



The Newsletter - No. 25 – October 2002

Greetings,

The main dancing season is over, and we have had five very successful Ring Meetings, and a fair proportion of the Clubs involved. The change over of Squires took place at the **Bristol** Ring Meeting, with *Gerald Willey* dancing out, and *Cliff Marchant* dancing in. Cliff was thus “in the chair” for the last Ring Meeting of the season at **Hartley** [Gerald Willey by that time being doing things academic at a University in Kenya].

This issue contains news of the deaths of seven Morris Men. Sadly, two died following Morris outings, *Roy Taylor* of **Mayflower** after a heart attack at the Hartley Ring Meeting, and *Peter Taylor*, of **East Kent**, [no relation] after contracting Legionnaires Disease on a Morris Tour to France.

We are sorry to hear of the demise of the **Escafeld** Morris Men.

Also enclosed with this mailing are:

- A **Summary** of this Newsletter – as the last page of the Newsletter.
- As expected - **Amendments** to the new Directory [collated with Newsletter].
- Your **Subscription Form** for 2003 – pay by end November to avoid penalty.
- **Booking Forms** for the **2003 Ring Meetings** - and the **2003 Jigs Instructional**.
- **Morris Shop List** and **Order Form**.
- For its Members, the **Agenda** for the next, and the **Minutes** of the last **Advisory Council** Meetings.
- Your copy/copies of the next **Morris Circular** should be with [or ahead of] the next Newsletter.

Remember: Unless you pass on the content of this Newsletter to the Men in your Side, the information stops with you. A summary is included on the last sheet.

E-mailed versions of these Newsletters are available on request [ideally as an attached Word document; please order and specify by Email].

IN MEMORIAM

Graham Harris.

Graham Harris, a founder member of **Lassington Oak**, Former Squire and Dance Foreman, passed away on Wednesday, 3rd July 2002 after fighting a brave battle against cancer. The courage he demonstrated in this battle was characteristic of the typical determination of the man. “Graham was not the best player of the piano-accordion to grace the earth. But when Graham played Valentine, Fieldtown, the dance was lifted. He was probably the best player of this tune in the side, as in playing it Graham demonstrated a deep understanding of Morris music - the dance should be augmented by the music, with the musician the servant of the dancers, not their master. Graham will best be remembered, however, as a fine singer with a rich, strong voice. Comfortable with singing sea shanties, humorous ditties and songs celebrating country life of yore, Graham always had a powerful, charismatic aura. He remained a real showman. Graham was often outspoken with strong opinions and had passionate views concerning the Morris. He was unapologetically traditionalist in view. Graham was always keen to welcome new members, and would always encourage them to perform well. Graham was truly the "elder statesman" of the side and will be sorely missed by us all.”

[Information from *Steven Rule*, Squire of **Lassington Oak**]

Jimmy Johnson

Jimmy Johnson was the musician for the **High Spen Blue Diamonds** from the early 1950's. He died on the 3rd August, aged 96, and was the last surviving member of the 1950's High Spen Team. He was still ‘on the books’ as musician until the mid 1990’s. Over 40 years playing for Rapper dancing. He is sadly missed. An appreciation should appear in the next Circular.

[Information from *Bob Wilson*, **High Spen**]

Roger Entwistle

Roger Entwistle [**Stafford**] died on 7th September. Born in Coventry, 2nd September 1938, he leaves wife Kay and son Phillip, currently at University. “A tireless worker for the Morris, he had held just about every office in the club, he was Squire for a couple of sessions and was currently Foreman. He loved jigs, one of his favourites was Ladies of Pleasure, Bledington, although he also danced the Fieldtown version; also Lumps of Plum Pudding (Bledington) and Nutting Girl (Fieldtown). He called for Barn & Country Dances, and played fiddle. He will be sadly missed for his camaraderie, conversation and pleasant company. His hobbies included Model Railways and collecting all sorts of things - old post cards being one.” The funeral was on 18th September; All Saints church, Wordsley, near Kingswinford, Morris men were in kit. Following half hour service family and a few invited friends attended the crematorium, and the church hall was open for others wishing to stay for some dancing in church hall. At the family’s request it was NOT to be a sombre affair. **Stafford** and **Bristol** [his old side] were well represented, together with also Past Squires, **Bert Cleaver** and **Gerald Willey**, **Mike Austen** [**Wantsum**], representatives from **Coventry**; and **John Burke**, **King John's**.

