



## The Newsletter - No. 33 – May 2004

### *Greetings,*

Congratulations to **Bob Cross**, of **Chalice**, who was elected as the next Squire of the Morris Ring at the ARM. The ARM itself was a great success and very capably run by **Mossley** and **Saddleworth**, our thanks to both Sides for their hard work.

Welcome to new Associates, the **Mummers of Boyden Gate** in Kent, and also the **Ferrette Morris Men** from France. The latter are located near the border and their dancing area is France, Switzerland and Germany; their Bagman contact residing in Switzerland.

The new **Brochure** should be available for the first Ring Meeting of the season hosted by **Dolphin** at Sutton Bonnington. A sample copy should have been mailed with the Spring copy of the Morris Circular. Please let the Treasurer know your requirements. It is probably not sensible to post them, but you can collect a box of 150 from the Treasurer, the Bagman or the Squire and Squire Elect – or at the various Ring Meetings. Cost to Sides is 80p per copy, or 70p per copy for orders of 100 or more. For re-sale at £1.00 / copy – or more as you wish!!

Also enclosed with this mailing are:

- The new **Directory**;
- **Amendments** to the last Directory, just so you know what has changed recently;
- **Notes and FAQ on the Ring Insurance**: please read and note, and inform your Sides;
- For Members of the Advisory Council, **Minutes** of the Meeting at the ARM, with the details of the next Meeting and any relevant **Papers**. [Following prior circulation by Email]. Also, an amendment sheet for Ivor Allsop's booklet.

*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].*

## **TREASURER'S RAMBLINGS - April 2004**

Many thanks to **Saddleworth & Mossley** for all their hard work in organising the 2004 ARM. During 2003 it was promised that the financial set-up of the ARM would be reviewed, this has resulted in a saving to the attendees of 28.2% over last years meeting. We will continue to work on this in time for the 2005 ARM hosted by **Harthill**.

### **SUBSCRIPTIONS**

These are slightly down on last year's, principally for two reasons:

- a) There are less of us every year.
- b) More people are now paying their annual subscription prior to the end of the November deadline, thus avoiding the additional £10.

Last year we succeeded in achieving one of my personal goals. All the full and associate subscriptions were fully paid up for the period 2002 - 2003 and some even paid this year in advance. This has only taken 10 years to achieve. Many thanks to all of you who assisted in the realisation of a treasurer's dream. I can now also announce that the same has been achieved during 2003 - 2004. This was not without a few minor tantrums along the way, but we got there in the end.

### **INSURANCE MATTERS (Oh! yes it does)**

**CEILIDHS:** During the treasurer's report I forgot to mention the latest criteria regarding additional premiums for Ceilidhs. If you are hosting such an event and it falls outside the parameters of 'The Morris Organisation' third party public liability insurance policy i.e. tickets available to the public and/or a professional band etc, this will incur an additional premium of £26.25 including ipt. This payment must be with the insurance broker no later than seven working days before the event, the earlier the better. Failure to meet this deadline will result in the required 'certificate' not being issued. The general rule remains, if in doubt .... get in touch.

**TRIPS ABROAD:** The Morris Organisation third party public liability insurance cover is worldwide. The only exception is the USA and Canada where an additional premium of £52.50 (incl. ipt) is incurred for the entire Side. This can vary as circumstances dictate.

**INSURANCE ENQUIRIES:** We, the Three Organisations, are working with our Broker in preparation for any further surprises that The Financial Services Act 2004 may or may not spring upon us. One of these is that I am no longer allowed to answer any questions or assess situations regarding our insurance cover. The reason for this is if I, for any reason, provide inaccurate or totally duff information to an enquirer, it is possible that this could tarnish, or at worse totally invalidate any possible claim. Whilst remaining reasonably knowledgeable regarding our insurance cover, the fact remains that I am neither a qualified broker nor a registered agent.

With effect from 13.03.2004, all insurance enquiries must be placed with our broker Mr. Michael Stimpson. He prefers to be contacted by telephone during the afternoons or early evenings. Please only use letters and emails if you must. If you need to make contact due to a potential claim situation, please contact Michael immediately by telephone. Most FAQ's are answered in the attached information sheet supplied by Michael Stimpson.

**PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE:** I am delighted to report that the annual take-up of this optional policy has seen an increase in excess of three times the number in 2002-03. I would like to see this increase even more next year. The individual premium remains £1.50 per head. This insurance will be available for renewal, or initial take-up, at the time off the September/October Newsletter.

