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## Newsletter No.65

March 2010

If you have not posted it don't forget to bring your **Ballot paper** to the ARM.

**The Morris Ring Annual Representatives Meeting**  
**Friday 26<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2010**  
Hosted by Stafford Morris Men

**BAGMAN FOR THE ARM WEEKEND:** Peter Copley: Stafford Morrismen  
Email: [peter@copley5.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:peter@copley5.freeserve.co.uk) Tel: 01889 567962

*All correspondence regarding accommodation and meals please to Peter Copley*

**Directions and final housekeeping details will be distributed by Stafford MM**

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**Morris Shop:** Due to a clash of dates Steve (BfB) Adamson is unable to attend this year's ARM. The Morris Shop will be at the ARM but in a rather reduced format. If there is anything specific that you wish to purchase contact Steve before Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March and it will be available for you to collect at the ARM.

## Programme for the ARM Weekend

**Friday evening:** In addition to the usual mixture of informal conversation, with opportunities for dancing, singing and drinking, we have the added attraction of a special showing of the film *Morris: A Life with Bells On*.

### Saturday

7.30 - 8.30 Breakfast

9.00 - 10.30 Instructionals Session 1 [Officers Meeting]

These instructionals are planned to be cumulative: participants will be expected to attend all three sessions:

- Rapper Workshop- tutored by Colin Messer
- North West Workshop - tutored by Earlsdon MM
- Horsham tradition - tutored by Broadwood MM Dan Dewdney has asked me to pass on the message that those doing the workshop will need to have one long stick and one short stick.

10.30 - 11.00 Coffee break

11.00 - 12.00 Instructional Session 2 [Area Reps Meeting]

12.15 - 1.00 Buffet lunch

13.15 - 16.30 Annual Reps. Meeting

16.30 - 17.00 Tea break

17.00 - 18.15 Instructional Session 3 [Advisory Council Meeting]

19.00 - FEAST (followed by informal dancing/singing)

With invited guests from the Morris Federation; the Open Morris and the EFDSS

### Sunday

8.00 - 9.00 Breakfast & departure

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### Minutes of the Annual Representatives' Meeting

held at 6 Roopers, Speldhurst, Tunbridge Wells, Kent on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2010

1. Apologies for absence received from: Charlie Corcoran, Bagman of the Morris Ring

Present: Brian Tasker, Squire of the Morris Ring

2. The meeting commenced at 1.15pm and was immediately adjourned.

The meeting will reconvene at Abbot's Bromley School for Girls, Staffordshire on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2010, at 1.15pm

Brian Tasker Squire of the Morris Ring

## AGENDA for ARM 27<sup>th</sup> March 2010

1. **Apologies for Absence.**
2. **Minutes of the last ARM [Previously circulated]**
3. **Matters arising from the Minutes.**
4. **Squire's Report.**

First of all I would like to express my thanks to the Stafford Morris Men for responding to our appeal and agreeing to host this year's ARM.

The **format** we used last year with an entertainment on the Friday evening and instructionals on the Saturday has proved popular and we are using the same format again this year. We have a showing of the film: "Morris: A Life With Bells On" on Friday evening and instructionals on Rapper, North West and Cotswold during the day on Saturday.

This year we have **six candidates** standing in the election for Squire. This is an all time record and it is a testament to the strength of the Morris Ring that so many excellent candidates wish to lead it. The voting procedure is complicated and has been fully explained in both the December and February editions of the Newsletter. Sides should ensure that they fully understand the procedure and vote accordingly. It may take several rounds of vote counting before one candidate has an absolute majority over all the other candidates and the candidate in the lead could change one or more times in the process.

Last year was our **75<sup>th</sup> anniversary** and we celebrated it in style with five wonderful Morris Ring meetings. The weather was generally excellent and I am certain that the seventy seven sides and nine hundred men who attended one or other of the meetings had a great time. The special edition of the Circular which celebrated these Morris Ring meetings was very well received and over two hundred extra copies were sold. Our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary was an appropriate time to launch a fund to help finance new sides of young people.

