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## Reviving the Whaddon Whitsun Song

by Nigel Strudwick

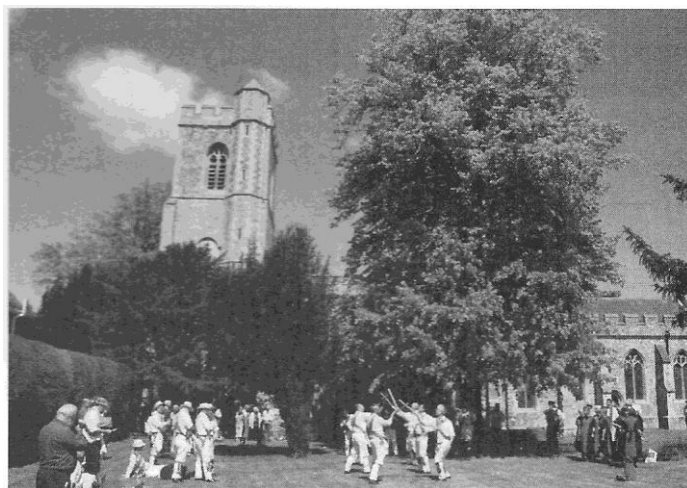
The village of Whaddon is located at the south-western edge of Cambridgeshire. It consists of a couple of hundred houses with between 300 and 400 inhabitants. My wife Helen and I moved there in 2002, and not long after our arrival we learned of the existence of the Whaddon Whitsun Song from one of our neighbours. Gradually we came to wonder whether we could revive the song through a morris event, and so we began a search for more information. A number of sources have been consulted to try and piece together as much information as possible. These include accounts of the collection of the song by Russell Wortley and Arthur Peck, with its original publication in *English Dance and Song*, Wortley's subsequent researches on folk customs, local accounts of the song, and local newspaper articles. The following is an account of what has been discovered and how the song was revived in May 2005.

**The rediscovery of the song**

Russell Wortley and Arthur Peck<sup>1</sup> originally collected the song in 1939 and 1942 from Whaddon resident Alfred Smith, and the music, words and an account of it were published in *English Dance and Song* 36:1 Spring 1974, page 20. The song perhaps came to Wortley's attention during his visits around Cambridgeshire looking for old customs, and/or he might have heard about the special Coronation

performance of it in 1937, from which much information is derived. A source of almost equal importance is a recording made in 1956. In that year, Peter Kennedy, who was recording folk traditions on

Alfred Smith told him that the procedure was as follows. The Saturday before Whit Monday the singers would go round the village and leave oak branches in the doorways (or roofs or thatches, depending on the



Outside St Mary's: White Rose, Devil's Dyke, Manor Mill

photo © Tony Gardner

tape, visited Tom Coningsby in Whaddon. Mr Coningsby then aged 82, described the routine for Whitsun ('Whitsun<sup>2</sup> in the local dialect; to Kennedy and also sang as much of the song as he could remember. This recording is sometimes mistakenly referred to as one made for the BBC. In 1937 it was decided to perform the song as part of the celebration of the coronation of King George VI in May of that year.<sup>3</sup> The singers were Alfred and Jack Smith. A photograph of the coronation celebrations shows these two elderly gentlemen dressed in top hats decorated with rosettes on the sides and long ribbons. When Wortley came to learn about the tradition

source) of the houses as a reminder of the event, which was to come. On Whit Monday the singers would walk round the village singing the song and carrying an oak branch, which they waved during the last verse. They collected money, which was spent that same evening on drinks for all comers at the Queen Adelaide (now Adelaide House) in Meldreth Road. From other sources we learn that the party there would include dancing, particularly a dance known as 'Up the middle and down the sides'. Of that more later. We do not specifically know that the dance was done in 1937. In the Kennedy recording, Tom Coningsby mentions that the singers would..(cont page 3)

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# The Squire

Greetings all

By now you will have chosen your new Squire Elect to take over from me at the final show of the Mendip Ring Meeting in July. I wish my successor every success and hope he enjoys his term of office as much as I have. It has been a real roller coaster of a ride and I have met so many smiling faces along the way. The kindness shown to me everywhere I have visited has been so much appreciated. During my time though there have been sad times but I can honestly tell you that all of the friends and families of those who have passed away have been so earnest in their belief in the fellowship of our organisation.

There have been changes along the way in that now we have realigned the Archive Group under the leadership of John Frearson, with changes in personnel, different views and objectives to be sought. I thank Ivor Allsop for acting as caretaker to the group after Roy Yarnell's untimely passing, and I must also give

special thanks to Barry Care (Photograph Archive) who has now passed the baton, so to speak, to Duncan Broomhead. Without Barry's leadership and raw enthusiasm in the early days I, and others, are sure that the Archive Group would have faltered. Barry has passed on a massive collection that we can be proud of but

I know that with Duncan's unfailing endeavours we move into a new era, not only for the standing collection but for the future especially in the area of digital recording.

Other changes during my term of office include the slimming down, not only of the Treasurer, but areas of the Treasurer's workload in that we

can now see where the money goes more easily in the form of standard accounts, Morris Shop and Archive accounts. This is instead of the whole being in one "pot". Steve has put in massive amounts of work to streamline himself and the accounting systems, and should be congratulated for his efforts.

By now you will have settled in with a new Bagman, Charlie is making his mark and I must congratulate him on his achievements so far.

Although most of what the above people do is not noticed in the day to day running of your club I can assure you all that the 'team' are constantly working for your club's benefit.

Can I wish you all, in all your endeavours this year, and especially those who are travelling abroad and flying the flag for the Morris Ring an enjoyable, fruitful and most of all, fun, dancing season.

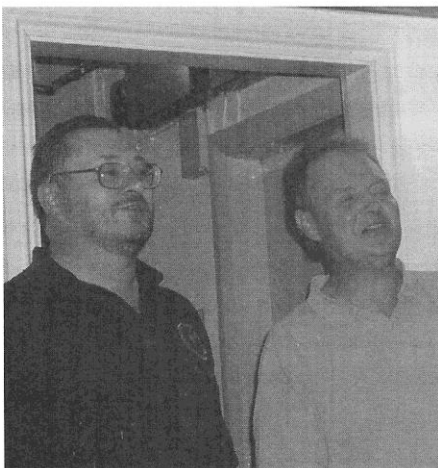
Bob Cross

February 2006



*The Squire of the Morris Ring, Bob Cross, on the right, and to his left, Paul Reece, Thaxted, Cliff Marchant, Past Squire of the Morris Ring (Jockey?), Richard Sinclair, Past Treasurer of the Morris Ring and Mike Austen, newly elected Squire of Winchester Morris Men at their Feast, 35th January, 2006*

Photo: Harry Stevenson



*Bob Cross at Uttoxeter, 2004; from left, clockwise, singing on Friday, dancing with Chalice, with Bill Tidy and out going Squire, Cliff Marchant, receiving plumber-insignia, hitching a lift and dancing in*

Photos H Stevenson



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## Whaddon continued

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decorate themselves with up to 28 yards of different coloured ribbons. Others have suggested that they wore knee breeches and stockings, although the 1937 photographs show them wearing regular trousers. The wearing of bells has also been mentioned, and it seems most likely that the dress used before the custom ceased on a regular basis was a little different from the coronation appearance (see below on the different versions of the song).

### The song

The tune as published in ED&S 36 is noteworthy for its varied tempo: at the beginning are given two time signatures 5/5 and 4/4, which half way through give way to 6/4 and 4/4. These mixed time signatures indicate the irregular meter of a song which was normally sung unaccompanied and which had to be flexible to fit an irregular word rhythm. Wortley records the song as being unique (as far as he knew) in being restricted to a single village. The published words are:

*Now Whitsuntide is come  
you very well do know;  
Come, serve the Lord we  
must before we do go;  
Come, serve him truly with  
all your mind and heart,  
And then from heaven your  
soul shall never depart.*

*How do you know how  
long we have to live?  
For when we die, O then  
what would we give  
For to being sure of  
having our resting place,  
Since we have run our  
sinful wretched race?*

*Down in those gardens  
where flowers grow in ranks,  
Down on your knees and  
unto the Lord give thanks;  
Down on your knees and  
pray both night and day*

*Pray unto the Lord that he  
will lead you the right way.  
Pray unto the Lord that  
angels he may bring,  
And then in Heaven your  
soul shall set and sing.*

*Both young and old, both  
rich and poor, give ear:  
Don't allow your children  
to lie, both curse, nor swear;  
Pray do not allow them  
to keep ill company,  
For that will surely bring  
them to shame and misery.*

*Now we may bring you  
the royal branch of oak;  
God bless our king and  
queen and all the royal folk;  
God bless our king and queen  
and all this world beside,  
Then the Lord he will send  
us all a merry Whitsuntide.* These are the words as written down in 1939.<sup>3</sup> Tom Coningsby's version in the 1956 recording has 'Victoria' in place of 'our king and queen' in the last verse, which suggests that he recalled it from his younger days, rather than the version which was sung in 1937 at the coronation of King George VI and Queen Mary. Some of the words he remembered are quite different from the Smiths'; village resident Grace Pierce also remembered learning somewhat different words from Grace North, another inhabitant of Whaddon. Mrs Bland, daughter of another former singer of the song, Mr Reed, also remembered at the end of the 1950s that her father sang 'Victoria'.<sup>4</sup> Presumably the Smiths updated the song appropriately for the coronation. Coningsby and Reed's version perhaps sheds an interesting light on the history of the song. Sources who spoke to Russell Wortley in the 1960s and 1970s believed that the song had died out of regular singing between



Standon MM: Weeping Willow Tree, Headington

photo © Tony Gardner

1900 and 1910, and surely Coningsby's singing the name of Victoria indirectly confirms this by being uppermost in his mind (Victoria of course died in 1901). I wonder whether the demise of the Whitsun celebration coincided with the death of the village fiddler, whose name was Stephen Jackling, better known as 'Stibbin', and who lived at 32 Church Street. He was said in the village to be an excellent musician who played for all sorts of events. Of course it must be remembered that the song was sung unaccompanied as far as we know, but perhaps Jackling's passing made the associated merriment more difficult? This evidence for the song's demise, as well as the timing of the disappearance, has some echoes of the decline of the Morris. Various explanations are put forward for the latter, among them the possibility that these old customs were becoming unfashionable,<sup>5</sup> which might also apply to such as Whaddon Whitsun customs; however, Keith Chandler also shows how difficult it was sometimes for the Morris to continue when musicians were hard to come by.<sup>6</sup> Nothing is known about the origin of the song. The nearest

thing to a clue is the oak leaves and branches. The mention of oak evokes the future Charles II hiding in such a tree at Boscobel House in 1651 after the battle of Worcester, and Oak Apple day, commemorating his re-accession on 29<sup>th</sup> May 1660. Could it be that the Whaddon Whitsun song developed as the local response to the Restoration, 'Merrie Englande' and so on, and the oak was adopted as a token of respect to Charles II? It has even been speculated that the original singing of the song may have taken place on 29th May, only subsequently moving to Whitsun.<sup>7</sup> Given that Cambridgeshire was such a Parliamentary area in the 17th century, and that Oliver Cromwell himself came from Ely, the adoption of the oak branch may also have indicated a particular defiance of that regime, of which nothing more is known.