**EVENT RISK ASSESSMENT:** It is now increasingly common for local authorities and/or the Police to demand a ‘Risk Assessment’ from Morris sides requesting the various permissions, licences or permits. In our litigation happy society of 2004, this is the way things are going, and it is going to get worse as time goes on. In anticipation of this intensifying situation, the Morris Ring has prepared a general ‘Risk Assessment’. This document may be edited to meet with your specific requirements. For further information, please get in touch.

**INSURANCE DOCUMENT:** We are no longer allowed to continue publishing the “Confirmation of third party public liability insurance cover” document in the back of the Morris Ring Directory (for legal reasons we are no longer allowed to call it a ‘certificate’ or ‘cover note’). We have managed to get away with this practise for more years than we should have. {The FAQ and guidance notes are copied in the Directory for ease of reference}. From now on you will receive your personalised copy of the insurance document with the appropriate mailing or at a later date if the subscription is delayed beyond the published deadline. This is the only way we can provide such a document as it is now required to have the individual Side's name or title and a real signature.

### **THE MORRIS SHOP**

The shop continues to thrive. I am forever on the lookout for new items of stock from all dance traditions (except Ballet, Line or Disco). If you know of anything that might be considered suitable for the Morris Shop, please get in touch. The latest items on offer are:

**CD Dancing Days** by Chris Leslie (£12), “The music of the Morris is tied to the steps of the dancers as they move along ancient rhythmic paths well trodden before. Joy, friendship, tradition, superstition and good times lead the dancers on. This album is inspired and driven by these things, and at times given a little stretch.....” Chris Leslie 2003

**CD Flickering Light** by Ramskyte. (£12) “ This is the fourth collection of songs and as usual, there is a healthy mix of material gleaned from many sources supported by examples of our own work. We have always enjoyed robust chorus singing and this CD is no exception. Departing from our previous recordings, but in line with our live performances, we have inveigled John Thornton into including a number of solo concertina tracks.....” Ramskyte.

**CD Soundcheck** by Mike Nicholson (£12) This long awaited second album is now here. Mike’s unique style and tone continues to flourish.

**CD Hic Est Wadard** by Wadard Morris Men (£9) Released April 2004. 18 tracks of Wadard Morris Men giving it their all.

**BOOK The Story of the Flamborough Longsword Dance** (£5 A4 landscape, comb bound) Richard Traves & Trevor Stone. This 17-page booklet oozes the experience and knowledge of the two authors. It covers the entire history of the Flamborough tradition to the present day.

**BOOK North West Morris Dancing** (£4.60 A4 portrait, comb bound). This Morris Federation publication contains notations, illustrated with figures and diagrams for ten of the most popular North West Morris Dances, originally researched by Trefor Owen.

**BOOK Abram Circle Dance** (£3.60 A4 portrait, comb bound). This Morris Federation publication provides background, complete notation, pictures and music for the Abram Circle dance. The dance originates from the North West but has a different structure to most North West Dances.

**BOOK Hinton** (£4.50 A4 portrait, comb bound) Traditional and created Cotswold Morris Dances. Morris Federation Publication researched by Sue Swift.

Regards to all and have a good summer.

Steve Adamson BFB, Treasurer.

## INSTRUCTIONALS

**Jigs Instructional – 2005.** This year's event went well, so once again the hall has been booked for another masochistic weekend. The dates for your diaries - **14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> January 2005**. An Application Form will be available nearer the date. Details and information from the indefatigable *Bert Cleaver*.

### ARM 2004.

The ARM at Mossley, run by **Mossley** and **Saddleworth** was very successful with good attendance. The Minutes of the Meeting will hopefully be circulated with the next Newsletter.

As already announced, to **Bob Cross**, of **Chalice**, was elected as the next Squire of the Morris Ring. Our commiserations to **Paul Reece** of **Thaxted**, whom we expect may well be standing again in two years time. Our Treasurer [and Diplomatic Officer!!], **Steve Adamson**, of **Boar's Head**, was re-elected unopposed [he is ever busy on our behalf, as you will have seen from his "ramblings" on the previous two pages].

The Bagman confirmed that he would be stepping down after some seven years service at the next ARM. Business and other pressures, and the increasing workload, mean that he can no longer give the post the time that it requires. Any interested potential candidates should make themselves known. The Bagman would be pleased to discuss what was involved.

The ARM business session provided opportunity for discussion and comment over a range of subjects. It was generally uncontroversial, although the premature reference to an incomplete [and very interim] working document of a "think tank" set up to make some suggestions on the "future" of the Morris for the Advisory Council, did provide some excitement. Cock-Up rather than Conspiracy probably summed up the situation!!!