Contributions are voluntary and the fund is not supported by Morris Ring funds. At the time of writing £472 has been donated. It is too early to assess the success of this initiative but the fund is up and running and any Morris Ring side which is involved in running a Morris club for young people is invited to apply for a grant from the fund. The details can be found by following the link on the home page of the Morris Ring web site.

The Morris Ring faces a **challenging future** as many of our sides are dominated by older men. We need to have a development plan for the years ahead and for that reason a questionnaire was designed which incorporated suggestions made by the Advisory Council. In due course a full report will be published. Eighty member clubs (53%) and nine associate clubs (20%) have so far returned questionnaires and they give much vital information about our clubs and their members' views on many important issues. I am getting reports that some clubs have still not managed to get hold of a copy of the questionnaire. If this applies to your side please phone me, write to me or email me and I will send you a copy. Every return I receive adds to the validity of the survey. It is not yet too late to make your club's voice heard.

Late last year, Dick Shilton resigned from the **Archive Group** and his position as Chairman has now been taken on by Chris Metherell, our paper and film archivist. I would like to thank Dick for his work as Chairman and wish Chris well in his new job. The paper

and film archive is currently stored at the Northumberland Record Office but negotiations are taking place with the objective of transferring it to the Essex Record Office on secure long term loan. There is a lot of work to be done before this transfer can take place but once it has been achieved the archive will be accessible to researchers in the same way as any other part of the Essex archive. A consequence of this relocation is that we need to find a new paper and film archivist, ideally located within a reasonable distance of Essex, to take over from Chris the job of developing and expanding the archive.

The Morris Ring has been without a **public relations officer** for some time now. It is very important that the voice of the Morris Ring is heard and that sides have someone to advise them on their own contacts with the media. It is a specialised appointment which requires someone with the right skills. I would be very pleased to discuss the job with anyone who is interested in taking it on.

The next **JMO event** is almost upon us. It will be hosted by the Morris Federation on 17 April in Bury St. Edmunds in Suffolk. We have ten Morris Ring sides attending, one less than the number we had at Nottingham last year, and less than our allocation of fifteen sides.

The **Adelaide Morris Men** are currently associates of the Morris Ring but have announced that they wish to become members. Their application will be voted on at the ARM and if they are successful they will dance in at the Thaxted meeting this year. It is a very great pleasure to see an associate club aspire to full membership. It was once said to me that a club comes of age when it holds its first Morris Ring meeting. Perhaps we can look forward to a Morris Ring meeting in sunny Adelaide one February!

I shall be dancing out as Squire at the Castleford Longsword Morris Ring meeting in September but before then I have a whole Summer's events to attend and I look forward to meeting many of you on my travels around the country.

**Brian Tasker Squire of the Morris Ring**

## **5. Bagman's Report.**

I start my report with the usual catalogue of thanks, foremost of which must be to my fellow Bagmen who toil to keep the administration of the member and associate sides running smoothly. I appreciate how hard it is to get men to read notices, or emails, much less commit themselves to an event or booking. I appreciate that at Leicester MM I am lucky as we are able to field three sides on a good day whilst many of you are phoning round to get one. This simply illustrates how effective Bagmen are simply to honour a booking!

As the Civil Servants of the Morris Ring it is fortunate that Eddie and I communicate frequently and effectively. He has certainly hit the ground running and has stepped into the not inconsiderable shoes of Stephen (BfB) Adamson. For a comparatively small organisation the Morris Ring has a very complex structure – with every side, whether member or associate, being basically an autonomous body – our only connections being our common purpose and insurance links. Eddie has accepted the interpretation of our evolving Standing order or Cheque payment system as well as, thankfully (on my part at least) the up-dating of the membership contact database. Steve and I realised quite early on that as membership was tied so closely to the payment of subs for the Bagman to

maintain one set of records and the Treasurer another based upon payment receipts was simply daft. What makes both of our lives stupidly complex is the apparent desire of many sides to keep the change of side officers a secret from the rest of the world – or at least from us!