[Information from *Alan Dandy*, **Stafford**; *Gerald Willey*, **Shakespeare**]

Jim Brooks

Jim Brooks, an active member of **Thames Valley** since its formation in 1952, died in mid-September. Jim had been involved with the Morris since 1929 and was a member of Curfew. He was actively engaged for many years in the revival of the Oddington tradition. Jim was cremated at on Friday 27th September at Randalls Park Crematorium, Leatherhead. Thames Valley provided a guard of honour, and other members of the Morris world attended.

[Information from *John Elkins*, Squire and Bagman, **Thames Valley**]

Roy Taylor

Roy Taylor, of **Mayflower**, collapsed with a heart attack at the end of a dance at the Hartley Ring Meeting. He was in intensive care, and was later transferred to his local hospital. He did not regain consciousness after the heart attack, and passed away peacefully on Wednesday night, 11th September 2002. Unfortunately, he was unable to sustain life without the use of the life support system. He was 64, and leaves a wife (Diana) and two sons.

“He joined Mayflower in 1995 when he retired from BT. It had always been his ambition to learn the Morris when he retired and that is exactly what he did. He was a very enthusiastic member of the side and fully supported our performances. He was also very active away from the Morris. He was a very keen walker/hiker and spent many holidays pursuing this interest. Unknown to many of us, I think, he had also served for over 25 years on the local Magistrates Bench in Basildon. Roy will be missed by us all and our thoughts are with Diana and her family at this time.” The funeral was on September 24th at St. Catherine's Church, Wickford. Members of his home side Mayflower attended, also neighbouring side, Rumford. **Paul Campbell** attended as the Ring and Area Representative and as a **Rumford** man.

[Information from **Ken Smith**, Squire of **Mayflower**; and **Paul Campbell**, **Rumford**]

Peter Taylor

Peter Taylor, accordion player with **East Kent** and a retired teacher, died, aged 63, on Sunday 15th September 2002, following a very short illness. The Side had been invited to France and Belgium the same W/E as the Hartley Ring Meeting. Whilst in Lille (France), three of the Side contracted Legionnaires Disease at the hotel. Two only had mild symptoms, but Peter died a short while later. The funeral was on Friday, 27th September, at Dymchurch RC Church.

[Information from **Pete Thomas**, Squire of **East Kent**]

Ray 'Moose' Cope

It is with very great sorrow that I pass on news of the death of **Ray 'Moose' Cope** of **Jockey** on the night of Saturday 28th September 2002. He had been suffering with non-Hodgkins lymphoma for some months. He suffered from it some 7 years ago and was treated successfully, but at Easter it returned and was already in an advanced stage when it was detected. He had been on borrowed time ever since. In the end his heart gave way which was a blessing for him but a shock for his family and all his friends. He will be very much missed as a dancer, musician, fool and a great friend, by the many people in the morris and folk worlds who had come to know him over the years.

The funeral was on 11th October at Worcester Crematorium. Our thoughts are with his daughter, Judy, and son, Jon [also a Jockey man].

Steve Holder noted that “Moose was a founder member of Jockey, and was still very active in the club, more than 50 years on”. Moose’s daughter wrote, “He was the best teacher of dancing ever. He just had such a good way to put things across to anyone. As a caller he was loved by the experts and the complete beginners. He has run dances for disabled people and learnt instructions in foreign languages as the occasion demanded. He knew over 300 songs. He ran the Hobbyhorse club in Birmingham for many years. He was a man to whom the past was very important but as evidenced by his participation on the Net he always kept up with technology. He even invented the skate board, he just didn't bother patenting it! He played Father Christmas every year and the children always thought he must be the genuine article as he had his own snow white beard. He played Beelzebub every year in the Boxing Day Mummers Play. He danced, as you know, with Jockey but he had also taught and danced with Southport Sword.”

[Information from Moose’s daughter, Judy, and **Steve Holder**, **Jockey**]

SUBSCRIPTIONS and TREASURER'S MATTERS

For Clubs, enclosed with this Newsletter is either a Member's or Associate's Subscription Form. This requires your URGENT attention. Not only does "sending the money" mean your Insurance continues, but prompt payment means you do not have to pay the £10 surcharge.

There is a slight change to the format this year, reflecting changes agreed at the last ARM. The basic subscription [covering membership costs; insurance and single copies of each publication] is now the same for both Member Sides and Associate Sides. In the past Member Sides have been provided, automatically with three copies of each issue of the Circular; this will continue and be charged automatically, unless Member Sides indicate that they require a different number [to your choice]. Similarly, if Associate Sides require more copies of the Circular, this is no problem. Hopefully all is clear on the form.

Remember that it is also possible to take out Individual Subscriptions to the various Publications – see the inside back cover of the Directory; the Web-Site or contact the Publications Officer, *Eddie Dunmore*.

