self-catering accommodation with views over Lough Derg near to the village of Garrykennedy where meals were to be taken at Larkins' pub.

On Saturday, the rest of the side arrived variously from Broadstairs Folk Festival and touring holidays and the dancing began. Because of the wet weather, this took place indoors at both Larkins' and Skyfarmers in Newtown (we never worked out how

similar hue went down rather well. In the evening, there was an accordion concert which featured both up and coming musicians as well as older men who had known Paddy. There were also the usual

activity took place in Newtown with a stage erected at Barry's Bar and a line up of local music, dance and drama talent. We agreed with the organiser, Paddy's daughter Eileen, that we would start proceedings off to gather the crowd,

them as part of the decommissioning process! Proceedings were then halted again to watch the other hurling semi-final which resulted in Galway beating the favoured Kilkenny to meet Tipperary in the final. The eve-



A stick dance at Dromineer

ning consisted of another concert, sing-arounds and a ceili/set dance session so men disappeared in various directions to these and a good time was had by all.

On Monday there was little officially organised by the Aonach Committee so we decided to try our hand in some of the other villages around Lough Derg. We visited Paddy's grave which features a carved stone accordion that was so realistic when it was new that someone tried to pick it up and play it. We then went south to Killaloe, across the border into County Clare, where we danced in the middle of the town outside the garda (police) office. Following lunch back at Larkins' we headed north to Dromineer and

Terryglass which are small harbour villages. We had kept on meeting people who had not seen us dance and wanted to, so we announced our absolutely final show at Larkins' at 7.30 pm. Having completed this we ate and, since there was no Irish music in the pub that night, ran an English music and song night. This included more "final" dances on the pretext that "there's a young lady here who wants to see you dance" and a continuing supply of drinks from the landlord.

Tuesday morning was an early start to get back to Dun Laoghaire which included a dreadfully slow drive along the Liffey in Dublin, fine if you have the time to admire



Opposite Larkins in Garrykennedy



Papa Stour sword dance at Dromineer

the buildings but not if you have a ferry to catch.

We were made very welcome wherever we went although the Irish had never seen anything like the Morris before and we had forgotten what it was like to be taken for Germans, Austrians, Swiss or Welsh (!) and complemented on our ability to speak English. As far as the dancing was concerned, the sword dances were particularly appreciated but, as in England, there seemed to be some embarrassment at the sight of men dancing quite apart from the usual local lads "trying to be funny".

Our attempts at playing or joining in with Irish music seemed to be appreciated although it can be difficult when a little 10-year old is playing so much better than you are. Finally, our habit of carrying tankards around was found very amusing. In spite of virtually everyone drinking indistinguishable pints of Guinness, tankards are not a feature of pub life. We are looking forward to going again.

*Martin Trewinnard,
Coventry Morris Men*



Mendip Highlight

Specially featured at the Congresbury spot of the Mendip Boxing

Day tour was a 2-man version of "*None so Pretty*" danced by **John Burgess** and **Len Bendall**. The occasion was their joint celebration of 50 years in the Morris!

Medals were presented to the two haf-centenarians by Mendip Squire, **Doug Schofield**, who, despite only recently recovering from his serious ill-

ness, braved the cold to be present.



A MAYOR FOR THE MORRIS



I was elected in March, and formally sworn in as Mayor of Totnes on May 25th 2000, thus becoming the 642nd Mayor (though only the 9th Woman!) in the history of this ancient town. Because I have been a great devotee of the Morris since 1966 I was determined to honour the tradition whenever I could during my year of office. I got plenty of opportunity!! Lionel and I made headlines from the word go - the March 2000 edition of the Dartington Morris Men's newsletter, printed shortly after I was elected, carried the fol-

lowing headline: 'Pruw to be the next Mayor of Totnes. Does that make Lionel the 'Mare-ess?' I thought that was funny and very clever and a copy is now in my scrapbook.

August saw the visit to Devon of Jugglers Meadow, a team from America. I was pleased to be able to extend an invitation to them to attend a small reception in our ancient Tudor Guildhall and then for a special short tour of the town including the Elizabethan Merchant's house. They in turn honoured me by dancing for me outside our medieval Church of St Mary. It was a great pleasure and

I'm sure that they took many good memories of Totnes back to America with them.

In September I held my Civic Service in the same Church. I decided that the service would be a 'Celebration of England' and that all the readings, music and hymns would be English. What better than to have Morris dancers as part of the service? Lionel's own team, The Dartington Morris Men, was the obvious choice and they were joined by musicians and singers performing English

music from the Tudor period onwards. It was a superb event and I received many compliments afterwards including one from a friend who said, with tears in her eyes, that for once she was proud to be English.

In October a group of Morris men, including Squire of the Ring Gerald Wiley, came to the Totnes area for a workshop and I took time out on Sunday morning to greet them at the venue and to have coffee with them.

I December I had a sitting for my



official photograph and we had a wonderful photograph taken of myself and Lionel together in our 'official' dress - hence the "Mayor of Totnes meets the Dartington 'Mare' "!!