The most obvious evidence of my role is the publication of the Newsletter. This is oddly controversial – as different people have different interpretations as to what a Newsletter should or might contain. My interpretation remains that I need to report up-coming events and recent Morris-related items of information that might be considered newsworthy. Like my fellow editors (or the Circular and the Morris Dancer) I am really dependent upon the wider membership of the Morris Ring, and in my case frequently the wider Morris community, for content. I do not charge to publicise your events or to report your successes but I need to know of them. As to failures or bereavements I will report on these as appropriate whilst Harry in the Circular will consider the publication of longer obituaries or celebrations of the life and contribution to the Morris of significant figures. Whilst referring to other Morris Ring publications I am delighted that we have at last managed to secure a niche and therefore hopefully a future for the Morris Dancer – as the mouthpiece of the Archive Group. It has been apparent for a while that the Archive Group has been performing an invaluable function but largely unnoticed by the wider membership. At the same time the Morris Dancer was falling between two stools – neither a magazine nor an academic publication. In its new guise, under the editorship of Dave Thompson but under the auspices of the archive group it has the potential to be both the academic organ of the Morris Ring and the means by which the general membership are informed about the invaluable work that this dedicated group of individuals.

On a personal level I remain involved with the Morris Ring and the wider world of the Morris through my involvement with both Leicester MM and Man Friday MM, because I enjoy it. Most events that I get to I attend as a member of Leicester MM but I do appreciate the various other invitations that I receive. Please do not stop asking me but do not be offended if I have to decline simply because I have to keep a balance between what is my hobby, the Morris, and my job – and, dare I suggest, the other things in my life.

The key to our future (serious note!) is communication. Elsewhere in these reports, and throughout the ARM agenda, there are references to various means of communication. When I took over from John Frearson most of the communications that I received were via snail mail or telephone calls. These days I receive comparatively few letters and even fewer phone calls – even though I have an answering machine (for when my wife and daughter are not available to act as messengers). Most communications are via email. *[Note: please do NOT use my work email [[ccorcoran@longslade.leics.sch.uk](mailto:ccorcoran@longslade.leics.sch.uk)] as whilst I may respond to other emails from this address it is notoriously fickle and rejects or loses correspondence with neither warning nor notification.]*

I am currently using mass emails to Bagmen and alternative email contacts for sides as notified by sides to, these days, our Treasurer Eddie; messages to the Morris Ring Google Group, to which all Bagmen and many self-selected others are invited to join and snail-mail paper versions to communicate with the wider membership. There are suggestions that to these we might add facebook and Twitter. However communications are distributed matters not one jot if the membership don't read whatever is distributed. Regardless of

opinions about Loving Cups, candles or feasts, we are NOT a secret society but can appear so if information is not disseminated and shared. Just as it is vital that Eddie and I can communicate regularly and effectively with whomever you elect as Squire (and he with us!) this is nowhere near as important as YOU communicating with us – your elected officers.

Finally, please do not underestimate the links that we have on your behalf with the other Morris organisations – and that includes the EFDSS. It saddens me that so many dancers from all three organisations still seem to think that we are all at war. You only have to read (and please do) the reports of our joint meetings and the various 2010- linked initiatives to appreciate that the war is long over and that we are now engaged in a joint campaign – to improve the public image of the Morris and thus to secure its future. We have all grown up - there can be very few sides in any of the organisations who will refuse to perform at an event simply because there is a group of the opposite gender performing on the same bill. This is why I am proud to be Bagman of the Morris Ring.

Charlie Corcoran

## 6. Treasurer's Report

It is amazing how quickly a year can pass and how busy it can be! As my first year as Morris Ring Treasurer draws to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to pass on my thanks to my fellow Officers, Brian & Charlie and also my predecessor Steve Adamson, for all their help in my taking over of the role of Treasurer.

Hopefully the day to day business of the Morris Ring has not suffered as I have climbed the learning curve, but any mistakes or omissions that have occurred are my sole responsibility.

