



The Newsletter - No. 30 – October 2003

Greetings,

Another Summer season and four successful Ring Meetings. Very soon there will be the Commemorative Dance Day in Trafalgar Square to celebrate the exemption of Morris dancing and its relatives, from the Licensing Bill. There is still work to be done for the Mummers and the Musicians, and it will be a chance to highlight these needs. Exemption from the Bill will not mean we can dance [or collect] indiscriminately – we will still need to ask for appropriate permission in many cases. We cannot ride roughshod claiming “rights” that we do not have!!! We will need to examine the Bill, and the notes, with some care.

Remember to pay your subscription. An appropriate form is enclosed for Member and Associate Sides, with details of the Insurance schemes. Remember, if subscriptions are not paid, your Side may not be covered.

Apologies is this Newsletter has any signs of rush. My time is becoming more restricted as my Consultancy work expands. I will have had a six year stint as Bagman by the next ARM. It is surely time for a change!! Anyone interested in taking over should get in touch.

Also enclosed with this mailing are:

- **Amendments** to the Directory, they keep coming in!!
- Your copy/ies of the **Morris Circular**.
- **Subscription Form** – sent payments before 30 November to avoid surcharge.
- **Application Form** for **Ring Meetings 2004**.
- **Application Form** for the **Jigs Instructional**.
- The **Minutes** of the **ARM**
- The **Minutes** of the last Meeting, and an Agenda for the next, for the Members of the **Advisory Council**.

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**Eric Walton** [Ashdown Forest, formerly Datchet]

Eric Walton, collapsed and died whilst performing at Standen House in East Grinstead on Saturday afternoon, 12th July. A member of **Ashdown Forest** for the last eight years since moving to the area upon retirement, he was prior to this a member of **Datchet Morris**, and had been for many years. In addition to the Morris, Eric was also very active in organisation and participation at various folk camps as well as events at Halsway Manor, so many others may well have met him and be saddened by his sudden passing.

There was a Memorial service on Thursday 24th July at Newick Parish Church. Ashdown Forest danced, after the service when all adjourned to the Community Centre next door. We hope that Datchet will also be able to get a side there. An ad-hoc folk orchestra played the hymns and players brought their instruments along for an impromptu session afterwards. Our thoughts are constantly with his wife Jenny, his daughter, his son and his grandchildren.

[Information: *Bob Draper*, Bagman, **Ashdown Forest**]

Dick Davey [Exeter]

Dick Davey, founder member of **Exeter** died in his sleep at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, on Saturday evening 6th September. He had suffered a fall, and was unable to be operated on due to his frail condition. Dick will be sadly missed not just by his family, but also by all the men in the Exeter club. He was still an active (if not dancing) member of the side, and attended as many dancing out events as he was able.

He will not only be remembered in the Morris world, but throughout the folk dance world. In his early years he played a big part in the EFDSS in Devon, and was a superb Playford dancer. He was South West Area Representative for the Morris Ring for many years, and was asked on a number of occasion to stand for the post of Squire of the Ring, but never accepted.

His funeral was at Plymtree Parish Church, on Friday 12th September. The Exeter men attended in kit, and danced after the service.

[Information: *Tim Sercombe*, Past Squire]

Byron Daniels [Blackheath]

Byron Daniels was one of the founding fathers of **Blackheath** and an influential figure in the new wave of Morris Dancing revival in London and the South East of England in the 1970s, although in recent years he lived a reclusive life.

His funeral was on Friday 12th September. It is hoped to publish an obituary in the near future.

[Information: *Doug Adams*, **Blackheath**]

INSTRUCTIONALS

Funding Instructional. Initial details of this were given in the last Newsletter. **Stephen Rowley of Gloucestershire** is a contemporary artist, as well as a Morris dancer. He recently expounded his thoughts on arts funding and Morris on MDDL. He will be leading an Instructional / Seminar on funding on **Saturday, 25th October 2003**. It will be open to all three Morris Organisations and will cost £10 per head including lunch. **Some spaces are still available.** An **Application Form** was enclosed with the last Newsletter [or contact the Treasurer].