In March Gerald came to Devon once again to take part in the ARM in the nearby town of Kingsbridge. I was delighted when he accepted my invitation to visit Totnes and was pleased to receive him in the Guildhali. After refreshment he honoured me by dancing for me in the Guildhali yard. A very pleasant interlude in most appropriate surroundings.

I have many happy memories of my year in office but none, I think, quite so personally fulfilling as those spent in the company of the Morris.

*Pruw Boswel
1 September 2001*

ANNIVERSARIES

SCA celebrated their 25th Anniversary last year with a series of major events. Following joint evening tours with Forest of Dean and Lassington

a visit to Prague, all in all an excellent overseas excursion and probably the most intensive dancing done all season. The photograph below

taken in Palacky park shows some audience participation at the end of Beaux of London City with our musician being revived, before all the side queued for the same treatment!

At the end of June the side welcomed Harthill and Yateley to a joint 25th Anniversary weekend and took over a local pub at Llanfapley. The Cottage Brewery was persuaded to brew a special 5.4% brew called Morris Jubilee Ale which was

also supplied to all their other outlets and, together with a range of 4 other ales, the sides were kept well lubricated. On the Saturday a day tour began in bright sunshine on the Bowling Green at Raglan Castle with its spectacular views over the surrounding area. Dancing spots at Llanvihangel Tor-y-Mynydd, Trellech Grange, Trellech and Bryngwyn followed before the groups returned in the early evening to Llanfapley for a five course celebration meal including iced cakes with the badges of the three sides. On the Sunday an hour of dancing followed at the Red Hart in Llanfapley to round off a memorable celebration. In the words of the Harthill men, a superb celebration weekend with good com-

pany, good food, good beer, good organisation and excellent weather - a weekend to remember for a long time to come.

Early July saw the wedding, in Hereford, of one of the side's musicians, where we were joined by the Kings Men and two local sides, Full Moon (a mixed cotswold side) and Cardiff Ladies. The day's tour included several spots in the area around Hereford plus a dancing visit to the

Oak, Sergeant Musgraves, Treacle Eaters and Winkleigh Morris. Saturday started with some 230 dancers and musicians inside the Roman Amphitheatre at Caerleon, followed by 5 coach tours of Monmouthshire covering a twenty mile radius. In the evening, coaches delivered the performers to the local swimming pool before returning them to Brynglas House for a celebration Cocktail Party provided by Wink-



Oak, the side embarked on a week in the Czech Republic at the start of June. This visit was based upon the town of Pisek, around an hour's drive south of Prague. After a twenty four hour coach trip from South Wales, the side were hosted by local residents and enjoyed traditional hospitality, including the serving of spirits and beers with every meal - breakfast included! Four days of dancing followed with copious dancing at the Pisek Festival followed by tours of the area. Memorable visits to Orlik and Zvikov included dancing on board a small excursion boat, and a visit to a brewery where we had a chance to dance for the children from the local orphanage. Other spots included the historic towns of Cesky Krumlov and Tabor plus



Spinning Dog brewery in Hereford.

The anniversary year finished with our annual family weekend, at the start of September, based on Brynglas House in Newport. We welcomed 18 other sides, including Adlington, Alford, Broadwood, Dog Rose, Greenwich, John O'Gaunt, Ripley, Sweyn Ey, Belles and Broomsticks (Guernsey), Brisingamen, Fleet Morris, Old Speckled Hen, Paragon Pit, Queens Oak, Royal

leigh Morris. This was followed by Old Time Music Hall and a Ceilidh with the Bedlam band. On Sunday the centre of Magor village was closed off for all the groups to perform, before sad farewells rounded off our biggest weekend in some years.

*Les Chittleburgh
Isca Morrismen*

Strike up the Tabor

Gloucester International Pipe & Tabor Festival 2001

The sound of massed taboring echoed around the city streets as tabors once again gathered in Gloucester for their annual tour, symposium and festival. From its small beginnings the TabFest has now become part of the calendar for a growing number of musicians.

As usual the Friday is given over largely to academic studies, a tour of pipe and tabor iconography, and a short symposium. Our route took in the fine C14th sculptures at Gloucester Cathedral, C18th plaster sculptures at Highnam Court, and stained glass at Malvern Priory. The high point was the opportunity to play in nave of Tewkesbury Abbey, with the angel choir overhead, complete with a winged taborer. The symposium introduced us to new information about the dimensions and tuning of English tabor pipes in collections around the country. One of our special guests, Dennis Sherman from the University of Chicago, provided some practical and historical advice for the playing of the instrument in mixed consorts.

We then had an introduction to the Basque tradition from our other international guests the Banda de Txistularis del Ayuntamiento de Pamplona. These are the official civic musicians for the city, retained by the Mayor, and required to perform at over 70 official functions. Their music is in four parts using different size pipes or 'Txistu'. The repertoire includes special tunes for dances, and also processions of Giants and Hobby Horses.

