

the MORRIS RING
founded 1934

THE MORRIS RING *Circular*

Edited for the Morris Ring by Eddie Dunmore
118 Edgecombe, South Croydon, Surrey CR2

Number 47



A composite photograph of Monkseaton at Thaxted, from the camera of Geoff Jerram



GREETINGS

Gentlemen.

I hope this missive finds you all fit and enjoying your dancing programme. Since the last Circular appeared, I have had a busy time visiting and dancing with sides from Cornwall to Whitby. I did manage to join my side Chanctonbury Ring on Good Friday for Long rope Skipping' a Sussex Easter tradition. I was with King John MM on the Saturday of their weekend of dance, all posing for photographs for a new calendar! I also went down to Cornwall, to join Trigg MM on a Day of Dance; later in the

month I was in Horwich, meeting many of the North-west sides for another Day of Dance. May morning saw me in Oxford for the May Carols, which was followed by a walking tour of the city; my thanks to Oxford City MM.

The Dolphin Ring meeting was a very enjoyable weekend, I was a Wath-on-Dearne man for the meeting, supplying them with Melton Mowbray pork pies all day! Carol Curtis was invited to the feast; she is a lady who has supported the Morris Ring for 40 years, and has been to nearly every Ring Meeting in that time. The

meeting was held in Sutton Bonnington, a village that has a pub with a very understanding landlord!! I was invited by Goathland Ploughstots to the Whitby Sword Spectacular; an amazing weekend of Sword dancing, with sides from all over Europe plus 3 from the USA I will always remember the Gay Blades of Boston, a side I happened to share a room with. Early June always means Thaxted; Paul Reece (their Squire) and Dave Brewster (the bagman for the meeting) put on another great weekend. What was really good to see was Northwest, Rapper and Longsword, they all put on a fine show. I was most pleased to be invited to dance in with Chester City MM, a big thank you to them.

July sees Bob Cross taking over as Squire, and me becoming chairman of the Advisory Council. There is great deal of work to be done promoting our music and dance, and we

all have to support Bob in any way we can.

I would like to thank, again, all the officers of the Ring: especially John and Steve for all their efforts. Eddie Dunmore has put in a lot of time getting the new Morris Ring brochure together and printed: it has been well received and sales are going well. John and Eddie will be standing down at the next ARM: we need 2 volunteers to take over — names please !!

To finish, I would like you all to maintain contact with **all** the sides in your area; work together to improve the dancing, and to promote our traditions. It has been an honour to be your Squire.

Merry is the hall where beards wag all!

Wassail,

Cliff

The Squire-elect

MY period as Squire Elect seems to have rushed by so very quickly. I was looking forward to Thaxted, shadowing Cliff, and picking up some points from him and carrying on my "hanging on the Bagman's every word". Unfortunately, John was indisposed and in hospital at that time (he seems to be making a good recovery). During Thaxted I was hoping that I would have a reasonably easy ride and pick the Squire's brains re running the shows and conducting the processions, however I found myself running around checking on clubs and getting their dance choices for the shows. I would have preferred John to be there but whatever happens it was great fun.

I am now looking forward to the Uttoxeter meeting and dancing in on Sunday at Abbots Bromley. I am sure I have

said this before in print, but thank you all, again, for your kind thoughts and wishes. We are now more or less slap-dab in the middle of the summer dancing season, even though when I look out of my window at the moment there is a storm raging, and yesterday was very hot sunshine — still life's like that! I have been inundated with requests and invitations for events up and down the country, it still amazes me just how many "folk events" go on all over the place.

To take a point from Daniel Fox, and to echo his words in the Circular when he was Squire: if I am invited to any event it will be on a first come first served basis, and I will endeavour in my second year to give priority to those sides I could not visit during my first year of office. So if you are planning an event please let me know as soon as possible, so that I can organise my diary.

The one thing I have been made aware of over the years, but more so since becoming Squire Elect, is that even with email becoming so popular clubs are not replying quickly enough to requests and invitations from other teams. If the reader of this is the club bagman I hope I am not teaching Granny to suck eggs, but please bear in mind the frustration of waiting for replies.

Many clubs have spoken to me regarding their numbers, and their constant uphill struggle to attract new members. If I had the answer to this problem I would be bottling it, and BFB would be selling it on the Morris Shop with unashamed glee, but I don't have the answer. However during my next couple of years whilst visiting various sides I will try and find out how if teams have attracted new men they went about it.