### ARM 2005.

As already mentioned by the Treasurer, **Harthill** have now confirmed that they will be able to host the ARM in 2005. The dates are 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> March 2005. Our thanks to Harthill.

This constitutes "Notice" in accordance with Item 14 of the Constitution. Further reminders will, of course, be issued in due time!!

**Chalice** have offered to host the ARM in 2006. If any other Sides wish to bid / offer to host then, or a later year, please advise the Bagman.

## OTHER EVENTS

**Scarborough Fayre Morris Dance Festival — 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> June 2004.** Hosted by Yorkshire Coast Morris [25 years old this year] Cost £18.00 – camping w/e [reduced price for children]. Contact: Wendy Bostock, 5, Westbourne Park, Scarborough, Yorkshire YO12 4AS E-mail: wbstock@mistral.co.uk Tel/fax: 01723 350078.

## ARCHIVES - CORRECTION [Again] – and ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

There has been previous mention of the log / album of the now defunct **London Rodney Side**. Despite having corrected the donor's name once, it was again misreported in the report that *Vic Street* [not Steel!!!] had allowed the Ring Archive to keep and preserve it.

*Dudley Binding*, after noting the repeated error, added “Vic and Pauline Street have been friends of ours for many years. Vic was very much involved with the formation of the **Cardiff**<sup>1</sup>, and in the earlier days of **West Somerset**, Vic was one of three musicians who played for **West Somerset** on August Bank Holiday Monday when their usual musicians (all teachers) disappeared for the Summer holidays - and on August Bank Holiday Monday, they relied on *Vic Street*, *Tubbie Reynolds* and *Charlie Bottomley* for music. One of the August Bank Holiday dancers was *Bob Cross*!”

## PHOTO ARCHIVE

Mrs. Joan Sharp of Bedfordshire has kindly donated copies of some 32 black and white photographs that she took at the Thaxted Ring Meeting in 1956, and has now scanned onto CD. She presented 5 copies of the CD to the Bagman at Ickwell May Festival – to allow distribution to the Ring Photo Archive; **Bedford; Thaxted and Letchworth**.

## MEDIA

The Treasurer reports “How the hell can you beat this for ego mania”. It seems a morris music group in Germany have dedicated to tune to him!!! Go to [www.morris-open.de](http://www.morris-open.de) click on the Union Jack for the English translation. Click on [The Music] and then at the bottom of the page click [The Treasurer's Morris]. Apparently Steve is busy making arrangements to have his front door widened. The site notes that it has a "Tune Of The Month" a tune of their own making, “written for our dear friend Freund Steve Adamson, Treasurer of the Morris Ring, played on Pipe & Tabor, Bagpipes and Synthesizer. Greetings, Steve!”

## NEWS

The annual Jigs Instructional on the weekend 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> January was again in the capable hands of *Bert Cleaver*, and hosted by **Dolphin** at Sutton Bonnington. A fine report by *Des Herring* is not yet available in electronic format and time for typing only allows a précis.

Some 28 participants from 20 Sides attended and participated in various ways. Bert Cleaver taught Fieldtown, on the Friday night, with demonstrations by *Steve Parker* and *Alan Chetwood* – this team was later to teach Sherborne jigs on Saturday. On Saturday, *Geoff Jerram* taught Bledington, with *Stroph Rayner* and *Ian Small* demonstrating – the same team later dealt with the Bampton jigs. *Tony Ashley* taught Oddington jigs, with *Joe Oldaker* demonstrating. Bert Cleaver then taught the Bucknell jig, Bonnets so Blue.

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<sup>1</sup> N.B. From the dates given in the log/scrap book, it is assumed that *Vic Street*'s involvement with the formation of **Cardiff**, was with the second Side, not the earlier Side formed by *Jim Marsden* [ex **Rugby**] in about 1953/4. [JPHF]

The Feast on the Saturday night was as usual a Bert Cleaver culinary masterpiece [chilled almond and garlic soup; levantine beef; chocolate and walnut pudding; cheese etc], followed by toasts and speeches and songs and recitations. An adjournment to the King's Head followed – and there was even space for a couple of dances and a jig before space became too restricted.

On Sunday, *Mike Matthews* of **Coventry** taught Jockey from the Ascott tradition. Sunday finished with Longborough with Bert's "team" before a revision session. The Squire had the last words – his car would not start – the words can not be reported here!!