There have been many favorable comments on the progressively slimmer profile of the Morris Ring Treasurer – hence the following "For Sale" notice recently observed in the Bradford Press.

FOR SALE

Two pairs of white trousers. Two side pockets and one at the rear. 60" waist. Good condition, one previous owner, full service history and low mileage. Current waistband considered to be generously excessive for present owner. Excellent for hang-gliding. All reasonable offers considered (No Euros).

Contact the Ring Treasurer.

To which Past Treasurer, *Richard Sinclair* responded – "Great News! The wet weather indoor accommodation for the Morris displays at Bromyard Folk Festival is now solved. All welcome! North-West displays in the left buttock area."

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

INSTRUCTIONALS - Forthcoming Instructionals include: -

N.B. The "Highlights" of **Bucknell, Brackley, Badby and Hinton**, has been cancelled due to various costing difficulties. It may take place in an amended form in the future. Our thanks to *John Burke* and *King John's* for all their preparatory work.

"Dances that are not often done". In response to a request for a meeting, *David Thompson [Ripley]* is running an Instructional Meeting at Ambergate Sports and Social Club, Ambergate on Saturday **16th November 2002**. "We will foregather at 11am; lunch at noon; dancing 1pm 'til late afternoon finish". Cost £5. Open to men from other areas. Contact David for more details [Email: Thompson_Capers@Tesco.net Tel: 01332 770578].

Jigs – 2003. 17th – 19th January 2003. Sutton Bonnington – hosted by **Dolphin**. Once again the infatigable **Bert Cleaver** and team offer their antidote to PCB (Post Christmas Blues/Belly). No doubt there will be the usual crop of hardcore masochists, but newcomers are always welcome. Each tradition is taught from the basics, but inevitably the pace is fairly rapid, so inexperienced dancers are unlikely to benefit. Applications from a FEW musicians who would like to extend their repertoire are also welcomed. An application form is included with this Newsletter.

ARM 2003.

For avoidance of doubt, the date of the **2003 ARM** was notified to give “ ... at least six months notice of the date ...” in the Minutes of the 2002 ARM and in the last two editions of the Newsletter, as required by Item 14. of the Constitution. **Isca** will host the Meeting. The dates will be **7th – 9th March 2003**. The venue will be Trellech, near Monmouth.

Under Item 15 of the Constitution “Nominations for the positions of the Officers [*The Bagman is due for election or re-election*] and the Elected Members of the Advisory Council [*The Northern; The North Midlands; and The South Midlands Area Representatives are due for election or re-election*], proposed alterations to the Constitution and formal resolutions for discussion at the Annual Meeting of Club Representatives shall be received by the Bagman at least three months before the Meeting.”

I would note that the Bagman is quite prepared to step down and hand over his post to any other interested candidate; indeed, he may have to stand down if pressures of work continue as at present!!!

Ideally, in **2004**, the ARM venue should move North – are any Northern Sides interested? – Please contact the Ring Bagman.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS - RING MEETINGS – 2003

Four Ring Meetings will be held in 2003. These are as follows:

30 th May - 1 st June ...	THAXTED RING MEETING
13 th - 15 th June	RIPLEY 20th ANNIV. RING MEETING – a camping weekend.
11 th - 13 th July	BENFIELDSIDE 40th ANNIV. RING MEETING
5 th - 7 th September	WINCHESTER 50th ANNIV. RING MEETING

An Application Form for is included with this Newsletter. The form should be returned by **9th November 2002** for consideration in the first round of selection.

OTHER EVENTS

The **18 – 30 Morris Group** [based on a core of “younger” Men from **Icknield Way**] is in Oxford from 25 – 27 October. This event is open to male dancers from all three Morris Organisations, [but female musicians will be welcome]. Please advise any younger men who may now be working away, or be at college to contact Ben Higgs without delay. **Please note the new E-mail number for Ben Higgs : ben_the_juggler@hotmail.com**

ANNIVERSARIES

Wadard celebrated their 25th on 29th June. A report is still expected!!!

Winchester celebrate their 50th Anniversary in 2003. Their Bagman, *Harry Stevenson* advises that they are arranging a private dinner for ex members on 15th March 2003, in Winchester Guildhall. He asks all ex Winchester men to contact him at 59, Olivers Battery Road North, Winchester, Hampshire SO22 4JB. Tel: 01962 855911 or Mob: 0777 578 5271 or Email: harry_wmm@trunkles.freeserve.co.uk

ARCHIVAL MATTERS

At a joint evening with **Bedford** and **Coton**, a member of the crowd, Dr. Martin Johns indicated that he had been “Horse” for a sword team. It seems he was a member of the Ivinghoe Plough Stots, based at the Youth Hostel at Ivinghoe on the Bucks/Beds borders. They danced sword for some five years in the early 1970s, meeting up at the folk singing sessions that were held each month. Some photographs have subsequently been provided.