### The 2005 revival

Only one performance of the song has, to our knowledge, taken place in the village since 1937. Russell Wortley had paid several visits to Whaddon in the late 1960s and early 1970s to learn more about the custom he uncovered 30 years before. On 29th November 1975 Wortley gathered a number of

villagers in the Village Hall to sing the song and to dance 'Up the middle and down the sides', the dance which used to be performed as part of the evening celebrations. Wortley himself accompanied the performance on the dulcimer. The event was reported on in the Royston Crow on 12th December 1975. I find it intriguing that no-one in the village has yet indicated that they were at this performance. Rather than just sing the song around the village, Helen Strudwick and I thought we would make a Morris event of the day. While the song is not at all connected with a dancing tradition, I do not need to remind readers of the importance of Whitsun time to the Morris. It was decided that the way to give the highest profile to the event was for there to be a procession of Morris sides round the village, singing the song as they walked and pausing at intervals for dancing. Whaddon even in these modern times lends itself to such a procession, since the village is highly linear, and one can pass every house in the core parish by following the main road (Meldreth Road/Church Street) and then turning into Bridge Street. The following sides agreed to join the Devil's Dyke Morris Men for the day: Hageneth Morris Men (Bury St Edmunds), Haughley Hoofers (Bury St Edmunds), Manor Mill Morris (Cambridge), Standon Morris Men (Standon), White Rose Morris Men (Huddersfield). There being no longer a Bank Holiday on Whit Monday, the day the song used to be sung, we decided that the event ought to take place on Whit Sunday, 15 May 2005. We also felt it important to involve St Mary's church in the proceedings. There is no evidence that there was any specific spiritual involvement in the original singing of the song, but in those days the church played a more important role in most

people's lives than it tends to now. Let us also not forget that there was early on a strong connection between the church and the Morris.' The recently appointed incumbent of St Mary's, Donald McFadyen, was extremely keen for us to do this. He particularly wishes to emphasise the role of the church in the wider community, something which has been rather lost in the last 50 years. St Mary's is very centrally located in the village, and it was arranged for a short Whitsun service to take

Potton Brewery. Music was supplied by a combination of Devil's Dyke and White Rose Morris Men musicians plus Anahata and Mary Humphreys of English Rebellion; all corners were invited to bring an instrument and join in if they wanted. About 60 people attended. We knew the evening would be good when Gordon Wood of White Rose got up to call the first dance of the evening and the whole hall stood up to join in. Clearly we had hit on a need for this sort of social event in the village.



*'Up the middle and down the sides'*

photo © Tony Gardner

place there roughly half way through the proceedings.

I mentioned that the original performance of the song was followed by a social evening, at which the collected monies were spent. We wanted to include such an event for the village, but the realities of work on Monday meant that it was more sensible to hold it the night before. We decided to call it a 'Folk Evening', done rather on the style of a traditional Morris Ale: music, dancing and singing each took their turns, and about half-way through the evening hot food was served. Excellent beer (Shannon Bitter, Village Bike) was obtained from the

After dinner, White Rose gave a show of the Morris. Later Helen Strudwick and David Dolby of Devil's Dyke sang the Whitsun Song, after which we played the Peter Kennedy recording of Tom Coningsby made in 1956. For most of the assembled company, this was the first time they had heard such an important piece of oral/aural village history. It was listened to in fascinated silence.

The records all agree that one particular dance, 'Up the middle and down the sides', was done by all present at the socials in the old Whaddon days. We know from Miss Grace Pierce, who was interviewed by Russell Wortley and also

from a letter she wrote to the Royston Crow in 1975, that schoolchildren in the village did this dance in the 1920s, and Wortley's notes indicate that it was performed along with the song in the 1975 revival. But exactly what did they dance? There was enough information in Wortley's notebooks to tell us that the dance was done to the tune of 'We won't go home 'till morning' with a clapping chorus to the words 'three quarts more, three quarts more', with the dancers standing facing each other in two long lines. Hence, Helen Strudwick was reasonably confident that a progression dance to this tune would fit the bill.<sup>9</sup> The dance thus put together was performed with great enthusiasm by all concerned.

Now to the Sunday. The weather was superb. With some still suffering a bit from the night before, all the sides gathered at the Meldreth end of the village from 10:00, moving off at 10:30. We had Anglia TV in attendance, and we gather that some of it was broadcast that evening; Radio Cambridge was there on the other end of the mobile phone. The Whitsun Song was sung as we processed from one dance spot to the next, and every dancer was encouraged to join in the first and last verse. As indicated in the sources, oak branches were waved in the air during the last verse. A considerable number of villagers followed along, and we had a good crowd at each dance spot. We stopped for dancing at the former Queen Adelaide, the Green, the church, the Golf Centre, Ridgeway Close, 29 Bridge Street and the bottom of Bridge Street. Each side did one dance at each spot, and the first side to dance immediately went on to the next spot where they did a complete show—this enabled every side to get plenty of dancing in. During the church service DDMM did a couple of dances, and processed out



*Devil's Dyke lead the singing of the Whaddon Whitsun Song*

photo © Tony Gardner

into the churchyard. For the final spot, instead of finishing with the traditional 'Bonny Green Garters', dancers and spectators got into one more rendition of 'Up the middle and down the sides'. A late lunch was then taken to end the day at Ermine Farm; during this John Jenner of Cambridge Morris Men told the assembled company something about Russell Wortley and his interest in folk customs.

It was a great weekend, and we are grateful to everyone for making it such a success.<sup>10</sup> The reaction to it in the village was excellent, so enthusiastic. Collections made during the dancing were put towards the cost of the weekend and the surplus of about £220 was donated to St Mary's church.

We have been asked if we will do it again. Will it be quite so special if we do it every year? I just don't know, although it would be good if at least the singing of the Whitsun Song around the village could be maintained. Ideas on a postcard please.

#### Credits

Helen Strudwick and I would like to thank all those who danced and all those

who watched. Most of the organisation of the weekend was done by Helen, and I would like to thank her for this, and for reading over this text. The event could not have been staged without great support in the village: we wish to thank Donald McFadyen and Whaddon PCC, and Ken Green and the Whaddon Golf Centre. In particular we wish to thank Clare Byatt for first making us aware of the song. Finally, our thanks go to David Dolby for managing to teach Devil's Dyke Morris Men the song. Published sources:

English Dance and Song 36:1 Spring 1974, p. 20.

Peter Kennedy's recording of Tom Coningsby. Folktrax International, FTX-423 — "The chain of gold". Songs & customs of Cambridgeshire & the Fens.

See <http://www.folktrax.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk>

"Reviving the song that is Whaddon's own", Royston Crow, December 12 1975, p. 4.

"About that Whitsun dance at Whaddon", letter from Miss Grace Pierce, Royston Crow, December 12 1975, p. 4.

Various entries on the song in Whaddon village newsletters and information sheets by J.

Rails. Unpublished:

The notebooks of Russell Wortley, copies of a typed transcript of which were made available to us by John Jenner. The transcript was made by Mrs Diana Wortley (now Hillman). The original notebooks are now in the archive of the National Centre for English Cultural Tradition in Sheffield. A W.I. history of the village for a Cambridgeshire competition in 1958 (loaned to us by Karen Coningsby). I would like to thank all those who helped with the unpublished sources, and also the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library for checking the reference to English Dance and Song. Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Wortley and Peck were of course members of Cambridge Morris Men from before the Second World War. Wortley was a great collector of folk customs, extending way beyond just the morris.

<sup>2</sup>The coronation was on Wednesday 12 May 1937. It is not known if the celebration in Whaddon was on the same day.

<sup>3</sup>As befits an oral tradition, there are at least three different versions of the song written down. In addition to the published version,

there is Wortley's manuscript version, pointed for singing, in which a couple of lines of verse 3 do not appear, and where a word or two differs ('never part' at the end of verse 1, 'children' in verse 4). The version in the W.I. manuscript has the verses in a different order. <sup>4</sup>Other singers known by name are Charlie Oliver, and Mr Disbrey, the latter not a regular performer.

<sup>5</sup> K. Chandler, "Ribbons, Bells and Squeaking Fiddles". The social history of Morris Dancing in the English South Midlands 1660-1900 (Hisarlik Press, 1993), Chapter 11.

<sup>6</sup> Ribbons, Bells and Squeaking Fiddles", Chapter 10.

<sup>7</sup> Enid Porter, Folklore of East Anglia (Batsford, 1974), quoted by J. Rails in a Whaddon Newsletter historical note.

<sup>8</sup> John Forrest, The history of Morris Dancing 1458-1750 (James Clarke & Co, 1999), Chapter 6

<sup>9</sup> The one used was adapted from one found on the web site 'The Round': <http://www.cam.ac.uk/societies/round/index.htm>

<sup>10</sup> A selection of photographs will be found on the Devil's Dyke web site:

<http://www.devilsdykemorris.org.uk/whaddonwhitsun05/index.html>.