But for yourself as an individual: next time you go out to dance, have a quick look in the mirror — does your kit need updating? or has your hat seen better days? These may be

small things, but I am sure every little helps in making you noticed for the right reasons.

2005 is going to be a very busy year for Ring Meetings and I'm sure this will be another year that will fly by but I hope that the final half of 2004 leaves you with good dancing memories. Just remember this as a final thought, cooperation with your local clubs is as important as within your own team. I have just received a phone call to confirm that my own club, Chalice, are being supported by men from two other clubs when a booking we had was made shaky by illness and injury within the team. I myself am looking forward to supporting Mendip Morris Men in Holland in a week or so, and I can tell you that good friendships are made by clubs cooperating.

Best regards, and good dancing

Bob

Hartley, May Day 2004



Hartley dancing the sun up, at Coldrum Stones

MAY 1st for Hartley commenced at Dawn (5.30 am), as it has done every year since 1975, by dancing at the Coldrum Stones, Trottiscliffe, a burial mound aligned to the sunrise on Mayday. This year, perhaps because it was Saturday, we had our

second largest audience of 117 early risers (not including the sun, which remained obscured by cloud).

tour that normally includes local schools so this year we celebrated our roots which, like the Ring, go back to 1934.



Hartley Green; all the usual suspects

Full English breakfast (and beer) followed, as usual, in our spiritual home the Rose and Crown in Wrotham, followed by a game of darts until our vintage coach arrived just after 9am. Being a Saturday we could not follow our usual

At 10am Wadard joined us to dance on the Green at Hartley, this being the village where Hartley were formed in 1952 by former members of the Stansted Morris Men. Interestingly, Wadard now hold their winter practices in the local



Hartley Green; Wadard dancing to Hartley's tune



Farningham; Hartley dancing at the Pied Bull



Farningham, the Pied Bull; and the band played on ..

school and two of the men present from each team attended Hartley practices in the village during the 1960's.

Our next joint stand was at the Pied Bull, Farningham, as we were based there during the 1970's and where Wadard were formed by some Hartley Men who got left be-

hind when we relocated to our present adopted village of Wrotham in 1978. We toured the pub's old Coach House where practices were held. Once a thriving Folk Club but now disused and desolate with plans to turn it into hotel accommodation.

Lunch was taken at the Black Horse, Stansted, to

celebrate the founding, in 1934, of our predecessors, the Stansted Moms Men who, during 1936, were the 37th team to join the Ring. Following lunch both sides led the May Queen's procession down to the recreation ground and danced at a pleasantly vintage traditional village fete.

to our present adopted village of Wrotham for a final performance outside the Rose and Crown. So it was that we came full circle following in the footsteps of our founders, the Stansted Morris Men, who regularly danced in Wrotham during the 1930's. Further details of Hartley's history and pres-



Wrotham; Hartley at home

Wadard then retired to the pub as Hartley had been promised, by kind invitation of the present owner, an opportunity to view Goodmans Barn where the Stansted team practised during the 1930's until the outbreak of war. We have a photo of the Stansted Men dancing Lads-a Bunchum so this was duly performed to the family before being invited inside what is now a superb private residence.

Returning to the Black Horse, we left Wadard's mini-bus driver to try and extract them from the pub and return them from whence they came whilst the Hartley contingent returned

ent activities are on www.hartleymorris.org.uk.

Terry Heaslip

Editor's Note

SOME of you may well suffer from a sense of deja vue, as this text appeared in the *Bagman's Newsletter*. As Terry is a friend of 35+ years, I felt obliged to contact him and ask for an augmented version. I hope you will agree that it deserved this presentation.

ED



Stansted; Lads a' Bunchum Hartley at Goodman's Barn

Thaxted 2004



Stebbing; Bedford dance Hinton, "Getting Upstairs".

was confined to his hospital bed for at least the weekend, I was given his tick-ets. This meant that, every time I proffered a ticket, I had to claim a face-lift

as being responsible for my lack of resemblance to the named individual.

Friday evening continued with visits to The Star and The Swan before returning to The Rose & Crown, and it was near enough 3 am before I fell into bed. I can report that the occupant of the other bed in the room, our



Stebbing; Etcetera dance "Step & Fetch Her".

When I arrived at the "Rose & Crown", I was greeted by the landlady, who asked me if I was "Bob". My denial of this was reinforced by BFB, who had obviously overheard the conversation. Various other long-time acquaintances drifted in, mainly in search of the Friday evening meal, and BFB went off to get our tickets. This was fortunate, because Thaxted were unaware of my attendance, a fact entirely due to my failure to give them any sort of warning (for which my humble apologies are due to the Thaxted directorate). However, as John Frearson



Stebbing; Men o' Wight dance "Skirmish", Bledington-style.