Leyland have been awarded £25,068.00, yes, twenty five thousand and sixty eight pounds to produce a professionally made video and a book about the Leyland tradition. The money is part of the Local Heritage Initiative from the Countryside Agency. The project runs until January 2004. The extract from the web-page includes the following: “Leyland Morris Men - The History & Dance Tradition. The group aims to research and record the heritage of the Leyland Morris Men and present the information as a living history, illustrating the local tradition from the early 1900's to the present day.

The work will involve training local people in recording techniques, collecting memories of older local residents, putting on travelling exhibitions, producing a booklet and producing a video showing the passing on of traditional dances to a younger generation, including scouts and school children. A chronological theme will be developed exploring the interface of the Morris Men with local people, and their relationship with the Leyland Festival. The information recorded will become a permanent record of this dancing group and mark their value as part of the town's social and cultural heritage. The recent collapse of the town's annual Festival further threatens the visibility and involvement of the Morris Men. This project will raise the profile of this threatened local tradition. **Local Community Involvement / Partnerships:** Local schools, Scout Group. **Local Heritage Initiative Grant:** £20,568. **Nationwide Building Society Grant:** £4,500”

Roy Yarnell notes that “During the **Hartley** Ring Meeting Feast, they displayed on screen a selection of photographs depicting the history of the club from 1953 to the present. These photographs had been scanned onto CD. Copies of the CD were presented to **Barry Care** [Past Squire and present Ring Photograph Archivist] for safekeeping. This prompts me to remind all club Bagmen and Scrap Book Keepers, to keep more than one copy of these irreplaceable records, and send a copy of your own selected, preferred copies to The Ring Archives. Barry has been mentioning for some time that there are few hard copy photographs from clubs, particularly of the 1950 - 1990 era. If a club's own record were damaged in some way, replacement copies could easily be provided. Barry is on email and welcomes hard copies or CD scanned records. The Ring may reimburse some copying expenses, please contact him direct.

NEWS

Including a few late reports for April and May – for the record:-

Tuesday 23rd April - **St George's Day** saw the Traditional evening visit of **Ilmington** to the village of Lower Brailes (Warwickshire) to dance at St George's C of E Church and The George Hotel & Inn. They were joined by the **Adderbury Village, Shakespeare**, and Shakespeare Mummers and the first outing of '*Doris the Morris*' (see The Ring Circular for details). An article in "Beer on Tap" the North Oxon CAMRA magazine indicates that they entertained 400 people; the beer was sold at a Guinea a pint and seven eighteen gallon barrels of bitter and three nine gallon barrels of mild were consumed on the night. [Without the Bagman's help!!!]

Wednesday 1st May - **May Day** in Oxford City. **Oxford City** and **Oxford University** gave their traditional tour of the City from 6.15am, this year joined by sides including Adderbury, **Ilmington** and **Icknield Way**.

Friday 30th May - Robert Dover's Games, Chipping Campden; the scene of the annual 'Cotswold Olympicks' where **Chipping Campden** gave their usual performance with their guests, this year The Traditional **Ilmington** Morris Men. Afterwards members of that side entertained the Bagman of the Ring, musically, in The Volunteer Inn. The Bagman responded with a 'cramped' version of the Nutting Girl jig. The following day was the Scuttlebrook Wakes in Chipping Campden. The Campden men pull the "queen" and her entourage. They also dance at selected spots and later were joined by the Bagman [as Thaxted did not fall on the same day] in the Eight Bells [another excellent watering hole].

Norman Hopson noted that **Long Man** took part in the Jubilee Celebrations at the Bandstand on Eastbourne Seafront, on Monday 3rd June, which was part of the BBC Music Live event. They also managed to get about 5 seconds of exposure on BBC South.

The weekend 7th – 9th June was the **Thaxted** Ring Meeting – a week later because of other Jubilee events. Photographs appeared in the last Circular. A full report is available by Email from the Bagman, if required by any attendees. Highlights included the dancing in of **Chipping Campden** and **Ilmington**.

The following weekend 15th June saw the re-election of **Stuart Jackson** as the Mayor of Ock Street. Excellent weather for the day with guests sides: **Colne Royal; Greensleeves** and **Hoddesdon Crownsmen** who joined **Abingdon** for the day, providing an excellent range of dance forms on their tour around the town. The Bagman and Squire Elect were also present.