The pipe and tabor has been the traditional instrument for morris since the earliest records, for this reason the festival is co-organised by Gloucestershire Morris Men, a side that can field four tabors. On the Saturday, GMM danced in the city centre accompanied by a good number of morris tabors from around the country. We were joined this year by special guest Bert Cleaver who later led a workshop on his style of playing.

For much of the history of the instrument it has had a street role, so the it seems appropriate that so many of the tabors turned out in costume to parade around the city centre, playing solo or in small groups. They were drawn together on occasion to perform THE BIG DUB, massed playing of up to 40 musicians.

As well as Bert's workshop there were others including: beginners, intermediate, historic pipe design, and C16th dance music ornamentation. David Thompson's workshop on making pipes was as popular as ever.

The concerts gave the opportunities for all tabors to perform and demonstrate their virtuosity. It is very noticeable that the regular festival goers have extended their repertoires, perhaps inspired by hearing others at the previous



events. Many of the morris musicians are now including selections of early music, folk melodies and even jazz.

For those familiar only with the squeaky Generation pipe, the concept of a Pipe and Tabor concert might seem an peculiarly extreme form of torture, but sheer diversity of the instrument and its repertoire is extraordinary and unexpected. Eveline Juten played beautiful renaissance dances, Bert Cleaver gave us American Patrol, and Richard Sermon played a

tune on small pipe made of goose bone, a replica of a C12th instrument found in Gloucester.

Next year we plan to increase the morris component of the festival. If anyone wants learn the instrument (its not as hard as it looks) and join the growing throng, please contact us. We have starter kits and tutor sheets. Provisional dates for the next festival 27-29 September.

Stephen Rowley

steve@artension.com

Lucky Saddleworth!

The last entry to this edition's 'Ridgewell Files' featured *The Daily Telegraph's* quest for 'Britain's best traditional country pub'. On Saturday 2nd February this year, the result of this 'seven month sifting' was announced, & the six finalists enumerated & described. One of these was: **Church Inn, Church Lane, Uppermill, Saddleworth, Greater Manchester** (01457 820902).

Nominated by Ken Bennett.

Halfway up a very steep, narrow road 1,000 ft above sea level on the edge of Saddleworth Moor is the 13th-century church of St Chad. The old stocks are still there, but the church was refurbished 150 years ago and now it is a tall, Gothic black-brick building that looks as if it escaped from the set of a Hammer horror film. The only other building in this isolated spot is the matching brick Church Inn; with its own brew house, large, cluttered main barroom and separate dining room, withingham-checked tablecloths.

Carol Taylor is the jolly, cheerful landlady, who, when she is not tending to the screeching peacocks outside or her claque of stray cats inside, presides over the lo black brick bar in the big, yet cosy, main room stuffed full of knick-knacks. The food is English - roast beef, Yorkshire pudding and jam roly-poly - and the beer is cheap. A pint of Saddleworth More, brewed from the local Saddleworth spring water, is £1.05. Other brews include Hopsmacker, Harvest Moon and Shafibender.

The locals are drawn from the nearby villages and the busy pub is host to many different groups, including the

church bell-ringers and Morris men. Although I usually dislike Morris dancers (there is something pathetic about a grown man celebrating our pagan-heritage by banging sticks and skipping about like Andy Pandy), I have made an exception in the case of the church Inn. The dippy entertainment offered here - the Rush Cart Festival, gurning (face pulling) and Morris men - seems quite normal in this spooky corner of Britain.'

Perhaps this pub is the source of the 'liquid sunshine' that is always commented upon as a Saddleworth feature?

Research & Serendipity

Historical research can be long, arduous and unrewarding. It can involve spending hours, perhaps days, pouring over old newspapers and manuscripts without turning up anything of relevance. It can also involve a complex process of detection, following up the most minute of clues, and piecing together a jigsaw puzzle via a process of lateral thinking. Sometimes, though, fate simply steps in and lends a hand. Let me give you a recent example of purest serendipity.

For the past fifteen years I have been researching the social history of morris dancing in the South Midland counties. During that period I have had more than my fair share of discoveries. I have also followed leads up blind alleys and ended up feeling frustrated. One such instance concerned one of the musicians who played for morris dancing during the nineteenth century.

In 1909, Cecil Sharp collected the following information from an unnamed informant:

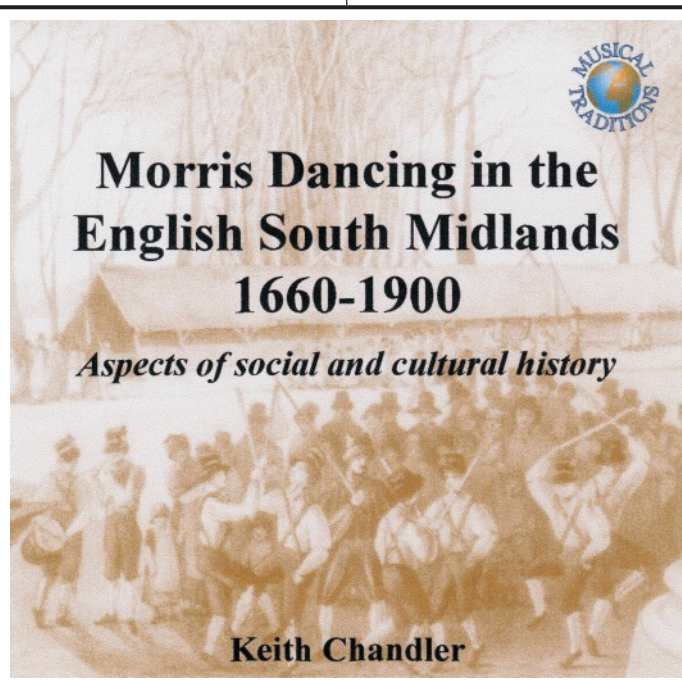
Little Barrington a great Morris place in old days. The whit- and dub-man named Garlick. His son went up to London, was adopted by a lady, sent to College and became a Congregational minister. [‘Folk Dances’ 1, f.69]

Armed with these details I looked at the census returns, and found that there was indeed a **Joseph Garlick** and his family living in **Great Barrington** (which is in Gloucestershire) in 1841. That source revealed that he was not born in the county, and I failed to find his baptism in the parish registers. By the date of the next census, ten years later (the first to note an individual’s place of birth), he was already dead. Although he was the most likely candidate for the pipe and tabor player, no confirmation was to be had. There was still that nagging clue concerning his son, which gave me some hope that I might one day solve the problem. Over a period of time I made contact with several family historians researching the Garlicks, but none had heard of such a connection.

It is now many years later, and as the research on the morris yields diminishing returns I move onto other projects. One of these concerns the mummung tradition in the same area covered by my morris interests. Last week I was in the *Centre for Oxfordshire*

Studies, Oxford Public Library (incidentally, one of the best-equipped resource centres I have ever used) with some time to spare. I had with me my list of known mummungers, and was working my way alphabetically

Three days later I was in the *Record Office* in Gloucester, where I discovered that Joseph Garlick had died, aged fifty-eight, prior to Whitsun in 1847. Which means that he must have played for the morris set at Barrington in 1846



through the Oxfordshire entries and trying to find those men in the 1891 census. I reached **Ded-dington**, and started searching for the one known mummer at that location. As I skimmed through the microfiche I spotted the name **George Garlick**. Now, given that the men who danced the morris sometimes moved around the area with their agricultural jobs, I always check out familiar names in unfamiliar places. Moving the fiche on a notch I saw that George Garlick, then aged fifty, was at that date a congregational minister. My heart leaped. Moving forward a little more I found that he had been born in Great Barrington. The blood pounded in my temples. Here was the possible answer to the riddle for which I had been searching for years. To add further weight to the potential correctness of the identification, some of George Garlick’s household were born in London, and his wife and several children born in Essex. Immediately I checked out the Mormon genealogical index for Gloucestershire, and, lo and behold: George Garlick, born 1841, the son of Joseph Garlick. *Et voila!* True serendipity.

or earlier. This pushed back the known nineteenth century period of activity by a Barrington side by a decade (the eighteenth fifties had been the previous earliest confirmed date, although there had been a dance team there in 1785). All this material was timely indeed. I was in the throes of correcting a set of proofs for the second volume in my history of the morris in the area, *Morris dancing in the English South Midlands, 1660-1900: A chronological gazetteer* (Hisarlik Press, for the Folklore Society), due to appear in June. (An unabashed plug if ever I saw one, I hear the editor thinking!) That work takes the hundred and fifty-one villages and towns known to have fielded morris dance sets during the period named, and gives details of performance chronology, names and biographies of known dancers, details of instruments and musicians, and a complete list of the known primary sources. So, I was able to tip in the new information concerning Joseph Garlick and thus make the published work that more valuable a resource.

[Originally written in the Spring of 1993 for the EFDSS magazine

SIPS Newsletter: Library, research and resources, but this was cancelled before the article could appear, and is published here for the first time. See the gazetteer entry for Little Barrington/Windrush for further biographical details on Joseph Garlick.]

Review

The extract above is a previously unpublished piece that is included on the CD reissue of Keith’s ‘Morris Dancing in the English South Midlands, 1660-1900’. I thought it worth excerpting completely as an indication of Keith’s writing style, & because I have experienced the same mixture of frustration & elation in my own attempts to pin down my own family history. I have no hesitation at all in recommending it to my readers, even those of you who already possess the book.

I was surprised to discover how little of the disk is actually used. Looking at the ‘properties’ of the CD, its total content is 5.6MB from a capacity of 648MB. This minuscule usage is due to the material being presented in a fairly conservative html that almost all computer-owning readers will be able to access. Personally, I find html documents to be frustrating in that any printed output cannot be guaranteed to maintain screen format. Having, as a matter of professional interest, to download examination board syllabuses for various levels of Mathematics & Statistics, I have become accustomed to the benefits of the ‘portable document format’ native to Adobe Acrobat (which produces a virtually non-environment-dependent layout).