Turning to the **accounts**, there are a number of changes to the presentation of these this year in relation to expenses and layout. These are designed to reflect a number of changes that have occurred, to help with administration and also, hopefully, to make the information in the Accounts more accessible to all. The changes are fairly straightforward but I have a few comments on these by way of background.

**Expenses:** The Morris Ring has had for many years, a policy of settling expenses of Morris Ring Officers, and some others, in connection with the work they carry out on behalf of the Morris Ring Membership. This has been refined over time to the current position of expenses being paid that relate to the business that is essential to the proper running of the Morris Ring.

Long before the House of Commons ran into a little difficulty with its administration of expenses, I had resolved to publish details of expenses paid, to give more detail on the total figures already given in Accounts in the past. These are included with the Accounts as Appendices.

**75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fund:** As you will hopefully have seen, a separate fund has been established to help support the development of youth sides. The fund operates as a voluntary fund supported by donations from those wishing to support the initiative. To assist with transparency, the fund has now been placed in a separate savings account.

The funds are shown in the General account in this year's account, but will in future years be shown as a separate column in the Accounts.

**Reserve Fund:** I have reviewed the income and expenditure on the General & Shop Accounts for 2009, to look at the turnover of money throughout the year. This has identified sums in both accounts, which are not required day to day. I have therefore set up a further 'Reserve Fund' savings account where these sums have been placed.

It is important to state, that although this Reserve Fund balance is not required day to day, it may well be required to help fund initiatives that require significant expenditure, at any time. Also, if heavy losses should occur on events backed by the Morris Ring, it may be required to meet these. Hopefully however, such losses would not arise.

At present the Reserve Fund has been invested at HSBC in a savings account. This allows easy access to the funds should they be required. In time to come it may be that investment of the funds in another organisation may offer a better rate of return. However the opportunity to earn interest will need to be balanced against the costs and risk that alternative investment may bring and the ease of access to funds at short notice to deal with emergencies.

I intend to monitor the turnover of the accounts again in 2010 to ensure the Reserve Fund is operating correctly and to adjust the balance as required. I will report back to the ARM in 2011 on this with any proposals to develop this further.

**Other issues:** The JMO Public Liability insurance continues to be excellent value for money to all, thanks to the tireless efforts of Michael Stimpson the JMO insurance broker. The settlement for 2010 shows an increase of only £47 approximately £0.25 per side in the Morris Ring.

Membership renewals were prompt this year, with many sides opting for renewal by way of Standing order. However, nearly 2/3rds of sides still pay by Cheque, which does make the administration of the renewal process slower than it could be. If your side has not yet set up a Standing Order for subs, please do consider this. Although not all accounts will support this, most will. Please contact me to obtain your sides' unique payment reference.

An initiative was set up with Geoff Jerram to help encourage people to attend the ever excellent Jigs Instructional weekend. This offered a £10 refund per person who had not attended the weekend before (Geoff knows who you are), refunded via their side. Although not compulsory it is hoped that sides will help co-fund their side members attending to encourage the development of their sides' repertoire.

I'm pleased to say that **21** people have taken part in this scheme at the 2010 weekend and the feedback from Geoff, the instructors and the people taking part has been very positive. Discussions are ongoing about an extension of this scheme for 2011 and details will be circulated in due course.

Finally, I look forward to continuing in the role of Morris Ring Treasurer and working with the Officers and incoming Squire in 2010 and beyond.

Eddie Worrall – Morris Ring Treasurer, Saddleworth Morris Men

## 7. Chair of Advisory Council's Report

*'How do we move from a rather inward and backward looking organisation with an ageing membership, viability issues and a stuffy and tired image to a more outward, adventurous, imaginative, dynamic and forward looking one that proudly puts male ritual dancing at the forefront of what it is about and seeks to attract a wider and younger membership?'*

This question and other contributions were put to the Advisory Council concerning the future direction of the Morris Ring. A list of suggestions for improving how this organisation works and serves its membership and the ideals of the organisation were sought. These should form the basis of a **Morris Ring Development Plan** with priority objectives that future Squire's should follow.