Wednesday 19th June - **Ilmington** visited **Chipping Campden**, this time to join representatives of Sherborne Morris (Gloucestershire) and the Albermarle Morris Men (Charlottesville, Virginia, USA). A marvellous evening of dancing, graced with the presence of The Squire of The Ring who danced a jig and possibly recruited two more sides into the Ring! The Campden and Ilmington sides had "danced-in" the week before at the **Thaxted** Ring meeting. Albermarle dance the Bledington tradition and were on a 'pilgrimage' to the village for a week, taking the opportunity to dance with many local sides.

Coton were joined by **Bedford** for their Day of Dance around Saffron Walden and its environs on 22nd June.

Tony Locock, Bagman of **Leominster**, notes “In June, Leominster featured in a Midlands based programme called The Heart of the Country. It’s sole purpose was to show us at our summer solstice celebrations. The presenter, Tony Francis, took an instant dislike to us and as the sun did not appear at dawn, this spoilt his story line and he eventually produced a piece about us and the morris which was rather nasty and sarcastic The programme was shown only in the Central region and our piece was mercifully short. We shall think twice before undertaking such a project again.”

David Wintle writes “The script of the Ryton-on-Dunsmore Christmas Mumming Play was discovered in January of this year after being lost for at least 104 years. We're taking it out on Saturday for the first time, in a series of out-of-season performances for the Jubilee (I knew the Queen was useful for something). The Ryton Mummies comprise four members of **Anker**, one member of **Earlsdon**, three residents of the village and one non-resident attendee at the parish church, making a total of seven men playing eight parts (you work it out). This historic occasion will be accompanied by mass heckling from **Ron Shuttleworth** and sundry **Coventry Mummies**, who had hoped to have been the first to revive the play until we beat them to the draw.” “We did it. The only place we got heckled mercilessly was in one of the pubs in Ryton itself - a prophet is not without honour, etc. Anne Langley, the person who found the play in an old book ("Two Conversations on the Field and By Paths etc., of the Ancient Village of Ryton-on-Dunsmore in the County of Warwick", edited by Alfred Starkey, published in London by Eliot Stock of Paternoster Row, 1898), was invited out and was pleased to see us. The Coventry Mummies didn't show, except for **Ron Shuttleworth**, who was heard to murmur "Not bad", so we must have been a lot better than we thought we were. We should be featuring (with photo) in the Leamington Courier Jubilee special (I think it comes out tomorrow - Thursday). We raised the princely sum of £61-odd, which will be divided between the three churches of the villages in which we performed - it won't do much for the roofs, but it could buy a reasonable quantity of buckets in which to catch rainwater. We are hoping to do it again at Christmas this year and for ever after.”

John Price [St. Albans] writes of a series of events on 3rd June “Afternoon. Outdoor Pig Roast in the Market Place, organised by the landlord of The Boot in "The Cathedral Quarter" of St Albans. We danced two spots, separated by about an hour, as part of a string of folk and street entertainment in the afternoon. Rock music in the evening, I think. A good crowd, both in size and receptive mood. We all bought raffle tickets from Attila the Nun, and Gordon "Serendipity" Jones continued his run of successes this year by winning three cuddly toys. - Late afternoon. Dancing outside the Verulam Arms, which was holding a BBQ. (This was supposed to have been a joint street event with The Farriers, but it wasn't apparent that what was going on 50 yards away in College Place was at all connected with our dancing in Welclose Street. Maybe the organisers fell out?) A good crowd of locals gathered to watch our dancing, including some who had seen us at the Abbey View event a week before, and were very receptive and clearly enjoyed our show. - Early evening. Dancing at a beer festival at the Lower Red Lion, St Albans. A good crowd, interested in watching. Much better than an average Monday evening! - Late evening. Dancing at the White Lion, St Albans. When we arrived, this looked dire. A singer/guitarist was entertaining a pubful of twenty-something year olds, singing songs which people of our age wouldn't recognise - or even recognise as different from each other! Nevertheless, we assembled on the patio at the bottom of the back garden to dance at the appointed time - and they all poured out of the pub to watch us. They were in high spirits and great fun to dance to, and we finished our show by getting a few of them to join in the Bromsberrow Heath stick dance with us. (Our courage in the face of high-spirited, stick-wielding, slightly drunk youngsters knows no bounds!!!) Afterwards, some of us went into the pub to experience more of the singing guitar player, who was now doing requests and had a very wide and competent repertoire. I was certainly able to recognise that David Bowie song about Major Tom, and another one, which clearly originated from The Smiths. - Altogether, an excellent day - even if we did miss some good television!”