*Great Bardfield; the Squire joins Chester outside The Bell
Past Squire Bert Cleaver watched by Squire Elect Bob Cross*

own Treasurer, does not snore or otherwise disturb a roommate's sleep.

The Saturday dawn chorus ensured that I was awake before BFB's alarm went off. After a light breakfast in the room, we strolled down to the Post Office, where I bought my Saturday paper - just in case the conversation in our transport flagged during our tour of dancing spots. As it turned out, being a co-passenger with our present and future Squires and BFB, the conversation never did flag.

The first stop of the Squire's Tour was at Stebbing (The White Hart), and we got there before the

and Bedford went on again, this time with Nutting Girl.

The next stop was at The Plough at Radwinter, where a Thaxted side were waiting in company with East Surrey, Headington Quarry and Monkseaton. My picture shows Constant Billy being danced by HQMD. From The Plough, we were driven to the Rose & Crown, Ashdon, where we met Belchamp St. Paul, Cam Valley, Lincoln & Micklebarrow, Mayflower and Ripley. We stayed with this tour as far as Castle Camps, before moving on to the lunch spot.

Lunch was taken at The Coach & Horses, Newport,



Radwinter; HQMD dance "Constant billy" outside The Plough

coach. This caused us to be pounced on by the German television crew (with a Chinese director), who were also waiting for the action to start. The coach arrived well within acceptable parameters for tardiness, and the dancing commenced. First up were Bedford, who treated us to a performance of Getting Upstairs, from Hinton; Dolphin then showed Balance the Straw, and Etcetera danced Step and Fetch Her. Men of Wight then demonstrated their virility with Skirmish,

in company with Cambridge, Letchworth, Standon, Whitchurch (whose Mike Chandler insisted that Bob Cross & I should lead the "Greeny Off"). It occurred to me to wonder why the midday meal should be beefsteak pie, complete with a genuine suet crust, when we were all going to sit down to the Saturday Feast at 19:30. Notwithstanding this caveat, the meal was well cooked and tasty, although I did feel somewhat somnolent during

the afternoon, as will become apparent.

Eventually the time to move on was signalled, and we drove to Great Bardfield. Being early once again, we were able to get in a round of drinks, in The Bell, before the dancers' coach turned up with its payload of Chester City, East Suffolk and Jockey and Stafford, and the dancing could restart.

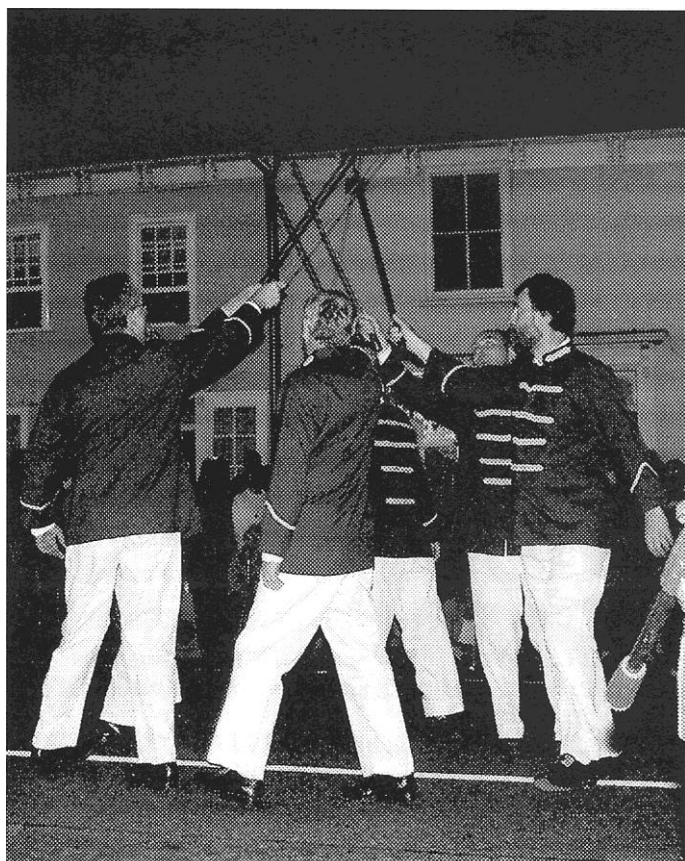
For whatever reason, I managed to fall asleep when we got back to The Rose & Crown in Thaxted, with the result that I missed the majority of the early evening show. All too soon we were wandering back up the hill to the school, and filing in to

also benefited from this facility). For the second time in the day, the food was good quality; a bonus was that I got my cheese & biscuits early because I passed on the dessert.