I discussed this fact with Rod, only to find out that, although ‘Musical Traditions’ is self-supporting, it is so only by dint of his labour being uncharged. The margins are narrow enough for any investment in equipment to be subject for very serious evaluation: a matter which explains the long list of supporters on the website. I shall have to see how I can help: in the meantime, I urge you all to keep this source of otherwise unavailable performances alive.

Eddie Dunmore



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Rutlandshire Despatches



Setting out on the expedition: the Procession leaving Land's End

Passing mention was made in the last newsletter of Rutland dancing for the Queen in Uppingham in June - we did indeed perform **Queen's Delight, Bucknell** (an reply from one of our men to a query by the Lord Lieutenant, which he and we thought no more about until we found it printed in the programme for the day, at which point mass "surely not!?" and much practice). We also functioned as the warm up act: dancing for the massed schoolkids and locals before she arrived. We were nearly too knackered to do the show dance! And I claim ownership

of the backside featured in the Guardian photograph - not for nothing is our motto, printed on our letterhead, "*twelve pumping thighs*".

The "*unpredictable Rutland Morris Men*" [collected: Squire of the Ring, Thaxted 2001] held their annual Feast weekend in October, joined by full sides from Northwood, Green Oak, Anstey, and Letchworth and men from 8 other sides - plus Squire of the Ring and Eddie Dunmore. BFB had originally decided to attend but then found he had to '*spread himself more thinly*' (now, there's a thought!). A bus tour through Rutland's finest (only!) towns,



The Procession crossing the Birthday Bridge

Oakham and Uppingham, and several villages filled Saturday to universal satisfaction; the micro brewery and pub overlooking the duckpond at Barrowden will be

remembered by visitors for a long while. An evening of outside dancing, a waitress-served Feast and fairly tasteful speeches (at least until the fifth annual presentation of the **Rutland Global Warming trophy**) was completed by continuous dancing until midnight. The highlight of Sunday was the unique **Lands' End to John O'Groats** non-stop processional, during which the Winster music somehow merged into Nellie the Elephant, and we sang Happy 100th Birthday to a railway bridge in Oakham (Gerald, we have the pictures so you can't deny you were part of it). Thanks to our visitors for making it a splendid weekend of dance, music and laughter.

Barry Mather

{As it turned out, I had the only camera (digital) available during the epic procession from Land's End to John o' Groats via the Centenarian Bridge. These three photographs commemorate its successful completion, despite the efforts of a female motorist in a hurry. ED}



The destination of the expedition: celebratory dancing at John o' Groats

Correspondence

Gordon Ridgewell

In your glowing review of 'Step Change: new views on traditional dance', edited by Georgina Boyes (London: Francis Boutle Publishers, 2001) in The Circular No. 38 (Summer 2001) page 12, you refer to the article written by Georgina Boyes entitled "The lady that is with you": Maud Karpeles and the English Folk Revival' (pp 170-95) & state 'Examination of the part played by Rolfe (sic) Gardiner may be uncomfortable reading for some. I suggest you read it carefully &, before dismissing it, check it out against the evidence.' I have now checked out against the evidence the statement made by Georgina on page 185 of her article that Rolf Gardiner was 'chief theoretician and moving spirit behind the exclusively male Morris Ring.' & find that her research is lacking on this matter as Rolf had nothing to do with the setting-up of the Morris Ring. My source for this is impeccable, namely, Walter Abson, first Bagman of the Morris Ring (1934-46)

who, in the final paragraph of his letter published in English Dance & Song Volume 59 Number 3 (Autumn 1997), pp 28-9, wrote:

I should like to take this opportunity of stressing that contrary to some assertions that have unfortunately appeared in print, Rolf Gardiner played no part in the formation of the Morris Ring. Although he was a member of the Cambridge club, he was not in close touch with Cambridge when proposals for a new morris organisation were under discussion, as he was then heavily occupied with his forestry work in Dorset, his marriage, his acquisition of the old watermill at Springhead and its conversion to a very beautiful home. Until a club at Springhead joined in 1937 he had no active association with the Morris Ring, nor any influence upon it.'

For Georgina to overlook Walter's correction is particularly amiss &, in view of the fact that you recommended Step Change to your readers, I trust you will see fit to publish this missive as a corrigendum.

Editor's Note

First, I accept responsibility for 'Rolfe' – a simple typing error (memo to self: engage spell-check before publication)

Second, Gordon is being very selective in his choice of quotation. An unsupported statement, even from a source as 'impeccable' as Walter (Walter 'not liable to sin?') needs to be dispassionately provable to be acceptable as unimpeachable. Certainly Gardiner appears to have been active in the EFDSS during the relevant period of the early 1930s, & his preoccupation with his other pursuits may, or may not, have been such that he 'had no active association with the Morris Ring'. At a distance of 70 years, a definitive statement one way or the other is difficult to uphold.