Woodside Ale on 30<sup>th</sup> January was attended by **Aldbury, Towersey, Letchworth, Mayflower, Grand Union, Kemp's Men** and **Stafford** – an excellent evening with Tring Brewery's "Side Pocket for a Toad" and an excellent meal. An energetic evening of dancing was enjoyed by all present.

A choice of events on 1<sup>st</sup> February. The Squire attended **Winchester** Feast; the Bagman, the **Ripley** Feast; and the Treasurer attended the **Uttoxeter** Feast. Detailed reports are not available, probably because all were notable for the quality of the hospitality.

The following Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> February, there was again a clash of events with the **Northampton** Ale, and the **Leicester** Feast sharing the date. The latter was attended by the three Ring Officers and Sides represented included: **Royal Lancashire, Dolphin, East Surrey, Rutland, Darlington Mummers, Anker, Whitchurch, Man Friday, Coventry, Oakworth Village** and **Anstey**. Also present Past Squires: *Ivor Allsop, Mike Chandler, Roy Yarnell* and *Bert Cleaver*.

The LynnNews.co.uk included the following report on the **King's Morris**'s exploits on the Leap Year [although they appear to have dated it a week early!!!] "Morris dancers will be "leaping on the leap year" in traditional fashion on Sunday. Led by their squire, *Mark Warrell*, the King's Morris will mark the special day with a display of Cotswold Morris dancing at the Swan Inn, South Wootton, from 1pm. They will be joined by the **Peterborough** Morris for the dance session, which is followed by a folk music in the bar. Bagman *David Jackson* said: "The only known tradition connected with 29<sup>th</sup> February is that ladies are allowed to propose to their sweethearts on that day. This, of course, has nothing to do with Morris dancing. "However, as the King's Morris were unable to give their traditional display at the Swan Inn on Boxing Day, they decided to perform on the leap year instead. "The team has only performed on this day once before in their 25-year history, in 1992." The Magic of the Morris ensured that the snow of the previous few days was replaced with a crisp sunny day. David has subsequently confirmed that none of the Men were proposed to on that occasion and they collected £93 for the Bryan Gunn Leukaemia Appeal."

**Lichfield** Feast was held in the splendid surroundings of Lichfield Guildhall on 21<sup>st</sup> February. A large number of Sides were represented and the three Ring Officers were in attendance. Sides had travelled from as far as Devon [**Plymouth**], Lancashire [**John of Gaunt**] and Yorkshire [**Ebor**]. The Mayor of Lichfield was also present. The traditional vegetable curry was served, accompanied by baked potatoes, baked beans and onion pickle.

**Aldbury** Ale was held on Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> February, and attended by a number of local Sides. **Kenet**'s Ale was held on the following day.

**Devil's Dyke** held their ale on Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> March. Another successful event with a well-filled hall and plenty of dancing.

The highlights of the business of the ARM on 13<sup>th</sup> March have been reported elsewhere. Suffice to say that the social parts of the meeting were also excellent [as would be expected from our hosts from either side of the Lancashire / Yorkshire divide, **Mossley** and **Saddleworth**. The Greenfield Real Ale Brewery provided excellent beers for the Meeting, and two local pubs also assisted in providing venues for singing and general social intercourse. The caterers provided what seemed an endless supply of food.

Whilst only few Ring Sides [**Hoddesdon** and **North British**] were participating at the “Dancing England Rapper Tournament” [DERT] in Bath on 27<sup>th</sup> March, there were a number of Ring Side members attending or taking part in other capacities. A splendid event.

On the next day, 28<sup>th</sup> March, a Joint Meeting of the three Morris Organisations, provided very useful exchanges of views and more areas of agreement for promotion of the Morris. It is hoped to increase the number of Meetings to two a year, to provide greater continuity.