Stafford report that Saturday June 29th was chosen this year to celebrate Lapley's Morris Men of the 1650s with dancing in Church Eaton and Stretton with local families and local school children involved. It was timed to coincide with Stretton's Day of Festivities, with dancing at the Royal Oak Church Eaton, the Vaughan Arms, Lapley, and Stretton Hall.

Out on the last Saturday in June [29th], the Abram Morris Dancers. At one spot they met up with Rippon City who followed the standard Abram dance by Abram, with their own clog version – an interesting contrast of styles. It was also interesting to see the Abram Side dance a more conventional North-West dance “Wigan St. John” at their tea spot.

Adlington received a £4,975 grant from the National Lottery Awards for All, to celebrate the Queens Golden Jubilee. In conjunction with Ringheye Morris of Mobberley they hosted a weekend of Traditional English and Northern Irish Dance and Drama. Sides attending include the Aughakillymaude Community Mummers from Co Fermanagh. **Duncan Broomhead**, reported on the visit. “They toured the area from 28th June to 2nd July and gave public performances in Withington, Macclesfield, Mobberley, Chester & Styal. This was only the second time that the Mummers have performed in England and the first time in the North West. Their performance includes a Hero Combat Play, singing and Set Dancing. Many of the characters dress in the straw decorated costumes and high conical straw head masks typical, of the Co Fermanagh mumming tradition.

John Price, writes, “Last night, 8th July, **St Albans** were joined at our venue in Sandridge by Benskins Morris, of Watford and a great time was had by all. We understand that they have declared themselves clinically dead, so it was a weird experience to see them dance and hear their musicians' formidable repertoire - with not so much as a whiff of formaldehyde to spoil the illusion of a flourishing side. They explained that it had been an interesting experience, recently, adapting eight-person dances for six: but when it became clear that they were now only able to raise four dancers for most occasions, they decided to roll over and play possum. However, they do hope to meet up a couple of times a year.”

Graham Cox [Squire of **Cambridge**] reports on **Pilgrim's** 30th Anniversary. [A good day of dance and a fantastic ceilidh; three casks of Hogsback “Tea” etc.] “Pilgrim celebrated their 30th Birthday with a weekend of dance in and around Guildford. Nine visiting sides included Hammersmith and Hook Eagle as well as mixed and ladies' sides from far (Cheshire) and near (Godalming). The visitors split into two tours, rural and urban, which met for a lunchtime show at the top of the High Street. Traffic has been excluded from the High Street throughout most of the Pilgrims' history and the mediaeval buildings provide a picturesque background. (The picturesque pubs provide excellent ales in historic styles). Hammersmith gave a notable double jig followed by a brief display of disco dancing, whereas Pilgrims countered with a fine Nutting Girl (Ducklington) as a three-hander. For the evening the Pilgrims had arranged a stupendous ceilidh with the Committee Band, who drive statues and the very structure of the hall to dance. The ale flowed like Hogsback Tea and many morris ladies greatly enjoyed the evening. The programme had a further session on Sunday but this correspondent was in no state to report. Well done, Pilgrim.”

Over the weekend 5th – 7th July, **Green Oak** celebrated their 30th Anniversary. They were joined by full sides from **Anker; Rutland** and **Saddleworth**; together with representatives various from **Anstey; Jockey; Boar's Head** [incl. Treasurer]; **Kennet; Ebor; Shakespeare** [incl. Squire] and **Bedford** [the Bagman]. A splendid tour of Doncaster and its environs, including the Earth Centre [for lunch – and a Nutting Girl for eight in space in the centre of the Board Room table] and Knaresborough Castle. An excellent Feast and an iced Birthday Cake was followed by table dancing – well the Belly/Arabian dancer climbed onto the table for a final dance!!] and by various activities around – and over – a celebratory bonfire.

Martin Johnson, Bagman of **Green Oak** reports “The tour began at the medieval Tithe Barn at Brodsworth (which served as the base for the weekend) and moved into Doncaster to walk the time line from pre – history to present day before mass dancing took place on the site of the old Buttercross in the Market Place. The Roman walls by St. George’s Church were viewed before the coach crossed the new bridge over the Don to Sprotborough, famous for Sir Walter Scott writing “Ivanhoe” whilst sat watching the cricket (one has to do something during the lulls in the game), and “The Boat Inn” a 17th century ferry boat inn on the river. From ancient to modern was the next jump as the sides performed at the Earth Centre in Connisborough before partaking of the provided lunch of bottle lager and a few sandwiches! Fortunately the “Station Hotel” providing 50 burgers at short notice redeemed the situation to some extent. This double lunch meant we were late at the Plantaganet Castle of Connisborough but were still well received by the small crowd and staff that saw us dance in the inner bailey. The view from the top of the keep (used in the film “Ivanhoe”) was worthwhile for those who managed it but the steps are not recommended for those in clogs! Finally we adjourned to the 18th Century ex- farmhouse Cadeby Inn for informal dancing and drinking before returning to the hall for the feast followed by entertainment provided by a Turkish Belly Dancer (and an Ebor man) and a daring display of Fire Jumping by Saddleworth Morris. The bar remained open whilst ever anyone was standing and a short sleep was taken before breakfast was served al-fresco on the “patio” with the local sheep watching. Those who were able to stay spent the Sunday at Hooton Pagnall performing to large crowds at the Victorian Street Market there and in the case of Ebor performing a good impression of the un-dead by after a very long and heavy night for some of them, playing sat amongst the gravestones in the churchyard.”