Changes to the management structure, our institutions, make-up and size of the Advisory Council and the role of Area Reps should be considered where they no longer are able to serve the purpose for which they were intended or that purpose has become obsolete or unworkable in a modern context. The best interests of the organisation and its membership, its changing needs and not least in attracting a different and future membership have to be considered. Would for example more concentration on a regional type management structure assist regional development and recruitment, perhaps centred on smaller clusters of sides and representatives?

**Publicity Officer.** There was a strong recommendation that a publicity officer is needed to get our message across and to stimulate interest in what we do. This would help us to raise our profile and extend our influence, engage with the public, critics and the media and put Men's Morris on the map.

**Morris Ring Logo** A competition from the membership for a new modern design is needed.

**A Directory of Morris Expertise: Teachers, Mentors, Musicians and Choreographers** to assist with the teaching and performance of the Morris was now long overdue. Its usefulness to sides wanting help and instruction, but importantly to the young through projects in schools, colleges and the scouts was very important.

**Should future instructionals be opened up to all JMO membership regardless of gender?**

The MR needs to be more prepared to take risks. Half day and evening instructionals should be considered as well as the use of 'flying tutors'. Quality and standards followed from instructionals. The success of the Jigs Instructional using parallel sessions for beginners and more advanced dancers was cited in giving good grounding in the main Cotswold traditions for those new to the Morris as well as those needing a refresher. We are all potential improvers. Schools are increasingly looking at the Heritage angle for reviving our living traditions regional and national. This should be explored to bring the next generation into the Morris. An **Education Officer** would help to facilitate and coordinate this important area.

**Area Reps** need a job description and a supporting team of helpers if they were to be effective, cover the ground and have an impact in their region. Areas perhaps could be divided into three as they are far too large for one person.

**Youth reps** should be considered as useful additions as would the assistance and knowledge of past officers in those regions. A youth representative on the Advisory Council should be a serious consideration.

**Morris Ring Flyers, Handouts and Stickers** These were being looked into as possible promotional and recruitment material that could be used by clubs.



**Funding. The Morris Ring is underfunded** and with all that needs to be done its status may have to be looked at if it is to attract funding. Someone who has been successful at raising fund raising would be a valuable asset in advising future officers on the ways forward at improving our position on raising funds. **Officers Expenses** is also in need of review. What has happened in the past cannot always dictate what should happen in the future.

Now that the keeper of the Morris Shop is not an officer of the Morris Ring, taking the Morris Shop to Morris Ring Meetings etc in all corners of the country is prohibitively expensive without travelling expenses. At the very least attendance at Ring Meetings that require the shop should not levy Steve a charge for attending.

## 8. Elections (Part 1)

Election of **Squire**      *The six candidates, in alphabetical order, are:*

Peter Halfpenney

Will Partridge

Fred Hands

Robin Springett

Steve Parker

Harry Stevenson

## 9. Archival Reports.

a. **Chair of Archive Group & Archivist**      Chris Metherell

Much of the period since I last reported to the ARM has been taken up with the task of finding a permanent home for the paper and film archives. The Archive Group has been searching for such a home for almost as long as I have been the Archivist, but all promising leads always eventually met with a polite refusal. However, perhaps galvanised by the fact that it was no longer possible (due to my personal circumstances) for the archive to remain at its current home, a fresh search was instigated in 2008.

A number of options were considered, including, as suggested at last year's ARM, the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library. However, after much deliberation and the preparation of several reports, following the last Archive Group Meeting in February 2010, the Group formally recommended to the Squire that the Archive be housed, on loan, at the Essex Record Office in Chelmsford. The Squire's decision is awaited.

It is not possible in this short report to deal with all the issues which surround such a move, however it is perhaps important to stress that although the philosophy of the Archive will not change, the methods used to achieve its goals inevitably would. For example, much of the information currently held in photocopy form would be scanned and deposited electronically. However the quid pro quo of such an effort will be that at last the archive would be housed in a state of the art record office, under properly controlled conditions and could be made available in a fully resourced search room with up to date facilities (including a large car park outside!).