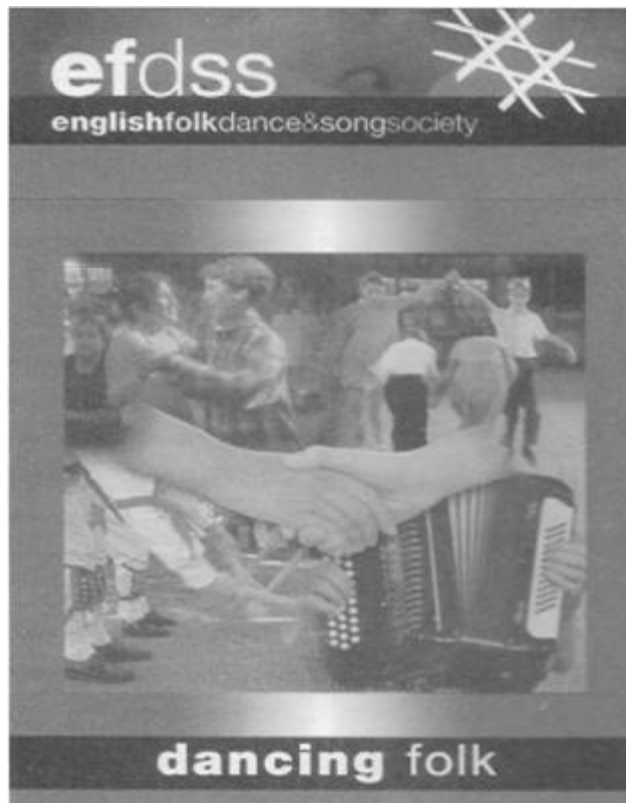
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## Review of 'Dancing Folk'

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by Geoff Jerram

'Dancing Folk' is a DVD and Audio CD set originally broadcast by the BBC Schools TV and now available from EFDSS under licence. The DVD comprises three programmes, two relating to Country Dance and the third on a Cotswold Morris dance from the Headington Quarry tradition. The original idea, for a Morris Dance teaching aid, was prompted by EFDSS and was the product of discussions between the Society and the three Morris organisations. The search for funding resulted in the BBC programmes, produced by Ron Smedley, a founder member of Beaux of London City Morris Men, the Bow Street Rappers and who helped reform the Exeter Morris Men in 1952 and set up Stockton Blue and Golds in 1954. The set is available for purchase from EFDSS at £20+pp. I regard myself as a complete novice on Country Dance matters and a natural first reaction when asked to review the work was that I should concentrate purely on the Morris aspect of it. I changed my view within the first few minutes of watching the DVD — perhaps a novice is better placed to review what is, after all, primarily a teaching aid. The early dance sequences are performed by school children aged between 9 and 11 and perhaps this gives a hint at its target audience, but it can realistically be used by would-be dancers of almost any age. The method is a step-by-step approach or, as Ron Smedley calls it, a ladder approach — one step at a time. I'm sure many teachers would regard this as obvious but I can think of several, at least in the Morris world, who regard the step detail as irrelevant. They, I suggest, would do well to see what this DVD is all about! Having been



taken through first the step, then the sequence, then all the sequences put together to form the whole dance, I think even I could join in a Country Dance without felling most of the other participants. As would be expected the dances become more complex as the programmes move on, building on what has been done before, and nine country dances are covered in all. The whole is brought to life by a seamless blend from young people in an empty hall into a full blown evening dance for all ages, no doubt to demonstrate to a young audience that it can be and is danced by all sorts of people of all ages. Maybe that's the reason for the very nightclubby blue lighting! Never mind, it's clever, it works, and enhances considerably the entertainment value of the DVD. By the way, all the music for the Country Dance programmes is provided by the John Kirkpatrick All Stars. I challenge anybody to sit still while watching or listening to it and for those who don't understand the

'dots', and there plenty of us in the Morris world the musical style of each dance from jigs through reels, polka and hornpipes is introduced in a simple, very effective and never patronising way

The Morris Dance section. Programme Three, is introduced by some dances (or fragments) performed by a number of different teams representing the three organisations. The narration gives a concise and meaningful insight as to what Morris Dancing is without dwelling on a rambling history of what it might have been. It is illustrated by glimpses of paintings, old photographs, modern dancers, and a wonderful freeze-frame demonstration by the Bow Street Rappers (of Royal Ballet fame) doing what we all aspire to and almost inevitably fail to achieve. This one shot makes the whole worthwhile — and danced by men who have been brought out of retirement for the occasion, after all some of them must be - ooh - at least 35 by now! The Cotswold Morris Dance is

'Bean Setting', performed by the Headington Quarry Morris Dancers and accompanied by their regular and long-standing musician John Graham, and is described in the accompanying notes as one of the simplest. Incidentally, my first dance was from Headington and ever since I've wondered why people consider it simple. In fact the observation from Nibs Matthews, 'There is no such thing as an easy Morris Dance' comes immediately to mind. The dance is shown as a whole then broken down, first step by step, then into the various figures so that each can be taught and practised in its own right. I particularly liked the way the Whole Hey is shown couple by couple, building to a whole set and showing the interaction between each couple. It's easy when you're able to look down from above. So that's what the DVD is all about but is it any good? Most definitely Yes! It is very well put together, some inspired teaching and demonstration and professionally finished! It is, I repeat, primarily a teaching aid. It was, I think never intended purely entertainment but the quality, the dancing shown, particular in the Morris programme, very nearly brings it into the category. As to its worth as a teaching aid I'm not really qualified to say for the young age represented in the Country Dance section but I learnt from it and, as I suggested earlier, any would-be dancer could benefit from it regardless age. For the Morris Dancer it shows a teaching style that many would do well to adopt and a quality of dance that many would do well to aim for. Incidentally, I spoke to John Graham and others of the Headington Quarry team the other day. They thought it was great too and were proud to have taken part in it. I can see why!

# The Ridgewell Files

<b>Publication</b>	<b>Issue Date</b>	<b>Title of Article</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Synopsis</b>
Dunmow Observer	4 November 2004	Good sign for the future	-	3 Horseshoes pub sign
Herts Advertiser	30 December 2005	Mayor keeping Mummers	-	St Albans Mummers
The Times	17 March 2005	on The Budget	Paula Blair	Morris family & Budget
Stevenage Comet	24 March 2005	Dancing in the Streets	-	Spring & Offley Morris Men
The Times	28 March 2005	Walter Abson	-	Obituary
Hebden Bridge Times	1 April 2005	Tradition & fun...	Kristina Fox	Pace Egg at Heptonstall
Hertford Mercury	6 May 2005	May day of delights	Gordon Richardson	May Day & Standon
The Guardian	16 May 2005	The Morris	Alfred Hickling	Review of a Play
East Anglian Daily Times	17th May 2005	From the archives	Photo	Ipswich Morris Men 1958
Hertford Mercury	27th May 2005	Morris dancer Ted	Alice Ainsworth	Ted Ovenden Obituary
Herts Advertiser	2 June 2005	Show is spot on	Madeleine Burton	Herts Show, St Albans MM
Essex Life &	June 2005	Morris men meet again	Gordon Ridgewell	Thaxted Ring Meeting
East Anglian Daily Times	7 June 2005	Morris dancer collapses	-	Bob Waller at Thaxted
Dunmow Times	9 June 2005	Morris men's gathering		Bob Waller at Thaxted
Saffron Weekly News	9 June 2005	Morris Men battle...	Pam Jenner	Thaxted & Stansted
Saffron Weekly News	9 June 2005	Dancer dies...	-	Bob Waller at Thaxted
Essex Chronicle	9 June 2005	Aircraft noise ruins...	Piers Myler	Thaxted & Stansted
Herts & Essex Observer	9 June 2005	Morris Dancer Dies	Sinead Holland	Bob Waller at Thaxted
Saffron Walden Reporter	9 June 2005	Morris Dance musician dies..	Dominic Bareham	Bob Waller at Thaxted
Dunmow Times	9 June 2005	Tragedy at Morris event	Jan Moller	Bob Waller at Thaxted
The Thaxted Bulletin	Summer 2005	Come to Church first...	Daniel Fox	Thaxted Ring Meetings
Stevenage Comet	16 June 2005	-	-	Offley MM 50th
Northern Echo	20 June 2005	Morris dancers honour..	-	Durham Ring Meeting
Hemel Hempstead Herald	30 June 2005	Morris Men stop traffic	-	Potten End Open Day
Herts & Essex Observer	30 June 2005	Honouring St Laurence	-	Thaxted & St Laurence
East Anglian Times	1 July 2005	Morris dancer death...	-	Bob Waller at Thaxted
Watford Observer	8 July 2005	Morris dancers	-	Greensleeves & Chipperfield
Leicester Mercury	26 July 2005	Plenty of red faces....	-	Leicester Morris Men
The Oldham Chronicle	22 August 2005	Cart the Away	Janice Barker	Saddleworth Rushcart
Whitby Gazette	23 August 2005	various	various	Whitby Folk Week
Whitby Gazette	26 August 2005	various	various	Whitby Folk Week
Whitby Gazette	30 August 2005	various	various	Whitby Folk week
The Independent	5 October 2005	The one & only....	Brian Viner	Ronnie Barker
Puddingstone	Autumn 2005	Offley Morris	-	50th Anniversary
Essex Life & Country-side	December 2005	A merry dance in Thaxted	Caroline Foster & Nigel Baker	Thaxted& Simon Ritchie

I am extremely grateful to Gordon Ridgewell for providing the newspaper cuttings, all of which will be available at the ARM. I am happy to receive same from different parts of the country and await your contributions in earnest, wherever that is!

# Picture Gallery

## St Albans Morris Men Ring Meeting



*Mike Chandler leads the procession*



*Bob Cross, leading , Charlie Corcaran and Steve Adamson, followed by Harthill*

*and below, Green Man*



All photos: Gordon Ridgewell. The photos were taken Sunday



*Hartley performing Sweet Jenny Jones, Adderbury*



*Stafford dancing Captain Laro's Skirmish, Jack Brown as fool*

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# Picture Gallery

## St Albans Morris Men Ring Meeting



*Ripley, above, dancing Cross of St George*



*Dartington, left, performing General Taylor, Bledington style*

*Trigg, bottom left, dancing Wenford Bridge, Bucknell style*

*St Albans, below, bringing the massed show to a conclusion with an exuberant performance of March Past, Eynsham, featuring Harry the Hart*



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## Trafalgar Bi-Centenary — Yateley Morris Men

By Paul Montague

For a number of years now the Yateley Morris Men have themed their dancing venues on their Tuesday club night around a particular commemoration — 2002 was the Queen's Golden Jubilee, 2003, the centenary of the Wright Bros first flight etc — so it was not difficult to theme 2005 around the Trafalgar 200 celebrations. This was more difficult than you might imagine in the area around Aldershot, with its connections more with the British Army, rather than the Royal Navy, but a number of pubs with seafaring names and the odd 'dry spot' at a couple of Nelson Roads were soon located & danced at during the summer.