Third, I have checked the back issues of ED&S surrounding the letter from Walter. It was part of a protracted sequence, which included criticism of a grant by the Douglas Kennedy Memorial Fund to a mixed morris side. Some of the correspondence from the 'exclusivist' tendency could almost have been written by Gardiner himself (the language is almost timeless).

Certainly, Robert Saunders' letter in ED&S Vol. 59 No. 2 (Summer 1997) includes Rolf Gardiner in a list, and his final paragraph includes 'The names mentioned herein (and others) might well be regarded as equal, each in his, or her own way in contributing to the foundation of the Morris Ring, except that Arthur Peck might be regarded as more equal than others: only he would no doubt have been the first to deny it.'

I would suggest that interested parties follow this thread (which started possibly earlier than Autumn 1996, & continued possibly later than Spring 1998) for a series, which contains some fine examples of polemic, & contributions from some well-known names apart from those mentioned above. I will concede that I think that Georgina's definition of Gardiner as a 'chief theoretician and moving spirit' is probably overstated: I am not at all sure that it is intrinsically impossible.

Eddie Dunmore

2002

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The Ridgewell Files

collected by Gordon Ridgewell

<i>Forwarded</i>	<i>Publication</i>	<i>Date of Issue</i>	<i>Side featured</i>	<i>Location</i>
10.x.2001	<i>Essex Life & Countryside</i>	viii.2001	Wath upon Dearne	The Fox, finchingfield
22.x.2001	<i>St Albans & Harpenden Review</i>	13.v.2001	Wicket Brood	Redbourn, Herts.
6.xi.2001	<i>Independent on Sunday</i>	1.vii.2001	Ravensbourne	Keston, Kent
9.xi.2001	<i>The Westmorland Gazette</i>	20.vii.2001	Amounderness	Ulverston, Cumbria
16.xi.2001	<i>The Watford Observer</i>	20.vii.2001	Chester City	Chipperfield, Herts.
22.xi.2001	<i>Surrey Mirror</i>	23.viii.2001	Silkeborg/Stafford	Reigate, Surrey
23.xi.2001	<i>The Watford Observer</i>	24.viii.2001	St Albans	Bushey, Herts.
28.xi.2001	<i>Oldham Chronicle</i>	27.viii.2001	Saddleworth	Saddleworth, Rushcart
4.xii.2001	<i>Daily Star</i>	5.ix.2001	'morris-dancing craze'	Hollyoakes
7.xii.2001	<i>Hemel, Berkhamsted, Tring & Langley Gazette</i>	12.ix.2001	Ancient Men	Berkhamsted
10.xii.2001	<i>Lichfield Mercury</i>	13.ix.2001	Abbots Bromley	Abbots Bromley, Horn Dance
13.xii.2001	<i>St Albans & Harpenden Review</i>	26.ix.2001	St Albans	Washington, D.C.
18.xii.2001	<i>Metro</i>	26.ix.2001	Thaxted	Uttlesford
24.xii.2001	<i>Cumbria & Lake District Life</i>	x.2001	Crook Morris	Kirkby Lonsdale
31.xii.2001	<i>Cheshire Life</i>	x.2001	Manley	Great Budworth
4.i.2002	<i>Evening Courier (Halifax)</i>	1.x.2001	Sheffield City Giants/ Ripon City	Halifax, Yorks
15.i.2002	<i>The Independent</i>	10.x.2001	Horwich	Whitby, Yorks.
22.i.2002	<i>The Sun</i>	18.x.2001	"Shamed Chelsea Star in Brawl: Morris Club Bust-up"	
29.i.2002	<i>The Times (correspondence)</i>	22/9.x.2001	Various letters on Morris dance vs Haka at Rugby matches	
31.i.2002	<i>The Times</i>	5.xii.2001	Cecil Sharp & Somerset morris dances	
5.ii.2002	<i>The Times</i>	31.xii.2002	<i>Malcolm Taylor's O.B.E.</i>	
7.ii.2002	<i>The Herts Advertiser</i>	3.1.2002	St Albans' Mummers	St Albans
8.ii.2002	<i>St Albans Observer</i>	3.1.2002	St Albans' Mummers	St Albans
11.ii.2002	<i>Bridlington Free Press</i>	3.1.2002	Flamborough Sword	Flamborough
13.ii.2002	<i>Whittlesey News</i>	18.i.2002	Various ('60 sides!')	Whittlesey
14.ii.2002	<i>The Daily Telegraph</i>	2.ii.2002	Saddleworth	see page 12 for details

M i s c e l l a n y



The Doncaster Process

Martin Johnson (no, not that one) sent this grainy photocopy, of a plate accompanying an account of the opening of Doncaster's new St George's Bridge, from 'The Yorkshire Post' of 19.xi.2001. His accompanying letter, on Green Oak stationery, includes:

We processed across (Winster) with some walking phases, as it is a long, long bridge, & on the return stopped at the very brow to dance Valentine, Fieldtown, around our Mayor. In deference to her age we refrained from hoisting at the end. As a 'getting out in the Market Place, it was an excellent event.