After the usual formalities, it was back on to the street and on with the second show. There was a massed Banks of the Dee, followed by Dolphin dancing the Chingford variant of Upton upon Severn. Ripley danced a six-man version of the Nutting Girl. Wyvern Jubilee were followed by Lincoln & Micklebarrow dancing Stanton Harcourt; Chester City did their thing, Jockey danced Jockey to the Fair,



Thaxted; Dolphin dancing the Chingford version of the Upton-upon-Severn dance



Thaxted; Second evening show, Monkseaton dancing

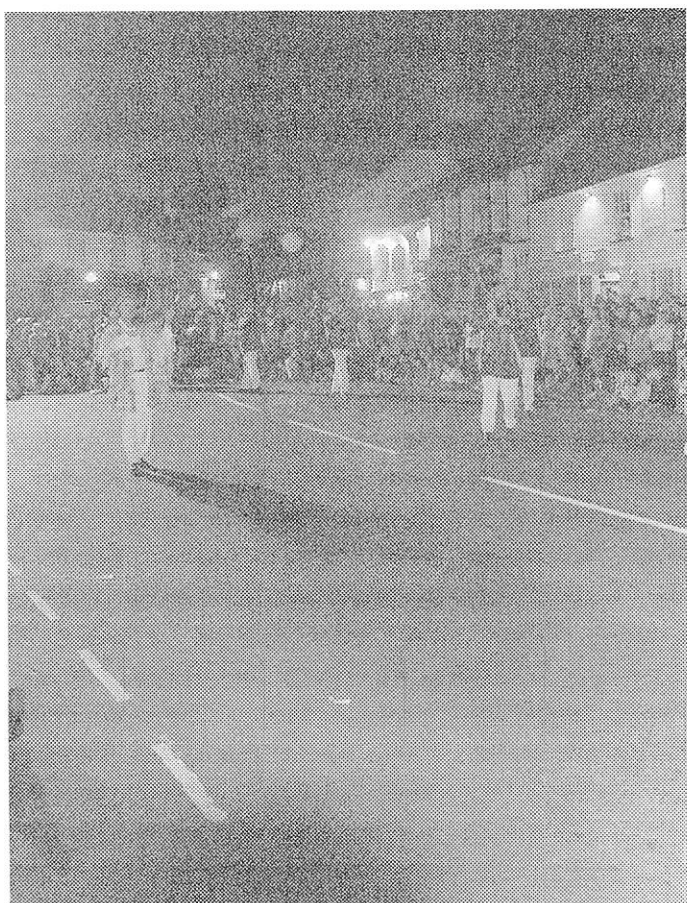
take our allotted places. I was directed to the top table, and found myself between BFB and the Thaxted vicar. I think the latter was quite pleased with this arrangement, as it meant that he got to share in the bottles of El Bombero, and Le 15 du President that I were part of my survival kit (Cliff & Bob

and Westminster danced Fieldtown Shepherds' Hey.

The crowd fell silent in the gathering dusk for the climax of the show; right on cue, we heard a distant violin playing that tune that Abbots Bromley disown, and on came the Thaxted Horn Dance. As a piece of street theatre, it can't be bet-



Thaxted; Westminster dancing Fieldtown "Shepherds"



Thaxted, late evening; Abbots Bromley lead-in



Thaxted, late evening; two of the "bit players".



Thaxted, late evening; the highlight of the show, the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance

tered. It held the audience's attention right through, and was precisely the way that most of us wish it could have been, although the cold light of day tends to induce scepticism. Nonetheless, the only sounds came from the fiddle, the stepping, and the snapping of the bow until they had all vanished from sight: then everyone applauded an impressive performance.

Sadly, I had to leave early next morning to be back in Croydon for a gig at the site

of the Crystal Palace. The journey home took just 75 minutes, not the 3 hours 30 of Friday afternoon. My thanks are due to Thaxted generally, for an impressive demonstration of a well-organised weekend, and in particular, to Peter French, who drove the Squire's Tour around with unfailing good humour and efficiency.