Yateley is just off the A.30, the old London to Exeter turnpike road, so we expressed an early interest in being involved with the 'New Trafalgar Dispatch' when it visited locally. On September 3rd we duly took part in the ceremony when the post chaise with an actor playing the part of First Lt Lapenotiere visited the old coaching town of Bagshot. The bright sunshine had



brought out a large crowd to witness the event & they were entertained by us before the arrival of the dispatch with such dances as 'Go & Enlist for a Sailor,' 'Bold Nelson's Praise' & our very own devised 'Jolly Jack Tars' — a stick dance in the style of the now defunct Farnborough Morris Men.

However a lot more time was expended on planning for our Trafalgar weekend tour which we undertook on Saturday, 22nd October. Early contact with a side on the south coast had produced no response so we decided to do our own thing using our Tuesday night idea of dancing at pubs with the Trafalgar connection in the

name. The Good Beer Guide provided us with the Lord Nelson pub in Brentford & Sutton while connections at Fullers Brewery came up with the Admiral Nelson in Whithorn, probably well known to those rugby supporting fans amongst you when visiting Twickers, & the Trafalgar Freehouse in Merton. All of these were within striking distance of Yateley, 20 or so miles away in south-west London. Further research revealed the fact that Nelson spent his last days ashore before the battle with his beloved Emma

We started at William road Sutton, where not 50 yard apart, were the two pubs, The Lord Nelson & The Victory So we performed a few dances between them, some with the help of the East Surrey MM on whose territory we were encroaching by consent. As well as dances previously mentioned we also included 'Maid of the Mill' - Ilmington where the linked hankchieves were replaced with ensigns and the Stanton Harcourt closing dance - 'Portsmouth'. An appreciative crowd of regular from both pubs as well as lo-



*A pint of Trafalga ale would make us merry and sing*

Photo Ian Sutherland



*Maid of the Mill – Eynsham*

Photo Ian Sutherland

Hamilton & their daughter, Horatia, at the home he bought for them at Merton Place. This has since been demolished but a number of aptly named roads now stand on this site so we decided to dance and perform our specially adapted Mummers play at both Hardy & Nelson roads in Merton. The Trafalgar Mummers play replaced our Christmas characters with Napoleon, Nelson, of course, as well as Capt Hardy, Vice-Admiral Collingwood & the Ship's Surgeon; Little Swing Swang retained his place in the cast as the 'first hand man of the press gang'! Several trips up to these suburbs were made in establishing contact, posterising the pubs & leafleting the various roads close to them. cal residents then saw the first performance of the mummers play. Unfortunately we had to leave most of the sandwiches & hot dogs kindly provide by the staff at the Lord Nelson to the East Surrey men as we had booked lunch at our next venue, the Trafalgar Freehouse in Merton. David, the landlord, had programmed a whole weekend of activities commemorating the event & the Greensleeves MM had visited the previous evening. As we waited for our lunch of either chilli, sausages or cottage pie – all at the special rate of £2.50p which was exceedingly good value - we entertained with music & seafaring songs which have been a significant component of our après

- morris sessions this year. After lunch we performed outside before walking the few hundred yards to Hardy Road where we danced again before processing the short distance to Nelson Road. By now we had attracted a good sized crowd who we treated to further dancing & the play again. As can be seen from the photographs, Nelson was not the only person to pick up a good looking woman in Merton!

Our next stop was the Lord Nelson PH in Brentford but a traffic jam across Kew Bridge made us 50 minutes late. However we kept the pub informed of our progress so that it did not dampen the enthusiasm of our best crowd of the day. After a swift pint of Fullers 'Trafalgar Ale' we danced to an appreciative crowd & involved them in 'Glorishers' - Bampton & the Brimfield stick dance. Unfortunately our delay precluded our performance of the mummers here and barely enabled us to enjoy



**Trafalgar 200 Nelson and Emma**

Photo Ian Sutherhand

another pint on the landlady, Diane before we had to be off to our last stop in Whitton. Despite being a London suburb, Whitton seems to have a good community spirit as not only the Admiral Nelson pub but the whole of the High Street were bedecked in Union & St

George's flags on our arrival & the staff were wearing period costume! The celebrations at the 'Nelson' were in full swing which had included the New Trafalgar dispatch during the afternoon but the disco music was duly turned off while we danced outside & for the final

performance of our Mummers play to the bemused audience inside the pub. We were then sent on our way with two jugs of beer for consumption on the mini-bus thereby ensuring well lubricated throats for the singing on the journey home.

Yateley MM would like to thank not only their Treasurer, Ian, for hiring and driving the Y.E.L.A (Yateley Elderly & Less Able!) bus all day, the most welcoming staff at the four pubs they visited, the residents of William Rd, Sutton & of Hardy & Nelson Rds, Merton, the PR Dept at Fullers & their friends, the East Surrey MM. All four pubs are worthy of a visit. They are: Lord Nelson (Youngs), Sutton — the after practice watering hole of the East Surrey MM Trafalgar Freehouse, Merton Lord Nelson (Fullers), Brentford and the Admiral Nelson (Fullers), Whitton 'Nelson forever!' Paul 'Monty' Montague is Squire of Yateley MM

## Quarry Morris Honoured

*from Will Partridge*

Timed for the annual tour of Headington Quarry on Whit Monday (30th May) the Mason's Arms, home of the Quarry Side brewed a special beer for the occasion. The 'Old Bog Brewery' a recently launched micro brewery housed in (guess what?) created a splendid hoppy brew quaffed by guest sides and locals alike. On tour were Westminster Men, for the 50 something year and, for the second year, Ewell St. Mary who have made their mark with us old lags. Such was the popularity of the beer that a dedicated lager drinker was seen with a pint!



Along with the guest sides we had the pleasure of Bob Cross, Squire of the Ring, trying his best at the Quarry style. A highlight of the supper later in the Mason's clubroom was the sound of William

Kimber's concertina played by Roger Digby from that old favourite band 'Flowers and Frolics'. The brew must have hit the mark as the standard of song was, without exception, the best for years.

Seen in the photograph is Will Partridge, Bagman of the Quarry Side, used to pulling a pint or two, and probably drinking them! Thanks from the Quarry Side go to the Meeson family from the Quarry, running a truly local pub (voted pub of the year by the Oxford Camra Branch in 2004), and valuable supporters of the morris tradition. What more could we want?

photo from of Will Partridge, from Headington Quarry Morris

(Article sent to me by Will, but may be attributable to C J Meeson, ed)

# 'Somebody Slap Me'

## An evening with Trigg

by Harry Stevenson

Our family holidaying was to be in Polzeath in Cornwall so I checked out Trigg Morris Men's web site, looking for

Stanton Harcourt. I was asked to join in Dearest Dicky, an amendment to their prepared evening show in order to accommodate me in the set. Actually with me dancing enabled

Surrey Men's family was over heard by one of my tribe saying 'He must be keen if he brings his kit on holiday!' Most of the dances I knew or remembered pretty quickly except a stick dance in the Fieldtown Tradition called Bodmin Riding. Similar to the long Fieldtown style, each dancer has two long sticks: Roger opposite soon had me dancing it as if a regular!

A good and appreciative crowd gathered at this spot and despite the weather forecast, the evening remained dry.

After the dancing we retired

teasing the audience): 'I wish they'd do it now', 'Somebody Slap Me' by Colin Ridley (the highlight of the night), melodeon being hammered with gusto; Viv Champion on concertina 'My Young Man'; Chris Ridley on his melodeon & Pete Marlow on washboard: 'Keep on The Sunny side'; John Richards & the whole band -Show me the Way To Amarillo; West Virginia; Brown Sugar; Sloop John B; Da Doo Run Run; All my life; Oh Boy; Keep knocking; Lilli the Pink; Delilah; (This will be the) Last time; Put your sweet lips...' Cornish



*Trigg dancing in Rumford*

their 2005 programme. I noted they were dancing at Rumford and Morgan Porth Thursda 18th August. Not too far from Polzeath. I emailed Roge Hancock their bagman indicating I might turn up and he replied 'Bring your Kit.

them to put two sets up. Moving on to Morgan Porth, a picturesque fishing village north of Newquay, and the Merrymoore Pub.

I went to the bar to order a round of drinks for my family (6) and kept being nudged by



*Writer attempting Bodmin Riding*

The first spot in the village of Rumford, with no pub but sponsored by Skinners Brewery from Truro. Beer, wine and soft drinks were handed out to all who wanted it. A good crowd saw Trigg dance a selection from Fieldtown and

Trigg Men: Roger enlightened me that if in kit you were unlikely to be charged!

From then on I seemed to dance every other dance and once with an East Surrey Man who had lost his kit. Incidentally, a member of the East



*Trigg performing in front of the Merrymoore Pub*

to the back of the pub for a supper. We then moved to the front bar where Trigg had set out a 'stage' at the far end with all sorts of instruments to entertain the throng. The reporting of the next hour and a half may be somewhat vague but it turned a good evening into a cracking one.

With Chris Ridley on his melodeon, Pat Broderick on Guitar, Pete Marlow with a wash board round his neck, various other percussion instruments, Viv Champion playing her English concertina.