Musicians' Instructional. this event, hosted by Mendip has been rescheduled for **21st - 23rd November 2003**. **Clive Du'Mont** has already advised those who were interested in the earlier date. A revised Application for was enclosed as a Stop Press insertion, with the last newsletter. Further copies available from the Bagman if mislaid.

Jigs Instructional – 2004. This year's event went well, with some 50% of the participants being newcomers. The hall has been booked again for **16th - 18th January 2004**. An **Application Form** is enclosed with this Newsletter.

ARM 2004.

The **2004 ARM** will be hosted by **Mossley** [with support from **Saddleworth**] and will be held at Mossley from **12th – 14th March 2004**. The cost of the business part of the Meeting will be met from Morris Ring funds. The **ARM Bagman (Mossley)** is **Roy Blick**, 77, Springfield Road, Droylsden, Manchester M43 7RD. Tel: 0161 2923794 Email: **RoyBlick@lineone.net**. An Application Form will be enclosed with the next Newsletter.

The Bagman must receive any Nominations, Motions or Resolutions by **12th December 2003**.

ARM 2005. **Harthill** have now confirmed that they will be able to host the ARM in 2005. thank you Harthill.

RING MEETINGS – 2004

Full details on the enclosed Application Form. In summary: -

14 th - 16 th May ...	DOLPHIN RING MEETING – 80 Men
4 th - 6 th June ...	THAXTED RING MEETING – 200 plus Men
16 th - 18 th July ...	UTTOXETER “Abbott’s Bromley” RING MEETING – 170/200 Men

Remember to submit applications **before 8th November** for the initial allocation.

OTHER EVENTS

Pipe and Tabor Festival. **POSTPONED** to a later date because of Insurance and other costs. Contact: **Stephen Rowley**: Tel:- 01453 763181 E-mail: steve@artension.com.

Sunday 2nd November – Trafalgar Square – celebrate the victory so far on **PEL** and help highlight was still needs to be done. [Contact the Squire if you wish to take part].

NEW DANCES

Do not forget that we are collecting new dances. Full details in the last Newsletter, but **John Tarling, Exeter**, has kindly agreed to receive and collate any new dances that Sides may wish to "put on record". Contact him at - 41, Woodbury Park Axminster Devon EX13 5RA. PLEASE NOTE – his Email has a hyphen NOT an underscore as wrongly stated in the last newsletter E-mail : **dancefolk.john-t@virgin.net** Tel: 01297 34804

SYDNEY GIG / TOUR

Mervyn Stanley of **Thames Valley** & **Monty Montague** of **Yateley** are trying to arrange a tour for the Sydney based 'Wheeze & Suck Band', a 6/7 piece folk band formed initially out of the **Sydney Side**. They play mainly traditional English but some Aussie and own compositions such as 'Shoreham's Green Shore', a Fairport-like belter of a ballad. Their first two CDs 'Traditional Graffiti' & 'Vincent Street' are stocked in the Morris Ring Shop. If anyone knows of possible gigs/venues that this band might perform at for a fee between mid - July & mid - August 2004 please let either Mervyn or Monty know.

MEDIA

Featured in "Calendar Girls", **Royal Liberty**, and their Fool in pink baby doll pyjamas.

Rutland provided Morris volunteers for a new Bollywood version of "Pride and Prejudice."

"England must stay calm" – Telegraph, 6th October:- "... Beckham joined in a lively training session .. , going through a drill .. that combined elements of basketball and Morris dancing."

ANNIVERSARIES

Bathampton - Next year is their 70th Anniversary and they are planning celebrations, and hoping to involve a substantial number of former members. Their "missing" are listed on their web site and on the last page here. If you are in contact with any of these [or have them in your side], please contact **Idris Roker**, Bagman, Bathampton, 85, High Street, Weston, Bath BA1 4DD. Tel. 01225 315660, Email: bagman@bathampton-morris-men.org.uk or enter the details on their website at: <http://www.bathampton-morris-men.org.uk/70link.html>