Toward the end of July there were Ring Meetings on successive weekends, at Ledbury [hosted by **Silurian**] and at **Bristol**. Both were excellent and reports and photographs should feature in the next Circular. At Bristol, **Gerald Willey** danced out and **Cliff Marchant** in.

Alan Dandy [Stafford] noted “The crowd at **Silurian** contained one 92 year old Mary Evans who had played for **Green Man** just after the war and who had met Cecil Sharp. “

An evening out for the Bagman, when he joined **Chalice** on one of their “pub” nights. It happened to be a show for the happy Caravaners at a holiday park [but the beer was fine!! - as it was at the drinking spot afterwards]. Chalice’s Buffoon variation was excellent, as was their Skirmish that woke the crowds. The kids were put through Headington Bean Setting [with an opening song] – I wish our new men could pick up a dance as quickly!!!

Duncan Broomhead [Adlington / NW Representative] commented on the opening of the Commonwealth Games. “In addition to the sporting aspect of the Games there is a North West Cultural Programme, featuring amongst other things, Traditional Dance. From enquiries that I made, it appears that the traditional dance of the England, did not meet their criteria and was not included.”

SIDMOUTH – [from a comment on the Web on the “Grandson of Morris On” Show] “... the dancing was terrific without exception, the teams’ musicians played brilliantly - we actually heard (for once) what a wonderful musician **Simon Care** can be when he played for the two lads from **Moulton**. The two lads being Simon’s son and nephew [and Past Squire, **Barry Care**’s grandsons]. Aged 11 and 9 they were better than many who’ve been dancing for ages, and certainly far better than children of that age have any right to be.”

Duncan Broomhead [NW rep] reports on Sunday 25th August at **Saddleworth**. The **Bacup** 'Nutters' danced to the music of 4 English concertinas, 3 trebles and a baritone. Saddleworth were as strong as ever, turning out 24 dancers and 5 musicians.

The final Ring Meeting of the season was hosted by **Hartley**, in Kent, over the last weekend of August. Whilst overshadowed by the collapse [and subsequent death] of **Roy Taylor** of **Mayflower**, the Meeting was a great success. A full report will appear in the Circular.

Steve Tunnicliff notes that **Ebor** co-hosted the York Festival of Traditional Dance over the weekend 6/8 September. Camping on the racecourse, organised boozing at the brewery and dancing around the City. **Chapel-en-le-Frith** were among the guests.

Gerald Willey [Past Squire] writes of **Gloucestershire's** Pat Snelling Memorial Weekend of Dance, 7-9th September, based at the picturesque village of Cranham, just north of Stroud, Gloucestershire. "Visiting Sides included **Boar's Head**, **Benfieldside** and **Plymouth** together with several individual 'odds and sods' including Ring Representatives **Gerald Willey**, Chairman of the Advisory Council, and a much stream-lined Treasurer, **Steve Adamson**. Socialising began on the Friday evening with an informal session at the Black Horse and then back to the Scout hut with its civilised mattress / bunk bed accommodation AND showers. On Saturday we went to town for the walking tour of Cheltenham with dancing from 11am to 4pm. The weather was kind and at the end of the day over £1000 had been collected for the Sue Ryder Hospice. Back to the Black Horse for a hearty supper followed by some dancing outside 'under the stars' and a splendid evening of song and entertainment. The incredible range of renditions from Benfieldside met with huge approval, (was it the drink or just the accent?), **Bob Carter**, Boar's Head, serenaded the immediate past Ring Squire with words of loving care!, **Tony Poulter** demonstrated why he has an obvious career (after the dancing has been put aside) as a future member of The Archers cast (Oh aar, Oh aar) and **Dave Pollard**, **Claro**, 'the chicken man' astounded everyone with his lewd and frightening tales. On the Sunday morning, a relaxed breakfast and then in to the Gloucester Docks / National Waterways Museum for a final dancing session. A memorable and rewarding weekend."