### MAY “ROUND – UP” – Part 1

**Terry Heaslip** of **Hartley** reports on their May Day activities. “May 1<sup>st</sup> for Hartley commenced at Dawn (5.30am), as it has done every year since 1975, by dancing at the Coldrum Stones, Trottscliffe, a burial mound aligned to the sunrise on Mayday. This year, perhaps because it was Saturday, we had our second largest audience of 117 early risers (not including the sun, which remained obscured by cloud). Full English breakfast (and beer) followed, as usual, in our spiritual home the Rose and Crown in Wrotham, followed by a game of darts until our vintage coach arrived just after 9am. Being a Saturday we could not follow our usual tour that normally includes local schools so this year we celebrated our roots which, like the Ring, go back to 1934. At 10am **Wadard** joined us to dance on the Green at Hartley, this being the village where Hartley were formed in 1952 by former members of the Stansted Morris Men. Interestingly, Wadard now hold their winter practices in the local school and two of the men present from each team attended Hartley practices in the village during the 1960’s. Our next joint stand was at the Pied Bull, Farningham, as we were based there during the 1970’s and where Wadard were formed by some Hartley Men who got left behind when we relocated to our present adopted village of Wrotham in 1978. We toured the pub’s old Coach House where practices were held. Once a thriving Folk Club but now disused and desolate with plans to turn it into hotel accommodation. Lunch was taken at the Black Horse, Stansted, to celebrate the founding, in 1934, of our predecessors, the Stansted Morris Men who, during 1936, were the 37<sup>th</sup> team to join the Ring. Following lunch both sides led the May Queen’s procession down to the recreation ground and danced at a pleasantly vintage traditional village fete. Wadard then retired to the pub as Hartley had been invited, by kind invitation of the present owner, to view Goodmans Barn where the Stansted practised during the 1930’s until the outbreak of war. We have a photo of the Stansted Men dancing Lads-a Bunchum so this was duly performed to the family before being invited inside what is now a superb private residence. Returning to the Black Horse, we left Wadard’s mini-bus driver to try and extract them from the pub and return them from whence they came whilst the Hartley contingent returned to our present adopted village of Wrotham for a final performance outside the Rose and Crown. So it was that we came full circle following in the footsteps of our founders, the Stansted Morris Men, who regularly danced in Wrotham during the 1930’s. Further details of Hartley’s history and present activities are on [www.hartleymorris.org.uk](http://www.hartleymorris.org.uk)”.

**Jeremy Towzer** of **Sydney** reports “Following on from the footage of us dancing on the BBC TV news prior to England beating the Frogs then the Aussies in the Rugby last November, we seem to have made Sydney’s main Sunday Paper with a shot from our May Morning foot up.”

**Bedford, Letchworth** and **Offley** greeted the May at Ickwell's May Pole. This was rudely interrupted by a thunderstorm that broke near the end of the Dance session. Letchworth valiantly carried on with their show dance in the heavy rain and were joined by Bedford for the final, very wet, "Bonny Green".

*David Jones* of **Milton** reports "We received an invitation to take part in a concert at Clare College, Cambridge which was celebrating 100 years of Cecil Sharpe's songs. Sharpe, of course attended Clare College and his original manuscripts were on display as well as a pictorial history. This all took place on the evening of Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> May. The Clare College Choir performed the songs and we danced three Bampton and a Brackley dance plus a Bampton Jig (from Sharpe's notes). We were very well received and much enjoyed being part of an excellent concert. It turned out that our musician, **Keith Hayward** on fiddle, was a chorister at Clare in 1939, and this caused much excitement for the Musical Director and the college Dean. After the concert we were cajoled by some very pretty Clare medical students (we didn't much persuading!) to give an impromptu performance in the student bar, this was an enjoyable finale to an excellent evening."

**Bob Hart**, Bagman of **Claro** has reported on a Yorkshire initiative. Recognising that several local Sides were having to turn down events as they might not have a full Side, but that there were Men from several Sides keen to dance more often than the availability of full Sides allowed, they have formed the "Great Yorkshire Morris" [a working name that may change]. The initial impetus was from **Boars Head, Castleford** and **Claro**, who have a deal of enthusiasm to get going quickly. If a local Side cannot cover an event, the intention is to offer it to the combined Side. A first practice of the new Side was scheduled for Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May in Pool-in Wharfedale village hall. It is planned to have fortnightly practices, which should provide a pool of 20+ keen dancers who are able to build a varied repertoire of Cotswold and Longsword quite quickly. They also hope to do Rapper courtesy of Boars Head, and there should be opportunity for people to try new styles and traditions.

#### AND FINALLY .....

After the "nationalistic stunts" of the Scottish hosts before the England-Scotland Rugby game, it was felt that England should retaliate. Robert Kitson writing in the Guardian [23<sup>rd</sup> February] suggested that "... the RFU will doubtless have stocked the visitors' team bath with piranha fish and booked every Morris dancer in the kingdom."

A photographic project to attract more overseas tourists, included a shot by Labour MP Austin Mitchell of Morris dancing in Yorkshire.

#### CONCLUSION

Please to keep the News flowing and report any changes for the Directory. Ensure your event is reported by sending in a Report by Email. Editing takes less time than copy-typing, and the present pressures on my time will restrict time input on production of the Newsletter.

The next Newsletter should be produced in June/July and should include the Minutes of the ARM. The mailing should also include the next edition of the Morris Circular.

#### *Wassail*

John Frearson, Bagman, The Morris Ring