ED

"I sowed the seeds of Love"



Milton dancing Balance the Straw, Brackley

MILTON Morris received an invitation to take part in the opening concert of a week long celebration of English music at Clare College, Cambridge. The concert celebrated 100 years of Cecil Sharp's songs. Sharp, of course attended Clare College and his original manuscripts were on display as well as a written and pictorial history of his life at Clare.

Arrangements were made with musical director, Tim Brown, to dance in the college's courtyard but due to cool weather and the porter's aversion to people treading on the beautiful lawn it was decided that the dancing would take place inside the Chapel. The setting was really impressive and unlike anywhere Milton had danced before. The anti-Chapel was used for the display of Sharp's manuscripts and college history, which was interesting to all. As the chapel started to fill

Apres-concert; replaci

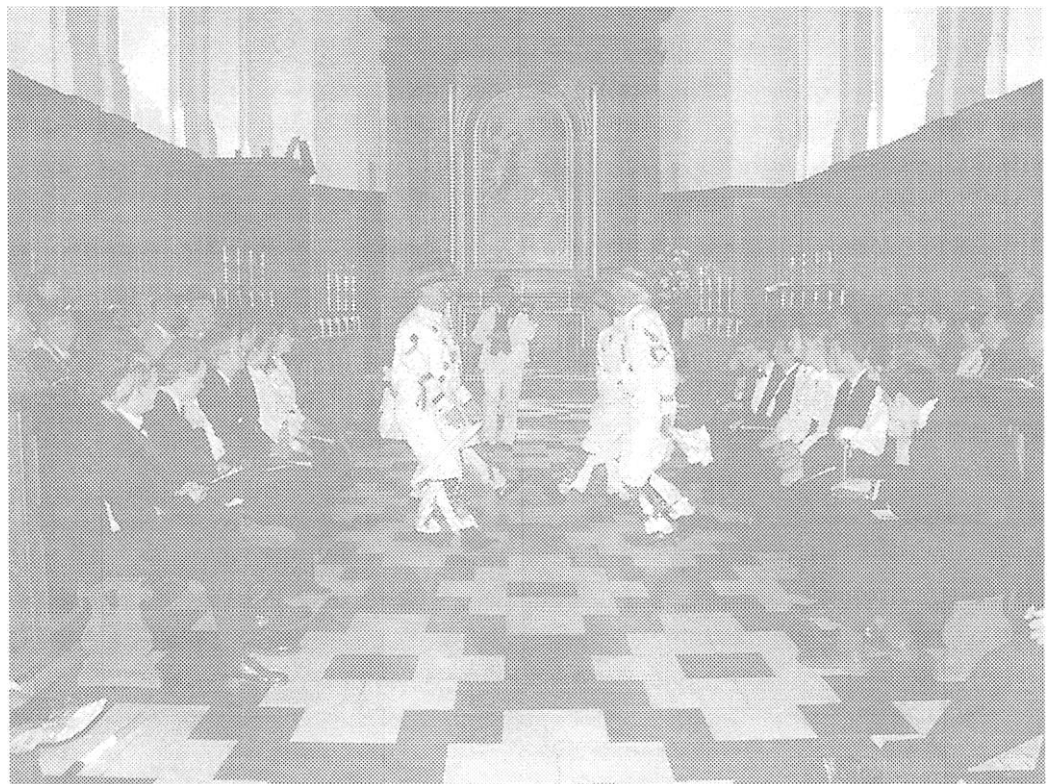
with people it came to light that Milton's musician, violin player Keith Hayward,

was a chorister at Clare as far back as 1939. This caused much interest amongst the

college dignitaries, including the Dean and many photos were taken of Keith for the college archive. The concert started with "I sowed the seeds of love" by soloist Harvey Brough, it was a very beautiful and haunting version. Clare College Choir including a bass player and pianist gave a memorable performance and after an interval glass of wine Milton performed. The dances, Bampton's Highland Mary, Banbury Bill and Step and Fetch Her were performed as close to Sharp's notes as possible and were very well received. During the second half Milton's bagman, Martin Cove performed Bampton's Lumps of Plum Pudding jig.

"It was altogether a memorable concert and your contribution to it was very special. You quite blew the minds of my students". Stated the musical director, Tim Brown afterwards.

At the end of the concert the men found their way to



Milton dancing Banbury Bill, Bampton



Après-concert; replacing essential bodily fluids

the college bar at the invitation of the director and were cajoled by some very pretty Clare medical students to give an impromptu perform-

mance. Needless to say the men did not need much persuading and an enjoyable finale to a great evening was had by all.