NEWS

Yateley send News of their activities: "Following on from the success of last years summer dancing programme themed around the Queen's Jubilee, Yateley have continued with a themed programme. This year they have been celebrating '100 years of Powered Flight' and have danced at local venues with aeronautical connections including Blackbushe airport, Cody's tree in the QinetiQ (aka Royal Aircraft Establishment), Farnborough and RAF Odiham where they were given a warm welcome by the Station Commander who joined them for Bonny Green Garters. They have also danced local streets with suitable names such as Hunter Road & Beverley Crescent, Farnborough as well as the Berkshire Museum of Aviation, Shackleton Way and Wright Close on what was once Woodley Aerodrome. After leafleting these venues they have always been greeted by appreciative residents. They are less upbeat about responses to their annual day of dance however, as they are finding it increasingly difficult over recent years to attract Ring sides to their traditional male only event that is held on the 2nd/3rd Saturday in September. This year they are hosting their 28th annual day of dance on 20th September with **Dartington, Thames Valley** and

Spring Grove but some members consider it may be time to extend the invite to mixed/female teams in future if Ring sides are unwilling to support them!"

Alan Barber, Mersey, provides another in their series of occasional ramblings:-

"Where is Montgomery Street anyway" said Bill (now a trifle deaf) after several weeks of discussion on practice nights about the Montgomery Street Fair. "No Bill, its a street fair in Montgomery, that's why we've decided to spend the fee and a bit more, to get a coach and take any wives who want to go". We could even ask some of those nice Men from **Kinnerton** if they would like to come along too". (No forget the last bit, it's just not credible is it - it was more "who else is daft enough to want to come and help with the costs").

"Several months on and Jim and I are in the car park with our wives at the Glegg Arms at 08:30 when the coach arrives. A minute or so later Clive zooms in. We haven't seen much of him since he had his stroke but when he's been out with us he still maintains an amazing burst of speed with his stick if he's going to the bar and doesn't need the stick at all when carrying a full tray of pints back out. Today though he's arrived on his electric buggy which creates the first problem. We've got a small (33 seater) coach and it won't fit in the boot without removing the seat. Nobody's got any spanners! Fortunately Richard has arrived and driven to the car park so he's sent home to get some tools.

"Kevin arrives next. His hair is still pink as the dye hasn't washed out yet (don't ask, it's too long a story). He has pliers but the bolt at the other end of the nut just spins. Jim wakes up (well he is almost 80) and announces that he has had spanners in his car all along. We get them, remove the seat from the buggy, jam it into the boot of the bus and almost fill it. Jim reluctantly agrees that his tools can accompany us so Clive can be mobile in Montgomery. All on the bus and Richard arrives back just in time with some tools we no longer need. We leave the car park 20 mins late after the first pick up - spot on "Mersey Time".

"The driver is based 30 miles away but eventually we find and collect small groups of Morris men and family members from various points of the Wirral and in Chester and set off. The driver doesn't understand Mersey Time and so makes up 15 minutes by the time we reach the Six Bells. This home brew pub has opened early for us at 11:00. Unfortunately we are the only customers so have to give up the idea of a dance spot and concentrate on drinking. Neville is disappointed. The local beer is "Big Nev" but they won't give him a free pint.

"On to Montgomery where we unload and reassemble Clive's transport. It's got a mind of it's own and rockets off at it's full 8 mph straight for the nearest pub. After a half hour dance spot Mersey, Kinnerton and families assemble around the hog roast and then rapidly move to the pub where Clive looks like a permanent fixture. After the second spot, some wives decide to climb to the castle where a local has told them the view is excellent. Clive zooms off ahead (0 - 8 mph in about a second).

"Collecting sticks, etc, several of Mersey venture beyond the square to The Crown to avoid dehydration. As we round the corner we see Clive's buggy parked outside, Clive's ensconced inside with a pint and a cigar watching the TV. "How was the castle we ask". "Not much there, just a ruin" he says "so I came back down here".

"Last spot and back to the bus to head for Shrewsbury. After 20 min we admit defeat and drive back into Montgomery to drag Kinnerton out of the pub. In Shrewsbury we meet up with Bull & Pump Morris and Shrewsbury Lasses who have been out for the day. They've laid on a magnificent spread for us - at least 5 different bitters - oh and some food as well. Clive's nose is still well attuned. Forget the buggy, the stick's out and he's first through the door and sitting with a pint in his hand before anyone else gets off the bus.