E-MAIL VIRII

For those with Email, you will no doubt be aware of the virus WORM_KLEZ.H. This seems to have gathered a listing of Morris Email numbers, and a disturbing trend is that emails containing attachments that harbour such virii will often purport to come from morris bagmen. To quote one recipient who has been in contact "I think it would be worthwhile circulating members to urge them to get virus checkers themselves to ensure they are always safeguarded. I pay about £15.00 pa to safeguard my PC and regard it as money well spent, especially as it has now proved it works." It is worth repeating, "It is essential to maintain an up-to-date anti-virus system and up-date it frequently". An annual subscription of about £30 can provide a system that up-dates daily.

IN CONCLUSION

As ever, please to keep the News [Gossip and Scandal] flowing in and, as usual, report any changes for the Directory [which is available at any time, in its latest form, by Email].

The next Newsletter will probably be produced in late November.

Wassail

John Frearson,
Bagman, The Morris Ring

The Newsletter - No. 25 – October 2002 - Summary

Ask your Bagman to show you / provide a copy of the full Newsletter.

NEW SQUIRE - At **Bristol** Ring Meeting, *Gerald Willey* danced out, and *Cliff Marchant* in.

IN MEMORIAM - The deaths of seven Morris Men. Sadly, two died following Morris outings, *Roy Taylor* of **Mayflower** after a heart attack at the **Hartley** Ring Meeting, and *Peter Taylor*, of **East Kent**, after contracting Legionnaires Disease on a Morris Tour to France. Also, we have lost: *Graham Harris*, a founder member of **Lassington Oak**; *Jimmy Johnson* musician for the **High Spen Blue Diamonds** for 40 years from the early 1950's; *Roger Entwistle* of **Stafford**; *Jim Brooks*, an active member of **Thames Valley** since its formation in 1952; and *Ray 'Moose' Cope* of **Jockey**.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS - "Dances that are not often done" - 16th November 2002 - hosted by **Ripley**. **Jigs – 2003** - 17th – 19th January 2003 - hosted by **Dolphin**.

RING MEETINGS – 2003. **ARM 2003** - 7th – 9th March – hosted by **Isca**; - 30th May - 1st June - **Thaxted**; 13th - 15th June - **Ripley**; 11th - 13th July - **Benfieldside**; 5th - 7th September – **Winchester**.

ANNIVERSARIES - **Wadard** celebrated their 25th. **Green Oak**, their 30th Anniversary with **Anker**; **Rutland** and **Saddleworth** and representatives from **Anstey**; **Jockey**; **Boar's Head**; **Kennet**; **Ebor**; **Shakespeare** and **Bedford**. **Pilgrim**, their 30th Anniversary.

ARCHIVAL MATTERS - Photos of **Ivanhoe Plough Stots** found - **Hartley** photo CD [send your own to the Archive] - Found! Script of **Ryton-on-Dunsmore Christmas Mumming Play**.

GRANTS - **Leyland** awarded £25,068 Local Heritage Initiative; **Adlington** received £4,975 National Lottery Award for All.

NEWS - **St George's Day** with **Ilmington Adderbury Village, Shakespeare**. **May Day** with **Oxford City, Oxford University, Ilmington** and **Icknield Way**. **Robert Dover's Games** with **Chipping Campden** and **Ilmington**. **Long Man** in Jubilee Celebrations. **Chipping Campden** and **Ilmington** dance in as Ring Members at **Thaxted** Ring Meeting. **Colne Royal**; **Greensleeves** and **Hoddesdon Crownsmen** join **Abingdon** for the Election of the Mayor of **Ock Street**. **Stafford** repeat their **Lapley Day**. **Moulton** lads dance jig at **Sidmouth**. **Coton** day of dance with guests **Bedford**. **St Albans** tours. Ring Meetings at **Ledbury** [hosted by **Silurian**] and at **Bristol**. **Leominster** will "think twice" after appearing on **The Heart of the Country**. **Bacup 'Nutters'** at **Saddleworth**. **Hartley** Ring Meeting. **Ebor** co-host **York Festival of Traditional Dance** [**Chapel-en-le-Frith** were guests]. **Gloucestershire's Pat Snelling Memorial Weekend of Dance**, with **Boar's Head**, **Benfieldside** and **Plymouth**.

Also mentioned: **Wantsum**; **Coventry**; **King John's**; **Shakespeare**; **Anker**, **Earlsdon**; **Coventry Mummers**; **Cambridge**; **Chalice**; **Green Man**

E-MAIL VIRII - For Email users, beware of Morris guise of the virus **WORM_KLEZ.H**.

Wassail

John Frearson, Bagman, The Morris Ring