The evening's repertoire was something like this:

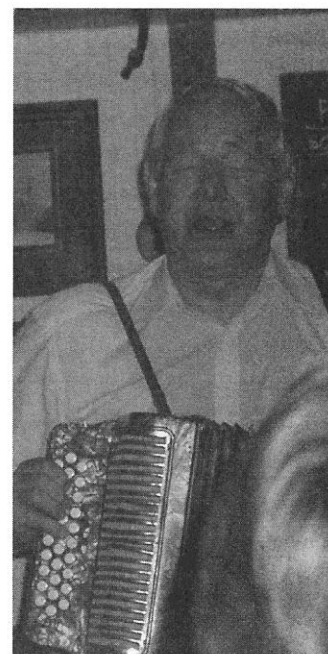
Cowboys & Injuns & Cavalry (John Richards, the Fool,

National Anthem!!! Everyone in the pub was joining in the singing, but led strongly by the unbelievable Chris Ridley and Pat Broderick.

I am sure I missed a few songs out, and apologies if I've got all your names wrong. Thanks for a great night

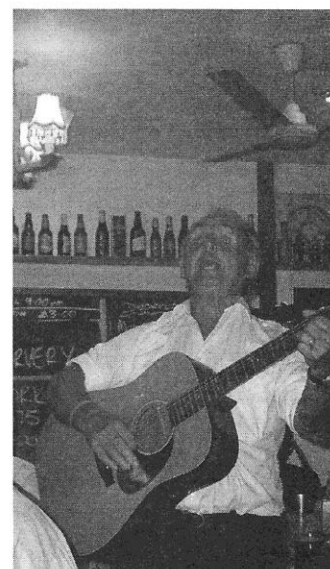
Photos on this page:  
Ben Stevenson

Photos on facing page:  
Harry Stevenson



## Trigg Sing the Roof off The Merrymore Pub, in Mor- gan Porth

From Top Right, clock-  
wise, Chris Ridley, Pat  
Broderick, Roger Han-  
cock, Chris Ridley and  
Pete Marlow, Robert  
Chisman, John Richards,  
the Trigg Fool, various  
Trigg men and left, Pete  
Marlow with washboard.





12 November 2005

Regards

Francis John Field

Ross Kilsby, Joint Squire,  
The Cup Hill Morris Men

From Ross Kilsby

Dear Harry

The enclosed photo was dropped into me by the curator of the Godalming. (Surrey) museum. It dates from around 1925 and the chap in the baldrics is "Francis John Field" who was a local school teacher. The Photo turned up in the effects of his niece. Nothing is known about the morris team apart from Mrs Field's address which was Wolesley Road, Farncombe. Godalming, Surrey. The curator was not keen on parting with the original photo. but I shall keep on trying! Cup Hill are a bit thin on the ground, but still dancing.

Hunt Cottage  
Hydestile  
Godalming  
Surrey  
GU8 4DE

( the kit resembles that worn by English Folk Dance & Song Society Teams, or its precursor. Certainly the white shoes are a clue. I am sure a reader will surely be able to name some. if not all of them. Sor'y to hear that Cup Hill are struggling with numbers; it is no consolation that others have similar problems. ed.)

04 October 2005

### Sidmouth FolkWeek 2006 - Call for Papers

From George Frampton

Following the success of the Talks, Lectures and Discussions programme at the Arts Centre at this year's (2005) Sidmouth FolkWeek, it is envisaged that the same will be repeated during the week 4th-11th August 2006. This is a Call for Papers. Topics covered it 2005 included Gipsy folksong a West Country hobby horse community-based custom new horizons in West Gallery music, and a discussion on the 'new cool' in Morris dancing Speakers will be expected to

supply their own equipment, although the Arts Centre does offer the use of a projector screen. Please submit ideas to George Frampton at george.frampton@thornson.com, for a response next year.

Many Thanks

George

### A Backward Move?

From Julian Whybra

Dear Harry

Viewpoints were asked for re Dave Thompson's 'A Move for the Future' in the MR

Circular no. 50. I began morris dancing in 1973 at university and joined my present side in 1976. In everything I've heard and read regarding the Morris the emphasis has always been on fellowship, co-operation and community and NOT on competition. I can't understand how anyone who knows the Morris hasn't been similarly inducted. I know there was a brief period in the hate history of North-West Morris where local competitions occurred but this was never the case elsewhere. Thus the idea of sides competing for Dave's 'gold standard' and the consequent 'ranking' of sides/individuals is a complete anathema. Isn't this just a marketing ploy? We all 'signed up' to a 'mission statement' when we all joined our various

sides -no badge is needed. Without wishing to be a killjoy Dave's Latin inscription is not attributable to anyone I suspect it's a play on "For evil to triumph, it is necessary for good men to do nothing" with Mores (Morris) thrown in for effect (perhaps Cicero's "O tempora! O mores!" would have been better!). And why Latin?!? Why not Old English "Landsidas cwelaó git sa godan dob naht."

Julian Whybra

Mayflower Morris Men

Billericay

PS I hope my thorns and eths came out.



# The Morris Ring Circular Editorial

Editor: Harry Stevenson

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It is good to be editor when you have something relevant, controversial or even a scoop to write about. I'm afraid to disappoint you, as I have none of those to hand. Having just written the 'and this is it and that's about it!' on the back page, I am trying not to slip into anecdotes.

## ARM

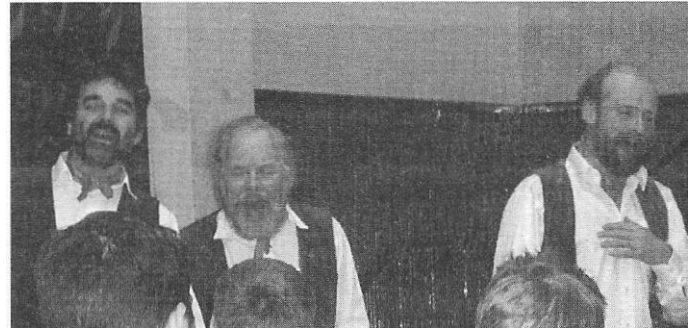
Hopefully, this issue will be delivered to those at the upcoming ARM along with Sean's first as Editor of the Morris Dancer. You will have to wait until Charlie's next newsletter for details of what happened at the ARM. We will have elected Bob Cross's successor, who will guide the Morris Ring for the next two years. I am sure we will all support him, who ever is elected. There are a number of issues to concern him, not least of which is the dwindling numbers of young dancers joining the Morris and clubs folding due to declining

numbers. Whilst not a new problem, it is a growing one. Another issue, one which always causes heated debate is Ring sides with both women musician and women dancers. A number of articles and photographs are included in this issue with women dancers and musicians. If member clubs send in relevant articles I will continue to publish. I can only publish what you send in plus a little of what I, in my limited way can do as an attendee at some functions. I do record a lot as Winchester Morris Men's scrapbook keeper, not as editor of this publication. I am trying to avoid this nub-



*Moulton Morris Men at King John's Day of Dance, 2005*

lication being a continuation



*John Bartlett, Brian Ingham and Peter Luscombe singing at Winchester Morris Men Feast, January 2003*

of Winchester's scrapbooks. So I welcome articles from all members. Having said that, I am extremely grateful for all the contributors in this issue; I think all the articles and photos are of a very good standard and long may it continue.

## Brian Ingham

Ron Fiddler writes that it is with the greatest sadness that I inform you of the death on 8th January 2006 of Brian Ingham. Brian, who had been

a member of Victory Morris for about

25 years, was always an active and enthusiastic dancer and his wonderful singing voice was always a strong feature of our performances over the years. He served in office of squire from 1991 to 1993. He has fought valiantly against cancer for several years but finally lost the battle.

I hope to publish a full tribute in the next issue.

## Morris Ring Publications: 2006 continued

A big apology for the errors in the delivery of the last circular, mainly affecting those (the majority) who receive three copies. Some of you highlighted this to me or Steve and we were able to get those clubs an apology letter from the post office together with some recompense. I am sorry for the added journey time to travel to your 'local' sorting office to collect same. For some that was not inconsiderable distance.

Only two issues of the circular were issued in 2005 and I

take full responsibility for this as your new editor. The first issue was issued later than expected in order to include an obituary consequently the second issue was produced a little later. Common sense told me it was pointless issuing two in the space of three months, so it was decided to issue the March issue as a 'Bumper' edition.

It is hoped the delivery will coincide with the ARM to save postage; at least that is the plan.

I am interested in your views

as to regular features in your circular and I am pleased Adam Garland has continued the feature started in the last issue as to 'Why I started Morris Dancing.' I wonder why his Dad started?

Ron Shuttleworth wrote an article in issue 49 regarding his role as an Appointed Officer. We have a number of these positions so it would be good to know what you all do.

That's it for now, so remember the copy dates are for

the next issue is 30th June, for July/August distribution, and final 2006 issue, final copy date is 30th October for November/December distribution. Final copy date for 2007 issue of The Morris Dancer is 30th November



*Who these & where?*

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# Thoughts on Why I Became a Morris Dancer

by Adam Garland

I was born at a very young age in 1973 the second child to Mike and Cynthia Garland, and from that moment on I was in and around the folk world — both music and dancing. A photograph still exists with me as a baby extending a hand towards my Fathers pint-pot! As I grew (Note I do not say 'matured!'), my childhood was accompanied by the paraphernalia of The Ring bagman and I spent many hours watching the old Gestetner printing Ring address lists whilst spreading thick, gloopy ink all over the kitchen floor. The one thing that was missing from this scene was the big pointing finger, "you WILL become a dancer!" I was always allowed to make up my own mind as to whether or not I donned the bells. Even at the age of eight, though, I could tell that this was a way of life that I would happily choose to accept. The use of the phrase 'way of life' is deliberate, Morris is more than just a hobby. I joined East Suffolk Morris Men in the winter practice season and was told that I could not dance out until I

was as tall as the shortest man, thus avoiding potentially embarrassing and somewhat painful incidents whilst in stick dances. I have always been eternally grateful to Des — some of you may know him as 'the little man with the Hobby Horse' ! And so in the summer after my ninth birthday I was to be seen in brand new sparkly bells in and around the villages of Suffolk. I attended my first Ring meeting in 1984 and have not looked back since. The hardest event I have had to perform at was my own High School fete - Secondary school kids can be so cruel! One event that I will always remember is my eighteenth birthday. A 'surprise' do, I thought I knew what was coming but little did I know to what extent. Ikniel Way and Harthill brought complete sides, along with representatives from sides too numerous to mention here. We danced and played the night away and at about four in the morning the dominoes started. My time at College in Cheltenham studying for my degree was a small inconvenience between evenings out with Lassington Oak, Gloucester, or Forest of