Clare College, Cambridge, Monday 3rd May 2004

Programme

I sowed the seeds of Love; *Harvey Brough, Tenor*
Music from the Court of Henry V
 I am a jolly Foster
 Ah Robin
 Pastime with good company

The Irish Connection
 An Irish Lament;
Jonathan Coffey, Violin
 The Londonderry Air
 Part-songs from 16th Century
 O Lusty May
 The Silver Swan



Martin Cove dances Lumps of Plum Pudding, Bampton

Now is the Month of
 Maying
Interval + a glass of wine

Milton Morris will perform dances from Bampton (Highland Mary, Banbury Bill, Step and Fetch Her) and Brackley (Balance The Straw)

The 20th Century renaissance

I sowed the seeds of Love
Of a Rosemary branch sent

Sweet Lovely Joan
The trees they do grow high

A Morris jig by Milton Morris - Lumps of Plum Pudding, Bampton

The Modern Madrigal It was a lover

The Turtle Dove
Come live with me
I will give my love an apple

When Daisies Pied
Nicholas Collon, piano;
Edward Young, Double Bass
David Jones



Milton dancing Highland Mary, Bampton

North Wood's Big Day Out



The Fireman's Arms; preparing for the day

Just on opening time, we pulled up at The Fireman's Arms, somewhere in deepest Sussex. We were so far south, that Brighton was the destination of the local bus-ser-

vice. My first photo shows us in the bar, preparing for the rigours of the day. It was at this first stop that we met a lady who was convinced that we must all be pagans (I can't



The Hatch; probably an Adderbury dance

THE North Wood day of dance seems to be a naturally biennial occurrence; only every other year do we attract significant numbers of outside participants. Perhaps managing to locate the event unerringly on Cup Final Day is a significant factor. This year's attendance was leavened by the presence of a pair of itinerant Green Oak visitors, who had decided that a weekend in Croydon had more merit than that on offer in Harrogate.

Just for a change, the planning was taken over by Taylor, who insisted on leaving most of us in total ignorance of the day's programme, with the exception of the nine o'clock start. By some miracle, all participants were in place at the designated time. Unfortunately, only two of us knew that we would spend the next 120 minutes in the minibus, on a magical mystery tour of some of the narrower unclassified roads in the South-East.



The Fireman's Arms; The Rose Tree, Bampton, with assistance from Green Oak

think why). My second shot shows a willing volunteer making up the numbers for a performance of The Rose Tree.

Having entertained around half-a-dozen spectators, one of whom was a game warden from Botswana, we re-embarked for the next leg of our magical mystery tour. After another hack through decidedly rural surroundings, we reached The Hatch, the subject of my third shot. Most of the patrons here were far too sophisticated to pay us any attention, although I am assured that the beer was good. Because of the long trek to our first stop, we had arranged lunch at The Hatch, so departure was delayed while blood sugar levels were replenished.

After lunch we invaded the Dorset Arms, where the patrons showed their enthusiasm by resolutely remaining at the bar. We did, however, manage to waylay a passing waitress, and persuade her to join in Banbury Bill. Then we paused briefly at The Royal Oak, before returning to Croydon and the



The Hatch; Jenny Lind, in the style of Lichfield

Dog and Bull. A brief performance in their beer-garden (which I neglected to record) followed, before we walked down to one of our spiritual homes, The Royal Standard, just for refreshment. It was here that Squire Cliff, returning from the special Advisory Council Meeting in Birmingham, joined us. Then it was back to the "Unit" for the Feast, prepared by Taylor (also known

as "Steve the Cook" - contact him direct, should you wish to hire someone who has cooked for HM). I left the Feast early, as I had arranged for the Majority Shareholder to drive me home, but I understand that our Squire made an ill-judged wager, which resulted in the loss of his cuff links.

Despite the distance driven, and the meagre audiences, the day was comfort-

able and relaxed. There were enough of us to share the dancing load, particularly with the two Green Oak stalwarts. The evening Feast was well up to the standard we have learnt to expect from Taylor. Our biennial visitors can expect even better next year.

Eddie Dunmore

Situations Vacant

Bagman

Salary: Zero

Expenses: By negotiation with the Bagman (Treasurer)

Weekends: You will be required to attend Annual Representatives' Meetings, Advisory Council Meetings, and Ring Meetings. Ales, Days of Dance, etc., will also be a major part of your social life during your term of office,

Duties: You will need to offer continuous availability via telephone, email &/or presence at any or all of the functions listed (plus any others at the discretion of the Squire). You will be responsible for the publication of the Bagman's Newsletter, for minuting proceedings at the Annual Representatives Meeting and Advisory Council Meetings.