All this activity has been set against a background of some change. I am the third Chairman that the Archive Group has had in 2010, and it is appropriate that I should thank both previous Chairmen, Dick Shilton and Paul Reece for all the work that they have put in, in what has been a very active year.

And next year? In the event that the Archive does indeed move to the ERO, much work will be needed in re-sorting and scanning material as well as simply transporting papers and films from their current temporary home at the Northumberland Record Office to Essex.

And of course, it would be impossible for me to continue as the Ring Archivist in such circumstances – travel distances would be too great – so a new Archivist would need to be sought. So this may be my final report to you as Archivist. Although I hope to continue, subject to the incoming Squire's views as always, to chair the Archive Group for some years to come.

Chris Metherell Morris Ring Archivist and Chair if the Archive Group

## **b. Photographic**

Duncan Broomhead

Once again, it has been a busy and productive year for the Photographic Archive; I have continued cataloguing the backlog of photographs whilst dealing with the flow of new material and outside enquiries.

The biggest change to the cataloguing process has been as the purchase 500GB remote Hard Drive to store the digitised images. Digitising and copying the images to this reasonably inexpensive piece of kit has given me the opportunity to re-examine the original catalogue entries, making corrections and additions as I go along.

There are at the moment over 700 images on the hard drive which has the advantage that I can bring it to events like the ARM and put on a slide show of material held by the Archive rather than bringing down static display boards and a handful of photographs.

New material continues to be acquired, some items have been bought, some swapped, others donated in by member clubs and even families and friends of ex dancers. The vast majority of new material now arrives as digital images but whatever format they are in, I am always grateful to receive new material.

Enquiries have come from a variety of sources, John Maher regularly forwards those that arrive via the Morris Ring website, I continue to receive family history enquiries, others from Morris sides and ex Morris dancers. Increasingly, I am getting enquiries from local history groups, this often turns into a two way process with them supplying photographs or information to me and me to them. I am particularly happy to answer these enquiries and welcome the chance of getting information and photographs back into the communities they originally came from.

Many enquiries can answered by return but more complicated ones take a little longer, keep your enquiries, donations and comments coming in, the archive is there to be used.

## **c. Mumming.**

Ron Shuttleworth

Still scanning, although as I told you last year, at a much slower rate. This is because I am now working on those accumulations of paper that have never been properly indexed or put in order.

The databases continue to be expanded and refined with invaluable help from Chris Little of the Traditional Drama Research Group.

Currently I have been able to borrow a high-end tape player and started work on the audio and video tapes. I discovered that all my preconceived ideas were totally wrong and I am involved in a very steep learning-curve indeed. Fortunately both my lodger and a fellow member of Coventry Mummers have the expertise to instruct me, but it is slow work as I can only download in real time.

It is difficult to know how to deal with the vast amount of stuff on the internet. It would be quite impractical to archive it all and currently I only download the few items of serious importance. For the rest, I think we will have to rely on websites, such as that of the Traditional Drama Research Group, which list all the links.

I continue to answer all queries as best I can and I thank all those who have contributed material during the year. I also draw your attention to my usual offering of surplus items, from which you are invited to help yourselves.

I have acquired a laptop especially for this Meeting, on which anyone interested can see both the databases and all the material scanned to date which fills 3.62 GigaBytes and comprises 4,084 files in 291 folders.

Ron Shuttleworth

#### d. **Sword**

Ivor Allsop

*I would start by reiterating once more that this is a private archive serviced by me using my money and is in no way an expense on the Ring or Archive funds.*

Thirty or more years ago I gave as the aims of the Sword Dance Archive the following

*To gather together in one location all the known references to  
Longsword in whatever form and whatever medium.*

The only amendment to this happened more than 20 years ago with the addition of the words *and Rapper* after the word Longsword. This is how it has remained for all the time that the archive has been in existence and I see no reason whatsoever to change or amend the aims. It covers everything which the archive can and should do but the archive is an eclectic collection of material and must be viewed as such. The intention, from the very beginning, was to make it available to anyone who wanted to see it, this still applies. It does mean, however, that to view it you have to travel here to Barnsley for that purpose, at least for the moment. Should this prove too onerous copies of specific items can be obtained but, unlike those who started the Morris Ring, I am not a rich philanthropist, so the full cost of copying and postage & packing has to be passed on.