"Lots of good company, the chance to dance a bit more and then the driver reminds us it's time to go. After dropping everybody off in reverse order we arrive at the Glegg to discover that Tony has picked up the spanners with his stuff at an earlier stop. We reassemble the seat on the buggy with the nut finger tight. Clive turns on his one-candle-power headlight in the gathering twilight and accelerates across the car park with his seat at a jaunty angle. Suddenly he stops. The stick comes out and he disappears into the bar. A fitting end to an entertaining day.

"Did Clive get home? Will Jim get his spanners back on Monday night? Can **Adlington** cope with an evening with **Mersey**, they're dancing with us at The Wheatsheaf on Monday? The never ending saga continues. Unfortunately I'll have to find out later as I won't be there tomorrow."

John O' Gaunt 35th Anniversary in Lancaster. *Rodney Briddon*, Bagman, reports:

“On Saturday 5th July John O' Gaunt were joined by friends to celebrate our 35th birthday. Guests were: **Banchory-Ternan**, Clogology, **Southport Swords**, and last but definitely not least, **Britannia Coconut Dancers**.

“We began the day with a procession arriving in the Market Square to an appreciative crowd. The teams then split up to circulate around four chosen venues; the market square itself, a number of markets are still held in the square which ensures a constant renewal of people to watch, behind the famous Lancaster Castle close to the spot where public hangings were held, St Nicholas Shopping Centre between Super Drug and Boots, luckily no accidents occurred to necessitate visits to either during the day. And finally Sun Street Square an old square with tea shops close by.

“For lunchtime we allowed our guests free rein of the city to explore the pubs, café's, restaurants etc. The John O' Gaunt Morris Men being in-the-know went to the John O' Gaunt pub just off Market Square where the landlord has just sponsored our underpants (no don't ask). This is an excellent pub serving real cask ales and great food; the Taylor's Landlord was in excellent form as was the pie and peas which I saw a number of Morris men trying, I believe there were no after effects. I am told that the Coconutters went on a pub crawl of the city and were never seen again, well not by me, or the other teams! They may well still be there; there are certainly enough pubs to go round. Without the Coconutters we held a mass dance in the Market Square to complete a successful day of dance.

“After a full days dancing we first retired again the John O' Gaunt pub for a quick one before going onto the Gregson, a community centre venue with a large hall where a Caribbean themed meal was arranged, by this time the weather certainly was near tropical. The meal comprised a buffet of black bean soup with Jalapeno bites, spicy potato skins, spicy pepper sticks and various canapés this was followed by the main course served at table; Jerk chicken – well mine didn't move when I stuck the fork in, Caribbean style fish or a vegetarian option. For those with hollow legs there was a Caribbean fruit bowl or pineapple upside down cake. Our table tried a jug of the Jamaican punch, made to special recipe and even though we offered the barman a quid he would not reveal the ingredients, whatever was in it, it certainly hit the spot.

“After the meal I looked at the contented faces and thought “not much more dancing or singing then” but to my surprise the tables were moved and the floor readied and dancing and singing went on until 10.00 p.m. I think everyone enjoyed themselves, I know I did.”

News of the **Cecil Sharp Centenary Event** in Somerset – 20th - 25th August 2003

Don Church writes “I was part of the 'Morris content' (huge thanks to **Bob Cross** and **Chalice** for letting me dance with them Sunday) ... Hambridge was an excellent weekend all round. **Taunton Deane** did our first Morris workshop on the Sunday, and may have got a recruit, an unexpectedly good result. We also danced on the Saturday with **Mendip**. **Stevenage Sword** put on a superb Rapper show in the pub that lunchtime. **Wessex** and **West Somerset** were there Sunday too.