Having arrived to find a massive crowd already gathered, our musician had to 'two-tone' us to the front. The crowd not only parted for us but cheered us on our way. We also had numerous photocalls with, & from, members of the public, & made contact with a couple of ex-dancers during the day.

Offshore News

St Helier (& Jersey Lillies) seem to have their local press well organised. They sent 3 extracts from the Jersey Evening Post: 1.v.2001, 5.v.2001 & 26.viii.2001. The first, in unfortunate juxtaposition with a banner headline 'Porn Teacher is put on probation' is a colour photograph of a joint performance on what looks like a jetty. The second,

with a repeat of the photograph, appears on the 'Gordon Young' page as an accompaniment to a minor polemic about the London May Day protest. The third, headed with a posed group photograph, details their season's outings & a visit to the island by Greensleeves & Dorset Button. Graeme's letter says:

We have no trouble making our presence known in the local press or on the radio & TV. We write our own articles & feed the radio & TV stations with any information we need broadcasting.

For our annual May Day tour of the 12 parishes, we had tremendous coverage, despite the horrible weather – live coverage on the radio, Channel TV, BBC South West TV & the local paper.

Gold Badge Winner

Gordon Ridgewell reminds me, in his letter of 25.i.2002, that Denis Smith of Westminster was awarded the EFDSS Gold Badge at the AGM on 10.xi.2001. He was thoughtful enough to include a copy of Mike Wilson-Jones' Citation, which included:

Denis was already playing for country dancing when, in 1954, he was approached by a Westminster Morris Man & asked if he played for morris. 'Who's Morris?' came the innocent reply. But it did not take long for Denis to learn the Westminster repertoire – being corrected by 'Ginger' Saunders in after-breakfast sessions during Westminster's first week-long Cotswold tour in 1955. The men would then set off on bicycles, Denis on his Bantam, his accordion strapped to his back, around the Cotswold sites that have become a constant feature of the annual Westminster pilgrimage.

Denis' reputation for accompanying the morris grew rapidly. Douglas Kennedy remarked to him, at the following Stratford-upon-Avon Festival: 'It's nice to hear the morris played as music!', a remark that harked back to a talk given by RVW in 1923. Denis, a stickler for accuracy with the melody, has always worked at finding just the right chords for the accompaniment. Add to that Denis' true 'feeling' for the morris, & magic can be created. His interpreta-

tion of Staines Morris, with no bass chordings, can send a tingle down the spine, both of dancers & audience, in a suitable evening atmosphere.

The Westminster Morris & Unicorn owe their success in no small part to the music of Denis. For almost all of the team's near-50 year history, the musician was always & only Denis. Even with his multitude of other commitments, he always made his diary available for the team's engagements.

Sidmouth International Festival

'The annual gathering of the clans' – Win Irwin, MOJO

Plans are under way for a spectacular 48th Sidmouth International Festival in Devon, from 2–9 August 2002. This year artists, dancers and performers from many corners of the world will meet in the Regency seaside town of Sidmouth as over 65,000 people visit the Festival and take part in this unique event. We have several 'Sidmouth Specials' in the pipeline, events that just can't be seen elsewhere, and which added together make Sidmouth a truly unique event. Plus, there will be the usual Festival favourites bringing a feast of song and dance to East Devon, and providing a major stage for the gathering of roots and folk supporters in the UK. The news gets



better aid better as we have held the earliest aid mid-range prices for our Season tickets at last years prices aid extended the range of Family Packages on offer making the whole holiday more affordable for those with children aid youths.

For more details contact Frances Watt, The Festival Office, P0 Box 296, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP19 9TL. Tel: 012 9639 3293 Fax: 012 9639 2300

Towersey Village Festival

'I wouldn't miss it for the world' - Quote from customer in 2001

Towersey lies at the foot of the Chiltern Hills, just a few miles east of Oxford and is usually home to just over 400 people... until the Towersey Village Festival takes place. Every August Bank Holiday weekend, Towersey grows into a community of over 5000 people who gather for five days at one of the friendliest and enjoyable Festivals in the UK calendar. This year is no exception with the 38th Towersey Village Festival taking place from 22-26 August.