You will establish the sequence of display dances at massed dancing displays, and the sequence of singers at Feasts, remaining diplomatic at all times. You will support the Squire in liaising with the other morris organisations.

You need to be able to sleep in conditions that are not always four-star. Of prime importance is the ability to rise the following morning, after three hours of broken sleep, bright, cheerful and alert, and ready to start work immediately.

Publications Officer

Salary: Zero

Expenses: By negotiation with the Bagman (Treasurer)

Weekends: Attendance at the Annual Representatives Meeting, and the Advisory Council Meetings, is a sensible option.

Duties: Persuading clubs that the content of the Morris Ring Circular depends heavily on their input. You will need to give occasional reminders that your presence at an event will ensure at least a mention, and occasionally a favourable report with photographs. You will also need to persuade club archivists, and those of similar bent, that their specialised knowledge can receive a wider audience if it is published in **The Morris Dancer**.

Above all, you will need to establish a good working relationship with your local printer; at the very least you should supply them with camera-ready copy, at best your publication will be handed over as an Adobe Acrobat file. N.B. Typesetting and layout skills are desirable in the interests of maintaining the Ring accounts in the black, and not elevating the Treasurer's blood pressure.

Hartley Ale



The Bottle House; Woodchurch (& Hairy Dave) dance Skirmish

Rock, Hoath Hill, and continue with them until lunch, after which Margaret and I would make our way to the Museum of Kent Life to join the "Goacher's Tour".

So, on 12th June, we set off for Hoath Hill, arriving at The Rock just after eleven. The "house red", I have to

report, was a trifle thin & acid. The Hartley programme admits to "English Morris Time", and the 11:15 start turned out to be 11:30. The personnel involved in this tour included Wessex, Woodchurch and Victory, in addition to the hosts. My only record from

The Rock; Victory dancing Constant Billy, Oddington

Following my contact with Hartley's Terry Heaslip about their May Day Sun-upping, we discussed the possibility that I could join one of the

Hartley Ale's tours, with a view to writing it up in this Circular. Having looked on their website for details, I opined that I should join the "Larkin's Tour" at The



The Bottle House; Wessex dance Bean Setting, Headington

The Beacon; Three jolly Sheepskins

this stop is Victory dancing
Constant Billy, Oddington

The second stop of the day was the **Bottle House** at Smarts Hill. Here, because I was driving, I had an orange juice, while Madame enjoyed a St Clements. Woodchurch, with support from Hartley's Hairy Dave, danced Skirmish. Other offerings were Victory's Banks of the Dee, Hartley's Shepherds' Hey (the Bampton six-man jig), Wessex's Bean Setting, and Woodchurch's Jockey to the Fair in the style of Brackley.

The next stop was lunch at **The Beacon**, Rusthall. Turning off the A264, a minor contretemps was caused by the coach having to back down its driveway. Before the meal, we all replenished our pots, and the active participants danced for the lunching customers. The dances here, that I noted, were The Valentine by Wessex, Beaux (Badby) by Hartley, Three jolly Sheepskins by Wessex, and Young Collins (Sherborne) from Victory.



Cobtree; St Albans dancing Vandals of Hammerwich, Lichfield (note the Mayor at the extreme left)



Cobtree; the other Hartley side dancing Young Collins, Fieldtown style



Cobtree; organising the shot for the Wedding Album

Lunch was a generous portion of chicken in a sort of Chasseur sauce, with the consistency of cotton wool and totally devoid of taste. The accompaniment was pilau rice (the best part of the meal), roast potato (!) and bread. As I remarked in my report of the Thaxted meeting, I wonder why such solid

meals are planned when a Feast is only another six or so hours away. This was a low spot in an otherwise thoroughly enjoyable day, and I intend no criticism of Hartley; they were sold short by their caterer.

After lunch, we made our goodbyes, and drove off to join Goacher's Tour at The

the prescription of warfarin was restricting his drinking.

Having danced at the Museum Shop, in the presence of the Mayor (see the photo), we moved into the grounds of the Museum, and met the wedding party that were already in residence. Haste to the Wedding, and Getting Upstairs were duly danced, but the bride could not be persuaded to participate in The Rose. However, the official photographer got everyone organized into a group photograph for the album.