Over the years it has grown 'a bit like Topsy' until now there are nearly 10,000 entries in it. As a product of the Morris Ring, it will not surprise you to know, that I, as the person who has run it for all these years, also have probably the most comprehensive collection of Morris Ring papers which are also part of the Sword Dance Archive. [Hopefully The Morris Federation and The Open Morris have got similar collections of papers stored away for future generations to peruse.

So what is in the archive. (*Complete catalogue / full details available on Morris Ring Website & Morris Ring Google Group*)

1. **Longsword References.**
  - In manuscripts, newspapers, books, periodicals, video and DVD.
  - Folders of sword dances
2. **Rapper References.**
  - In manuscripts, newspapers, books, periodicals, video and DVD.
  - Folders of Rapper dances.
3. **Morris Ring References.**
  - Box 1. Annual Representatives Meetings, Notifications, Minutes etc.
  - Box 3. Morris Ring Meeting Papers.
  - Box 4. Advisory Council Papers.
  - Box 5. Morris Ring Directories
  - The Morris Dancer. Volumes 1, 2, 3 & 4
  - **The Morris Ring Circular.**
    - I. Edited by Dave Berryman.
    - II. Edited by Eddie Dunmore.
    - III. Edited by Harry Stevenson
  - **Bagman's Newsletters.**
4. **Pruw Boswell's North-west Morris Papers.**
5. **Books.**
6. **Periodicals.**
  - The Morris Dancer – fully indexed.
  - The Journal of the English Folk Dance Society 1914 – 1931 (nothing published between 1915 & 1927)
  - The Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society 1932 – 1964.
  - The Folk Music Journal 1965 to the present.
    - Rattle up, My Boys
      - a. Edited by Trevor Stone 1987 – 2003
      - b. Edited by Andrew Kennedy 2004 to the present.

*All the above Periodicals have been fully indexed into the archive.*
  - E.F.D.S News various copies from January 1930 to 1936
  - English Dance and Song: various from 1938 to 1941 and then 1942 to the present (not all indexed).
  - Folklore Society Journal 'Folklore' various from 1889 to 2005.
  - The American Morris Newsletter various from 1977 to the present.

*These Periodicals have been partially indexed into the archive.*
7. **Newspapers Cuttings** (as they refer to both Longsword and Rapper)
8. **Personal Correspondence** re teams, dances, dancers etc.
9. **8mm/Hi8/ Digi8 video tapes** of Morris and Sword Events.
10. **DVDs.** Mainly 'sword' and presented to the archive but one or two of Morris Ring Meetings.
11. **VHS video** of various ceremonial events.
12. **W.F.C. Collection.**
  - Manuscripts, papers and magazines.

- Photographs (some with negatives)
13. Various studies which have been presented to the archive.
- Cindy Sughrue's thesis on South Yorkshire Longsword Teams.
  - John Ledbury's thesis on a similar subject.
  - Chris Bearman's 'The English Folk Movement 1898 – 1914'
  - Tom Brown's 'English Vernacular Performing Art in the late Twentieth Century'
  - Ivor Allsop – controversy re Rolf Gardiner and Georgina Boyes in *Step Change*.
  - Ivor Allsop – the Gatty's of Ecclesfield
  - Ivor Allsop – the 'Squire who never was! An account of the life of Richard Callender'.

At the present moment Phil Heaton and myself are contemplating sharing the responsibility of the archive. Ultimately the archive will be serviced fully by Phil. Hopefully this is some way off in the future though if I feel like I did at the New Year again it could be sooner rather than later.

Ivor Allsop

e. **New Dance Collator** Position currently Vacant

f. **Keeper of the Ring Scrapbook** Keith Francis

**Logbooks.** The Logbooks are almost up to date. I will continue to write up events until the end of 2010, and then handover to another Logbook Keeper, whom the new Squire will need to appoint. Currently the Logbooks are written up in longhand in Leather bound Minute Books. Should this practice continue or should Logs of Morris Ring events now be kept electronically?