The Towersey Concert Tent will be hosting the angelic vocals of Barnsley's Kate Rusby in the company of John McCusker and Andy Cutting as the Kate Rusby Trio. Two world famous Maestros of Brilliant Entertainment, Aly Bain & Phil Cunningham will be at Towersey this year, now both honoured with MBEs to celebrate their talents as ambassadors of the Celtic traditions. A long way from home, Slainte Mhath come to Oxfordshire from Canada after taking Sidmouth Festival by

storm last year with their high-energy Celtic music and unusual Latin percussion. Next we have the mesmeric and powerful trio Last Night's Fun (Chris Sherburn, Denny Bartley and Nick Scott) with their individual take on Irish music and song. Other concert artists confirmed for the Festival include English squeezebox master John Kirkpatrick, Roger Wilson and winners of the BBC Young Folk Award in 1999 — **422**. Further information available from

P0 Box 296, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP19 9TL
Information Line: 01296 394411
Fax: 01296 392300

On Reflection - Eliza Carthy & Nancy Kerr

Mrs Casey Records
MCRCDIO03

February 2002 sees the release of a new compilation featuring two of the folk scenes most influential performers - Eliza Carthy and Nancy Kerr. This new album pulls together tracks from their 1993 debut album and from their 1995 album 'Shape of Scrape'. It also features some of Nancy's more recent work with James Fagan, a new live recording and tracks taken from their highly successful albums 'Scale' and 'Steely Water'. It also includes two previously unreleased tracks from Eliza. This third Eliza Carthy & Nancy Kerr release on Mrs Casey Records is an exciting voyage though their ever-expanding mu-

sical careers and shows their true skill and maturity in writing, playing, arranging and performing music.

Tel: 01296 394411 Fax 01296 392300: www.mrs-casey.co.uk
Direct mail order from Mrs Casey Records and available from all good record shops

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Distributed by Proper Music Distribution Ltd

Geoff Halford... a potted history

Charlie Corcoran, of Leicester Morrismen, sent me the CD with the following note:

Geoff is Leicester born and bred(some 70 odd years ago). He was at the opening night of the very first folk club in the early 1960's, where he performed and has been doing so and *delighting* audiences ever since.

A very accomplished musician on a variety of instruments and a wonderful singer who champions the cause of Traditional Music. Not only a performer but he has been fundamental in running folk clubs with the late Toni Savage and more recently with Nic Burdett (Roy Bailey was once resident at their club when he lived in the area). Geoff has also been a musician with the Leicester Morrismen for nearly 40 years, playing for Cotswold and Border on fiddle, concertina and melodian.

Currently he is involved with Dave Smith, performing Panbox.

This is a show depicting aspects of life of the travelling people using song, music, stories and dance and incorporating shadow puppets and dancing dolls.

This CD has been produced in appreciation of Geoff's contribution to traditional music in the area for some five decades.

The CD is an impressive professional production. It chimed with me because in 1967, while I was working in Colchester, I actually appeared at Toni Savage's club as the guest singer (I still have a booklet of poems from his press): additionally, I knew Roy Bailey when I was an undergraduate at Southampton, 1957-60.

My notes on the CD record that 'The Outlandish Knight' has an uncertain start, that some of the ballads are sung at funereal pace, & that 'The Maid of Australia' is salacious rubbish. Additionally, I found that the 'Fool's Jig' lost rhythm in the final section. Let these opinions seem a bit harsh, let me say that the whole is worth listening to: in particular, 'Careless Love' was wonderful & had me reminiscing about jam sessions in the distant past of my youth.

I have one nagging criticism, though. 'Brigg Fair' turns up with the collector & arranger credited, but no mention of the source. The source in question, Joseph Taylor, from whom Percy Grainger collected many fine songs was, to my mind, one of the finest singers around in his day. considering that he was 78 when he was recorded in 1908, he must have been superlative as a young man.

Editorial

Here we are again then: electing a new Squire for 2002 - 2004. It must be a feature of ageing that this seems to arrive more precipitately as the years roll on. By the time you read this, the die will have been rolled & we will all know who the next Squire will be.

This issue started out looking rather thin until I had a closer look at the submitted material. Once again I started typesetting with an apprehension that the pagination would be thin. As it turned out, I thought some of the items could benefit from a slightly expanded presentation, which produced a respectable size: I hope you agree.

I have to confess to an error which resulted in the Subscription levels being in error, specifically for Option 'C'. With only one pair of eyes proof-reading, there is almost always a mistake which manifests itself **after** publication is complete. I have included a corrected version on page 17. Those of you who have not yet renewed your subscription (I do need it fairly promptly so that I have a good estimate of the print-run required: the alternatives are either asking for a reprint or being snowed under with surplus copies).

Bagmen: I know that you have many responsibilities already. Can I ask you to add one - to encourage members of your side to

take out individual subscriptions. The longer the print-run, the smaller the cost per copy. On this subject, the revision of membership dues might need explanation. The intent is to render the cost of either form of membership the same, so that transition to full membership is merely a matter of application & ballot, with no financial implications. At this basic level of subscription, only one copy of either publication will be received as of right. However, if existing full Member Clubs choose to maintain their subscriptions at the current level they will, as before, receive three copies of each edition of the Circular. In addition, current Associate

Members can opt to receive three copies of each Circular by increasing their subscription to the current full Member amount. I hope you all understand that (No: I hope I've understood that).

The next Circular, Number 41 in the Gregorian calendar, is due for publication in early June. This means that typesetting will need to start in early May (immediately after we've all got up really early & frightened night-workers coming off shift, for instance). Can you please let me have any items for inclusion by the second week in May - at the very latest.

Eddie Dunmore