Adam dancing Ladies' Pleasure

Photo: Hilary Blanford

Dean, I even inflicted myself upon Bristol on a couple of occasions. In the twenty-four years I have been dancing I have made many good friends and had countless excellent days/weekends out all over the Country. One phrase I have heard all the way through my dancing career is 'the Fellowship of the Ring' and I have experienced many examples of this. This Fellowship (and the capital 'F' is deliberate) was brought home to me again two years ago when my Wife died and I received many, many kind thoughts and messages from all over the Country. Now, looking back over the

twenty-four years as a member of numerous Sides, having been to many Ring meetings, Days of Dance, Ales, Feasts, and instructionals, I even ran a workshop at the Beasts and Animals Weekend many years ago on how to behave like an animal (no smart comments, please!, and yes, Henry is still going strong.) I am happy to say that the reasons for me joining East Suffolk, the impressions I had as to how it would be, have been reinforced over and over again. I can say without a shadow of a doubt that I would not change one minute of it. A last thought which I am sure many of you will have had as well, is that over my dancing career I have been with East Suffolk to many places in Europe and it is quite obvious that The Dance is in many cases received better on the Continent than it is here in England. The forthcoming Olympic Games opening ceremony is an excellent chance for The Morris to shine as something this country should be proud of. If we all pull together and lobby the appropriate people perhaps filling the stadium with 2000, 5000, 10000 dancers would be a good thing.

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## St George's Day celebrations in Newcastle.

by Keith Gregson & Brian Pollard

April 2005, St George's Day was celebrated in style with the great and good of morris dancing assembling for a day out in and around Newcastle upon Tyne. With the success of last year's event, which was firmly linked to overcoming problems presented by proposals in the Licensing

Act, this gathering was used to further promote the cause. Dancers representing all the morris organisations turned up from various parts of the country. The sides associated with the Morris Ring were Benfieldside, Stockton and Darlington Mummers — all from the traditional county of Durham plus the Red Leicester Border Morris side. It was particularly pleasing to see the Stockton side in action, as

public performances have been limited of late. Their stunningly tight rapper showed that, in truth, there is no substitute for experience (and age!). Over the day, the British public in all its glory had every opportunity of seeing what it is all about — from the culture vultures inside the Sage to the masses of happy shoppers in the city centre. The latter included an extremely happy and interactive group

of young ladies on a hen weekend from Belfast. Overall, the day proved a good exercise in PR — both internal and external and an event, which would benefit us all with its repetition.

Brian Pollard is a Benfieldside man and Keith Gregson is a free-lance journalist. Ed. Sony, no pictures.

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## Jim Jones: A Tribute

by Mike Chandler

**Jim Jones**, Master three-hole pipe maker, died on Monday 1st August 2005 in the Forest of Dean in his 92nd year. The funeral was held on Thursday 11th August at the Yew Tree Crematorium and it was a celebration of his long and busy life. The Chapel was filled with family and friends including the Forest of Dean Morrismen who proceeded the coffin with the Winster Processional. Jim was one of the quiet men of the Morris probably not



*Jim Jones 1977*

greatly known outside the pipe & tabor fraternity where the pipes he made for them were outstanding. He came into the Morris in his early 40s but in his younger years he had a variety of jobs and interests. He made spectacle frames from tortoise shell, trained as an optician, was a farmer,

carpenter, made and showed marionettes, was a punch and Judy man, to name but a few. In the mid 1950s the St Albans men who were short of a musician advertised in the local paper and Jim responded, initially with a mouthorgan and then melodeon and his music was a joy to dance to. A year or two after he joined St Albans he volunteered to make a pipe for one of the other musicians and this started his interest in these renowned instruments. He discovered when making a second pipe for me that it was not as straightforward as he had thought. However, with his hallmark patience and meticulous attention to detail he researched almost every blown instrument to find the answers. After a break of about three years living in Australia he returned and set up home in the Forest of Dean and resumed pipe making. Having originally started with brass tubing he now moved to stainless steel which presented more problems to overcome. He was helped in

this by some of the Forest of Dean men, for whom he was now playing, who made the necessary press and formers for this harder material. Over the years Jim made hundreds of pipes and they have gone all over the world. He will be missed as a friend, teacher and inspiration.

Mike Chandler  
Past Squire of the Ring & Pipe player.



*Jim Jones, Ruardean Mayor 1973, Doug Isles & Dave Nick, left*

all Photos: Dave Evans



*Jim Jones' day: John Ralph Mike Chandler & Dave Wintle*

With the greatest of sorrow, the Devil's Dyke Morris Men announce the passing of Peter Hardy, dancer since 1995, and squire 2000-2003. He had just passed his 53rd birthday. Peter collapsed in what was intended as our penultimate dance of a most enjoyable and warm evening at the Wheatsheaf at Exning near Newmarket, and despite efforts of first aiders at the scene, ambulance staff and the A&E at Addenbrookes Hospital, he failed to recover. Peter very rapidly picked up the basics of the morns, and was one of the regular attenders of the side. He could be relied on for all our tours, organising some



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## Peter Hardy

of them, and was very congenial and active in the social side after performances. He was a good singer, and perhaps the greatest of his many contributions to the side was to encourage us all to sing, leading many of the songs himself. He was an excellent squire, organising, controlling and encouraging the men at the same time.

He lived in Withersfield, and owned a company in Haverhill producing bar-code products. He leaves a wife and four children.

# 350 years of Morris Misdemeanours

Combating Unreasonable Authority

*'In 1655 the Puritan Vicar of Lapley took a group of young people to the Stafford Assizes for the Misdemeanour of Morris Dancing. They came from Lapley, Church Eaton and Stretton "in Penkridge Parish". After a couple of court appearances, they were "bound over to keep the peace" - which presumably they never did. The restoration in 1660 made it legal again, until 2003, when there was another attempt to licence and restrict Morris dancing. Like them, we fought our right to dance unhindered, and we won!'*

by Alan Dandy

T'was with a high degree of fear and trepidation that the two Alans of Stafford, designated, nay volunteered during some moment of madness, leaders of Misdemeanours Tour 'A' approached downtown Penkridge on a sunny Saturday morning in July. Shortfalls in every aspect from financial, residential, transportational and culinary, to support personnel and manpower had been opening up like earthquakes for weeks. A pleasant surprise then when 'people', some in what



looked like Morris kit, were found littering the Monkton 'Base Camp' as we arrived. With a short call-to-order, a motley crocodile drawn from Briggate, Silhill, Black Dog & Stafford wended its way to the first designated spot at Penkridge Market, some 400 yds. Next surprise was that space had been set aside and before someone filled it with a stall Stafford started the dancing. Silhill, Black Dog and Briggate followed, introducing themselves in turn and presenting their very different styles to an appreciative audience. From the immediate public interest it was obvious that we had something

different. The rich tapestry of dance, the kaleidoscope of colour, and mix of costume was a surprise to many, and



they were interested, asking intelligent searching questions of anyone they could get near. By good fortune or perhaps some basic aspect of sides which are enthusiastic enough to want to show their skills, we had a high quality gathered an un-expected cohesion, inter-side banter and audience engagement by all sides assisting. A clear blue sky promised a very hot day ahead but we presented a full programme in the time available each completing two dances. We collected hard before boarding the bus (not where it should have been with more misdemeanours if

but eventually apparent) for Lapley - home of the original men, & women, of the 1655 misdemeanours. The 1655 event and the research carried out was explained and that we were hoping for current descendants of the original families to be at the evening event. On arrival we stuck with the successful order of dance and entertained a few locals and each other! Beer service was a bit slow but otherwise a useful and historic stop before lunch and the tour's main arena of the day, Newport Agricultural Show. Lunch was taken at the aptly named Last Inn where the landlord had been threatened

service of Ale & Victuals were tardy. In the event it all went to plan and left time for us to entertain a few Inn guests and ourselves in dance - Briggate actually learned / practiced one, then tried it out on us! On then to the Show where we were 'received' at the gate and the bus escorted by 4-wheeler off-road bike to parking near the "Village Green" - the traditional dance site for SMM who have covered the show for a number of years. The years of Newport Show experience paid handsomely as Stafford located a prime dance spot in front of the beer tent. Silhill, quick to learn, joined us. We



were paid a modest sum to dance on the 'Village Green' at an allocated time, but missed the first spot; they were not concerned as each side was also encouraged to dance anywhere in the showground, but paying attention to the vast number of (real) animals around. These spots were also good for collecting. On the Village Green sides joined forces, each presenting dances in turn then culminating in a massed Bonny Green Garters - which was new to some in the non-Ring sides. We solved this by Alan C taking the announcer's mike which we had used to amplify the music throughout,



and calling - lines were not quite to Ring standards but it presented a splendid spectacle. The response from the sizable audience was remarkable. The regular MC said that whilst they always enjoyed the



SMM presentation they recognised this year they had witnessed something very different indeed. Special also for ourselves as we witnessed, Border with precision, Molly with style & refinement, (Black Dog donned Dog Masks at one point), and North West with ingenuity, to keep the authentic production with just few dancers, (we all know that one !).

Difficult to say what Stafford added perhaps "difference".

We returned to Penkridge for Tea, then demonstration dances by sides from tours A & B. A police presence had been arranged and when told of the historic roots of the event asked from which side they should arrest someone - "No problem with that one" said one Stafford man "Uttoxeter"! And they duly

carried out the request !!



For the later evening a hog-roast had been arranged and SMM Squire changed hats

we had only taken one 9 gallon of "Summer That" from Woods of Craven Arms.