When the dancing stopped for refreshments, a family conference opted to head for home, rather than stay for the massed display in



Cobtree; Kennet dancing Shepherds' Hey, Fieldtown

Museum of Kentish Life, Cobtree, arriving at the due hour. The contingent that arrived soon after us (impressive time-keeping) consisted of Hartley, Kennet, and St Albans. I was carrying with me a copy of Circular 46 and a bottle of wine, which I was able to pass over to the latter for onward transmission (I have since had an email confirming delivery). A welcome sight at Cobtree was the Bagman, John Frearson, who assured me that he is recovering from his recent illness, although

West Peckham. It had been a thoroughly enjoyable day out, particularly as I met so many old friends from my early days of morris. In fact, I put a plea in for North Wood to be on next year's invite list. My thanks go, in particular, to Terry Heaslip, who supplied the information that enabled me to work out an itinerary, and to all the Hartley men who made us feel welcome.

Eddie Dunmore.



Cobtree; the brode & groom talk to Terry, after the photoshoot

Correspondence

Re Morris Standards

GENTLEMEN, whilst I agree with the overall principle of maintaining (or improving) standards in Morris, my perception of the some of the facts on which Roger Kennington bases his criticism of the Motley Morris at Sidmouth differs from his. I cannot comment on events at Whitby, as I was not there, but I was one of the musicians playing for the Motley Morris at Sidmouth in 2003.

Specific points:-

"Dancers who were not even in kit". I do not recall seeing ANY dancers not in kit. However, the musicians, including myself were not always in kit, and the "kit" of some of the dancers was unconventional. I had hoped to produce a photograph to justify this point, but it is hiding in some remote corner of the family computer.

"Unscheduled performances". The Motley Morris, like all visiting sides, registered its presence with the festival organisers. The evening spots on the seafront were billed in the festival daily newspaper. The side

had an allocated spot at the Anchor Inn one evening, and an allocated place in the Friday night procession.

"Events...caused concern to...festival organisers". I was not aware that anything that the Motley Morris did gave concern to the festival organisers.

"Little or no effort to standardise their dancing". I agree.

"Their stunt backfired". I don't understand this comment.

As was announced at the spot at the Anchor Inn, the Motley Morris gave an opportunity for individual dancers (and musicians) to meet and dance together. The dancers from Auckland, New Zealand, particularly appreciated this.

So what was the public's perception? They donated well over £100 to the collection, which was handed over to the local lifeboat fund.

*. Keith Lascelles,
Bagman,
Men of Sweyn's Ey*

(Editor's Note: the letter referred to was published in Circular 46, pp 13/14, and was from the Squire of Hexham Morris, Roger Kennington)

The next Circular is due for publication in September/October. Reports, articles and general correspondence to the Editor by September 1st, please. Photos for inclusion are best

digitised at 300 dpi, please, and with minimum dimensions of 1600 by 1200 pixels to allow cropping, etc. Alternatively, send prints which can be scanned and returned.



Just to show that our Bagman is out & about. This picture, supplied him, was taken during the Hartley Ale Tour (report on pp 13-15). He spent his time on the Goacher's tour.

EDITORIAL

ALL too soon my penultimate Circular has been typeset and printed. The emphasis on the Southeast corner was forced by a dearth of volunteered material. The Bagman's Newsletter, although a very necessary publication, is much more the parish notices. The Circular has always tried to reach beyond that restricted remit, to (hopefully) engage a wider audience. Reports of Ales, Days of Dance, Feasts, Ring Meetings - preferably with accompanying photographs - can all be given an appropriate treatment within these pages.

I have to apologise to those of you who have submitted letters, etc, which have not been included. The constraints of typesetting are dominated by the need for the number of pages in a publication such as this to be a multiple of four. Any items

held over will be prioritised for inclusion in Circular 48, due out in October.

This copy of the Circular should reach you at, or just after, the Uttoxeter Ring Meeting. At that meeting, Cliff will hand the Squire's Staff over to Bob Cross. Cliff has had an eventful two years as Squire: it was on his watch that the business of the Public Entertainment License Act came to a head. My feeling is that we all owe Cliff, in particular, a debt of thanks for all the work that he put in, in concert with his opposite numbers in the other morris organisations. In the end, it boiled down to the serendipitous coincidence with political agendas, but nonetheless, morris dancing is now enshrined in a parliamentary Act as a traditional activity.

I shall be at Uttoxeter; I look forward to meeting a lot of you there. Have a good summer.

Eddie Dunmore.



HQMD at Thaxted; photo by Geoff Jerram