“More seriously, there was also a conference for the three days before; very thought provoking. There was also a reception on the Friday night, the exact centenary of Sharp hearing John England sing. The nursing home, which the vicarage now is, had one of their residents as a guest of honour; she is 100, and was alive at that time. George Withers, a local singer, sang 'The Seeds Of Love' ("my own version, not John's", as George put it), in the vicarage garden. I tried to join in the refrain, but my lower lip was wobbling too much. A very emotional moment.

“Thanks to *Dave Sutcliffe* for organising the festival, to Folk South West for the conference and getting the grants that made it all possible.”

Duncan Broomhead notes that **Adlington** have five new dancers this year who made their debut on 3rd September when they danced out with **Thelwall**. “One found them through the "Sidefinder" web-site. The other four men are all new to the Morris: one came from a Scouts project they ran; the other three from a recruitment campaign in the local press and Libraries. The age range of the seven original recruits? One in his late teens, one in his mid twenties, three in their early thirties and two in their forties. Duncan says “As it is, keeping five of seven is still more than the number of new recruits we have had in the last decade. Was it just a fluke on our part to attract all these men, or is there, dare I say it, a 'morris revival' on the horizon?”

Three Brewery and dance-out evenings [not all attended by the Bagman!!!]: -- **Coventry** met at the Rainbow pub and micro-brewery at Allesley, and later moved to the Cottage at Fillongley. The Bagman, who had gone along “to watch” found he was 6th man and on a steep learning curve with Ascott and Badby and similar energetic delights!!! [Their own beer was unfortunately “off”]. -- **Anker**, together with **Jockey** and **Earlsdon** met up on 29th August, at the Church End Brewery and tap, to dance, tour the brewery and sample the beers [in whichever order]. Also present, Past Squire, *Mike Garland*, and the Ring Bagman. An excellent music and song session followed. -- The following day **Ripley** were due at the Leadmills Brewery and Tap, possibly no one was capable of providing a report – or did not wish to make this compiler jealous!!!

No Report yet on this year’s 3rd **Cotswold Tour** on 6th September. The Tour visited Bledington, Ascot under Wychwood, Ducklington, Sherborne, Longborough, and Oddington.

JAPANESE MORRIS BRIEFING

A Japanese translation of “What is the Morris about”, has been produced by **Stafford** [the talent of the lads – or the persuasive powers!!!]. Copies available from them – or the Bagman.

AND FINALLY

John Price, St Albans wrote on the MDDL “I was rather heartened by an encounter on Saturday [2nd August]. We’d been asked to dance at a surprise birthday party for a lady who has been a frequent supporter over the years. (In fact she had been married to a member of the Club who died many years ago.) The dancing was to be in the road outside her house, and we parked round the corner in order to bell up before making our appearance at the appointed time. There were some young (under 10 years) kids playing in the recreation ground opposite, and they came over when they saw us. One of them was knowingly telling the others “They’re Morris dancers” – rather like William Brown addressing his gang in the Just William stories. The others sought confirmation of this from me, which I gave - and I let them into the secret about the surprise party, which was going on in the nearby house. What heartened me was that they then asked if they could watch the dancing.”

CONCLUSION

Please to keep the News flowing and report any changes for the Directory. The next Newsletter should be produced in December and include the Booking Form for the ARM.

Wassail

John Frearson, Bagman, The Morris Ring

The missing Bathampton Men – do you know where they are now?

Chris Allen; Arthur Ayre; Bill Bailey; Bill Bence; Dave Berryman; Steven Burrows; Anthony (Pru) Comer; Tony Cook; Brian Coward; John Dolman; Roy Dolman; Vic Ebdon; Tony Farragher; Philip Freeman-Sayer; Philip Goatcher; Mike Gould; Lionel Gray; Arthur Green; Ken Hansford; Ken Harrison; Billy Hobbs; 'Phred' Irving; Tony Jackson; Stue Lee; Will Lestrangle; Keith Lyons; Ken MacLeay; Dudley Netherwood; Francis Percy; Jim Reynolds; Mike Rolls; Hugh Rooms; Rupert Simon; Robin Smith; Dave Tomlin; Roy Stretton; Keith Walker; Nick Ward; Don (Willy) Williams; Ray Wilson; Richard Woodgate; Bob Woodhead.