Foot-note - The following day in the post church service demonstrations John Colbert introduced 'Sharp' mentioning that it was a dance created by Roy Yarnell a respected Midlands Morris man who had died recently but who had always supported for all forms of Morris Dance. Later a young lad came up to him and said "Thank you for mentioning my Uncle. I'll tell the rest of the family" Photos by Bevan Craddock, Penkridge Town Crier who reports of ecstatic reception of

the event by Penkridge citizens at <http://www.penkridge.org>.



and played for the ceilidh whilst John Colbert MC'ed. An excellent family event, the only 'down-side' being the limited supply of real Ale - Not being too sure of numbers

The first paragraph is copied from the Penkridge Web site where more of Bevan Craddock's photos can be seen

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# The Yangze Incident

by Sem Seaborne

After a busy dancing season it's refreshing to take a week or so on vacation enjoying the traditional delights of another culture. However, Murphy's Law of Coincidence sometimes intervenes, as it did when Pete Johnson of **Leicester MM** found he was visiting all the same locations as Sem Seaborne of **Icknield Way MM** when they met in Beijing on the same extensive tour of China in September. As Leicester and Icknield Way don't meet up that often (despite Dad (Ian Hubbard) being Squire of one side, and Son (Graham) being Bagman of the other), there were plenty of stories to swap in the bar after a day ogling the sights. However a great opportunity arose when after sailing down the Yangze River for three days, the prospect of a final party was announced with a request for guest participation. What could be better than upstaging the American Karaoke Elvis impersonators



*Pete Johnson on keyboards and the writer in 'kit'*

with some traditional English dancing to complement the excellent traditional Chinese dancing on display. The problem was that as the meeting was entirely unexpected neither Pete nor Sem had kit or music. With the help of an outstanding Tour Leader (Liu "Mike" Nanhui), bits of silk, coloured paper, flowers and sun hats were rapidly cobbled together and multi striped luggage straps turned into baldrics

using beer mats as crests. Two bell-pads were fashioned from the tops and bottoms of the local Tsingtao Beer cans with enthusiastic help from wives and fellow travellers. in generating sufficient empty cans. A Yamaha keyboard was located and although all the voices were labelled in Mandarin careful panel removal revealed English titles underneath. Pete is not a regular jig dancer for Leicester but had recently

attended one of Bert Cleaver's excellent instructionals, and after appropriate amounts of Tsingtao recalled sufficient information to get through Fool's Jig (Bampton) and Ladies Pleasure (Bledington) with only one rehearsal. The vital "breather" between jigs was provided by Sem teaching the assembled audience of British, American, Canadian, German and Chinese tourists the words and actions to "The Man who Watered the Worker's Beer". The Chinese government have already launched an enquiry. It all went to great acclaim, and could signal further opportunities for joint Leicester - Icknield cultural initiatives (Ian and Graham please note!). If anyone else has danced the morris on a boat down the Yangze, please let us know, otherwise we'll note this as a "first", executed with great missionary zeal and Tsingtao beer. Cheers.

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## A German extravangza!

by David Doolin

It's not very often that Manchester Morris Men find themselves at a loose end during the summer; in fact, on reflection; it's quite a rarity. Planning a season's dance programme isn't so big a challenge and we're fairly adept at filling in the gaps. Early in 2005 we were busy making plans for a trip to the Czech Republic, having been invited to dance at a "Best of British Festival" at Libochovice Castle, near Lovosice, about 60km north of Prague. Everything seemed to be proceeding satisfactorily



*Brandenburg Gate, Berlin*

© British Embassy Berlin

and everyone was looking forward to another overseas trip. [The last being Malta for those who remember reading our last report on the Birgu Festival.] When suddenly the line went dead! No further communication whatsoever. What had happened — had the festival been cancelled? — had we said something to upset the organizers? Try as we might — and we really did try — we couldn't re-establish any sort of contact. The consequence was we had something of a major hole in our plans for Summer 2005. Now for those who do remember our Malta article you may recall our mentioning



*German football fans*

© British Embassy Berlin

the benefits of a club having a number of 'country' members. So it was with a looming hole to fill, and a travel lust to satisfy, we contacted our resident member in Berlin, an Englishman by the way. Joy of joy, "Why don't you come and stay with us?" was the reply. "I'll put a programme together and ask a few people what permissions we'd need to dance in the City and all will be well!" And so it was — only double! Because in the process of seeking permissions to dance in Berlin during May, he unearthed an opportunity, via the British Embassy, to dance in Leipzig, during September, at an annual civic festival organized by that City. So it was on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> May that 13 of us 'Easyjetted' into Berlin from Liverpool, with another country member joining the group on Friday, direct from Birmingham. What followed was a weekend of dancing, singing, eating, and drinking [some of us to a little excess!], at some exciting venues in the magnificent capital city of Germany. Our accommodation for the weekend was shared between Frank (our overseas member) and Sheila (his Lady), and a number of their family and friends living locally. Following a Friday morning of sight seeing, the dancing (Cotswold and Lancashire) started after lunch at the

Hackescher Markt in the old Eastern side of the city, then an excellent spot by the riverside at Nikolai Viertel (Spreeufer) ending with a full display at the historic Brandenburg Gate. That evening a wonderful dinner and German style bowling competition, both held in a friendly local restaurant (it had its own bowling alley!), finished off what had been a memorable day. Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> dawned a 'roasting hot' day again and so we started out on a dance programme that took in Wilmersdorfer Str., onto Wittenberg Platz, and ending at the Kurfürsten Damm on Joachimstaler Str, a venue shared with the football fans in Berlin for the German Cup Final. On the way back home the more hardy of us (or should that be foolish?) called in to sample the delights of a wine festival being held in one of the local parks. A very pleasant hour or so was spent, in the cool of the park, sampling the wines. Later that evening a splendid feast was arranged that was graciously attended by all our hosts after which, at midnight-ish, most of the men contentedly retired. However, still with a little life in the batteries, the 'hard core' made the short journey to a local hostelry for a final nightcap. Stamina was rewarded when a lady who just happened to be in the bar and who, it turned

out, was a professional singing coach with a special interest in folksong, joined them. There followed a long night of singing that those there will remember for a very long time. Sunday morning was spent in general 'recovery', before an afternoon flight back to the UK. The September event in Leipzig was of an altogether different kind, but unquestionably enjoyed by all the men. The arrangements for the visit were made by the British Embassy in Berlin, for Leipzig's 2005 Herbstaftakt (Autumn festival) which this year had the theme 'Discover Britain'. To showcase different aspects of 'Britishness' the Embassy arranged for, amongst others, the Metronomes Steelband [from London], a Beatles tribute band, author David Henry Wilson, a Scottish Pipe Band (which surprisingly came from Berlin) and, to show folklore and tradition, Manchester Morris Men, to appear at the festival. Arrangements for getting us to Leipzig, accommodating us and moving us to and from the festival were all arranged by the Embassy staff, and what a job they did! From meeting us on arrival at the airport door in Berlin, to getting us back there the day after the festival, everything really was 'First Class' all the way.

Frank (our country member - see above) joined us as we arrived in Berlin making our numbers 13 for the weekend. The festival day was Saturday, during which we danced both Lancashire and Cotswold to fascinated and appreciative audiences at various venues on the festival site. In between spots we enjoyed all the other festival events, making numerous friends and answering all sorts of questions from interested festival visitors. In the evening there was a dinner for all the Embassy's festival performers at which our musicians played for country dancing, greatly enjoyed by all those taking part. A Sunday morning journey back to Berlin and afternoon flight back to the UK saw us all safely back in Manchester by 4:30pm. The problem we have now is planning a 2006 programme that could possibly equal 2005. Maybe we need to wait for a few holes to fill! (I am grateful to Keith Ashman Bagman, Manchester Morris Men, ed.)

<http://www.manchester-morris.freemove.co.uk>

(Ed. not proficient in German or familiar with spelling of Town names; printed as seen, and enjoyed!)



*"Discover Britain" festival, Leipzig*

c/w British Embassy Berlin

# Fools and Animals Unconvention

by Robert Chisman

Cromford, October, 2005.

I now know why I recently purchased the biggest people carrier on the market - a Chrysler Grand Voyager. No, not for transporting the wife, kids and dogs; not for clearing out lofts for the tip; it's for taking two fools, two animal keepers, one Rat, one Horse, camp beds, sleeping bags, kits, one barrel of cider and two barrels of beer to the Unconvention at Cromford! We nearly raided the beer for comfort drinking whilst stuck for two and a half hours in the largest car park in the country - the M42. By the time we got to Cromford, most of the delegates had arrived, had their supper of excellent chilli con carne, and disappeared down The Boat! The first surprise at the venue was REAL beds and LINEN! We didn't need those sleeping bags and camp beds - would've made more room for the beer. I then looked for the swimming pool - only to be reminded that it was the Cromford Venture centre, NOT the Leisure centre!! In fact, the centre is a converted old mill, and was more akin to a Youth Hostel than the



usual school hall or whatever  
*A tired looking Wyvern*

where most Morris Weekends are held. Very comfy, thanks. It was time to greet old friends and make new. The Unconvention has been extended to members from all three Morris organisations for two years now, and I was pleased to welcome some ladies to the Unconvention for the first time. Delegates had travelled from far and wide



*Alexander Leighton (Banchory Morris)*

to Cromford this year - from the Netherlands I reacquainted myself with **Maarten Niesson and Henning Koeford**, but from farther afield were **Alexander Leighton** and **Stuart Ashton** form **Banchory Morris Men** in Aberdeen! I think I managed to speak to everybody, and knew that I had had a drop or two by the time I got back to the Centre for a spot of kip! Saturday morning, and after breakfast and a short briefing, we prepared to go en masse via public transport to Matlock Bath for some dancing, fooling and beasting. It was decided that some beasts would not fit on a Trent bus, so were taken along using my Grand Voyager, a Land Rover and a VW camper van. After one attempt to catch the wrong bus, the bemused driver of the right bus was treated to a colourful, motley collection of characters boarding his bus for the short journey to Matlock Bath station, where

we all reassembled and got ready to ascend the cable car to the Heights of Abraham. Emerging from the VW camper van, was the biggest beast that I have seen at an Unconvention - **Geoff Turnbull (Wyvern Jubilee)** with **The Wyvern**, a huge, green and red scaly monster with big ears, mouth and tail. Geoff insists that it is not a dragon, but is a creature in it's own right. Now I could look and see everyone in kit; from the feminine charms complete with fluffy tickling stick of **Jenny Howard's fool (Bedfordshire Lace Morris)**, to the not so feminine charms of **Brian Swain's Molly (Bishop Gandulf's Morris)** dressed more like an old washerwoman! Walking from the station to the cable car proved difficult not only for some of the taller



*Ian Heighton (Kings Morris)*

beasts, for example myself in **Trigger**, and **Doug Herdson (Plymouth Morris)** in **Bilge** the ship's rat because of the overhanging foliage, but **Stafford Morris' young Max Haynes** was beaten in speed by his grandfather, **Jack Brown**, because Max had just had an ingrowing toenail removed, and was on crutches!

The ride up the cable car to the Heights of Abraham was a bit scary for some, but at the top, we got together with **Ripley Morris**, our hosts for the weekend. The weather was just about holding, and we were able to interact with what few tourists had braved their way to the top! Apart from Ripley's excellent dancing, we enjoyed jigs from **Verna Wass (Bloxham)** and **Simon Pipe (Adderbury and Outside Capering Crew)**. There was plenty of room for the tourney horses such as **John Edward's Knotty (Stafford MM)**; from **Ashley's Rise Junior Morris**, Bristol was **John Clifford**, with **Dennis** who in one previous life was in the English National Opera (who says we can't have culture at Morris events?) and all the way from **Banchory MM**, Aberdeen, **Stuart Ashton** with a horse without a name. I persuaded him to name it during the weekend, but have forgotten what it was now! The Fools were also busy accosting the public. Like bad pennies, they always seem to turn up, and it was great to see old friends such as Thomas the Tank Engine, sorry, I mean **Julian Kohler (Plymouth MM)**, plus **Tim Sercombe (Dartington)** and **Roger Comley (Letchworth)**. Back down the cable car, we then moved on to the Fishponds pub for more performances and lunch. Highlights outside the pub were the three girl and one hobby horse jig by the junior side, **Ashley's Rise Morris**.

Lunch was unfortunately a rather slow affair, but enjoyable for all that. Most delegates then made their way to Cromford back via the train this time, and we assembled at Arkwright's Mill where there was a good size area to dance. To help Ripley MM



**Ripley with Unicorn at Cromford**

out, a series of multiple jigs and dances were performed by the fools and beasts. We also saw for the first time the magnificent **Fine Lady of Banbury (Steven Wass)** on **Blanche**. I'm not sure what the **Leicester Fox** thought about all these horses... the Unconvention were **Ellie the Elephant (Jenny Banks, Bloxham)** and a **Griffin** brought by **Eddie Strover of Braybrooke Morris**, who was accompanied by his team's **Greenperson, Clara Taylor**. On to the Apple Crushing festival at Cromford, where we danced alongside the nearest thing to the swimming pool I was looking for earlier - Cromford lake! Ripley Morris under Jack Daws' squireship were working their socks off for us, aided by their fool, **John Butler** and **Roger Ward** in the **Unicorn**. There was more fooling from **Ian Heighton (Kings Morris)** and **Jed Dunn (Wyvern Jubilee)** After nearly losing a few people in Scarthin's bookshop, we moved on up the road to dance the last session outside The Bell, surprising a few hardened sports fans who thought they were in the pub to watch the footie... More jigs were performed by Jack Brown, Simon Pipe and Jennie Howard, and a mass fool's jig by everybody who wanted to have a go. Not easy in an Animal, I can tell you! Back to the Venture Centre to freshen up for the Feast, which

was held in the bijou refectory. Catering was by John and Helen Butler, helped by some friends - Helen could certainly show the professionals a thing or two about serving 40 or so guests so promptly! The menu of pate, followed by home made Lasagne, and Apple crumble to finish, washed down with copious amounts of cider and Skinners Betty Stoggs bitter - and dare I say it - Mineral Water, was a meal to remember. **Charlie Corcoran (Ring Bagman, Leicester MM)** proposed the toast to the Immortal Memory, and I proposed all the thanks etc. etc. (the boring but necessary bit!) Entertainment was led by **Ken Johnson** who ran a quick Mummers play workshop and then produced a Mummers play, followed by his own amusing one man version! Other turns were performed by Alexander Leighton as grumpy old man, with songs



**Bilge, the Plymouth Rat**

from many others led later on by Jed Dunn and his comprehensive folder of songs! The Instructionals were held on Sunday morning; the Fools workshop was led by **John Butler**, and simultaneously the Beasts had a seminar with **Ron Shuttleworth (Coventry Mummers)** on ways of making a Beast.

We then met together for a discussion on the future of the Fools and Beasts, and made some decisions, not least of which was the venues for the next few years! Julian Kohler wondered if a trip abroad to Brest would be feasible for 2006; Jed Dunn asked if we could hold 2007 at Wyvern Jubilee, where it will their 30th Anniversary; John Edwards suggested Stafford for 2008! Some discussion was made around the name of the organisation, and whether we should still be affiliated to the Ring. The name which appeared to be handed down to me was The United Union of Fools; this seemed double dutch (whoops- sorry, Maarten and Henning - no offence meant!) to some, and looking back the original title of The Illustrious Order of Fools was adopted, with an extension to incorporate the Animals/Beasts, and therefore, after more discussion, we agreed upon The Illustrious Order of Fools and Beasts to be our official tithe. Tim Sercombe then pointed out the current badge said United Union of Fools and had a picture of a Fool only. He suggested that we hold a competition to design a new badge which incorporated the new agreed name, and a logo or whatever which reflected both Fools and Beasts. Entries, please, to me **Robert Chisman**, before next year's Unconvention - prize tba, but probably free beer! Simon Pipe and Verna Wass explained the Banbury Hobby Horse Festival, and asked for the moral support of the Illustrious Order, and invited all members to the Festival, to be held 1st/2nd July 2006. For more details, visit their website [www.hobbyhorsefestival.co.uk](http://www.hobbyhorsefestival.co.uk) Talking of websites, John Edwards pointed out that he had set up a website for fools and beasts, but had not really had much material for it, and asked for people to send pics

and events to him, for the website [www.foolsandbeasts.org.uk](http://www.foolsandbeasts.org.uk). We all promised to support it, and wished John best of British luck! To round the weekend off, those who didn't have to depart too early joined a walking tour of Cromford, with our guide, Steve, who gave us all a quick history of the town. Until then I thought Arkwright was a



**Jack Brown (Stafford)**

stuttering corner shop keeper in Rotherham, but I found out that the real Arkwright was a brilliant entrepreneur, idealist inventor, businessman and ostensibly a philanthopist; he founded industrial mills, building houses and looking after his workers - but he made sure he got back all that he gave his workers by owning the pubs and renting all the properties! Thanks to Ripley MM for hosting the weekend, and particularly to Roger Ward for arranging things, and John and Helen Butler for the catering. Look out for next year's venue and dates.

Robert Chisman is the Fools Convener; all Photographs by Robert

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## The Scattering of Len Luckwill's Ashes

Saturday, 1st October 2005

Len, who died on 27th June at the age of 91, had fond memories of the Mendip Hills, as it was his hunting ground as a botany student at Bristol University from 1932-1936. It was his wish to have his ashes scattered upon Blackdown. Accordingly, the following gathered around 12 noon at Tynning's Farm to carry out his wishes.

Those present were: Len's family, Roger & Sheila Luckwill and their daughter Hazel. Also Margaret Burgess.

Past & present Mendip men were: Stewart Angelinetta, Ian Beadle, John Burgess, Colin Campbell, Bob Cross (Squire of the Morris Ring), Alf Denham, Andy Hebden, Peter Higgs, Malcolm Nicholson, John Price, Neil Ross, David Rye and Andy Sims (Squire).

The group walked up onto Blackdown and found a suitable place both to dance and scatter the ashes.  
It was somewhat breezy but the threatened showers fortunately held off until later in the afternoon.  
Six men danced 'Shepherd's Hey — Adderbury

Roger Luckwill said a few words about his father and his love of the Mendips and then John Burgess mentioned his memories of Len. Then others, including the Squire of the Ring added some of their remembrances. Andy Sims said he would not forget the occasion, as it was his last function as Squire of the club. the A.G.M. being in 2 days time.

Roger & Hazel then played a dance tune composed for the Luckwill family by Pat Shaw on the occasion of Clevedon Folk Dance Club's 21st anniversary.

It was called "As Luck will have if '.

Roger then scattered his father's ashes and no doubt we all had individual memories of Len as we saw them spread downwind on the breeze

Six more men then danced Shepherd's Hey (Signposts) — Fieldtown

after which we made our way back to the cars and thence to The Swan at Rowberrow to finish our celebration for Len with food and drink.

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### *And this is it and that's about it!*

I am very grateful to the South East Area rep, Fred Hands for emailing me a photograph of a bunch of morris men on the pier at Eastbourne. This was prior to the massed display at the Sunshine Ring Meeting, hosted admirably by Long Man. The photograph in question is largely of Waddard joined by a nameless Winchester man whose hands are wrapped around the front of a scantily clad, but amazingly enhanced young lady. Adjacent is another fine example of young womanhood, with a sort of reversed baldic covering, well not very

much. I do not intend to publish the described photograph but will bring a copy to the ARM. Barry Care, or his successor as photographic archivist will adjudge if it is suitable material for the archive. Ronnie Barker's obituary in The Register, in The Times, dated 5th October, 2005, notes the curious fact that he began to write his first scripts under the pseudonym, Gerald Wiley. I also noted Mr Neil Murray's letter in The Times, dated 11th January 2005, concerning his search for handkerchiefs for morris dancers. I am indebted to the readers

who reminded me of David Beckham dressed as a Morris Dancer in the The Times' The Match' supplement; Danny Kelly urging footballers in the up-coming World Cup to wear national dress. Good to think Morris Dancer's costume is England's national dress. Finally, and again from the Times, 8th October, 2005, an article by Julie Burchill. "extols the virtues of shopping in Tesco, rather than a return to using small local shops. As part of the argument, and I quote:- "This slow shoppers' backward thinking, taken to its logical conclusion, would

also see the return of Morris dancing, inbreeding and operations without anaesthetic" I recognise the first two as a paraphrase of Sir Arnold Bax — "You should make a point of trying every experience once, excepting incest and folk-dancing"

But.....operations without anaesthetic . . . .where does that come from?" Grateful for this from Gary Gibbons, who found the comment on the ox uni morris men mailing list.

Anybody read any other national newspapers?