**Scrapbooks.** The scrapbooks will be available at ARM. I will continue to keep them until they are fully up to date.

Keith Francis

g. **Sound Archive**

The Morris Ring Sound Archive is a new area of archiving which has been waiting for a volunteer to come along and take it on. I came along with an open offer of help and duly took on the job. Chris Metherell had a box of audio cassette tapes and a few reel-to-reel tapes and these have been passed on to me. Ivor Allsop has also passed on audio cassette tapes from the John Wells collection and some of his own personal tapes. I am currently in the process of transferring these to my computer and saving them as WMA files. These files are slightly bigger than MP3 but the quality is better (where the source tape is decent in the first place; some aren't).

The few reel-to-reel tapes I have so far received have been passed on to Sean Goddard of Chanctonbury Ring MM who has a lot of experience dealing with this type of tape. Sean will digitise the recordings and they will be added to the MRSA. This is a very welcome offer of help and my thanks go out to Sean.

The digitising of these recordings is 'real time' so a 120 minute audio cassette tape will take 120 minutes to transfer plus the setting up, saving and naming. It is very time consuming when you consider I have currently 204 such tapes in the collection. I also have to listen to the full recording because there is no record of what the recording is, what date

it was recorded or any details of content. The majority of the tapes come completely anonymously. Many are fairly boring but some hold little gems such as instances of Kenneth Loveless singing at Ring Meeting Feasts. I usually make a separate recording of those songs after recording the whole first. I am slowly working my way through the backlog and have completed about 65 of the cassette tapes. Many of the tapes are copies of originals recorded by Doc Rowe, Barry Care, Winchester MM etc and we have reminiscences of Lionel Bacon, Kenneth Loveless, Tony Foxworthy, Nibs Matthews, Jim Brooks, Son Townsend, Roy Judge, Margaret Fennessy, Fred Jordon. There are many recordings done by John Wells of Morris Ring Meeting feasts - speeches and after speech entertainments - these were done to help John remember what happened and quality was not foremost in John's mind. The microphone was placed on the top table and (depending on acoustics and position of the speaker or singer) sometimes it is good sometimes inaudible or poor.

The future of the MRSA is as yet unknown but at this time I anticipate the following:

- The completion of digitising of the MR Sound collection and adding details to the Archive database. I have had some problems with the database but hope soon to have sorted these out and the sound files information added. In the meantime I keep notes of each recording where it is felt appropriate, and I maintain a complete list of what I have, together with a record of what has been transferred so far.
- More recording of reminiscences of eminent characters in the world of 'Morris' (in the widest sense of that word).
- Recovery of recordings that are 'out there' - by that I mean recordings already in existence and held by teams or individuals that they feel could or should be in the central Morris Ring repository. I will welcome **ANY** donations of existing audio cassette, reel-to-reel, and digital recordings, and even better if they come with full details of time, date, location and details of sound recordist and brief notes about contents and copyright holder. If the copyright is being handed to the MR that should also be made clear in writing – it helps those who might deal with this in the future.
- The making available of a list of recordings held by the MRSA and eventually, after all considerations such as copyright etc have been taken into account, the making available of copies of those recordings in whatever format or means is felt appropriate.

Andy Padmore

## 10. Publication Officers' Reports.

### i. Editor Morris Circular Harry Stevenson

Three issues for the calendar year to 31 December 2009 were published. The 60<sup>th</sup> issue was a special part colour edition in gloss, featuring the 2009 Morris Ring Meetings, in celebration of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Founding of the Morris Ring. Clubs and individuals bought over 200 extra copies. Future editions will be on gloss-it enhances the depth of photos. Editor's thanks go to the contributors, proofreaders, the Special Edition subscribers and the elected officers, who have been very supportive.

It's been a pleasure

Harry Stevenson

## ii. Editor Morris Dancer

David Thomson

The problem with the Morris Dancer has been a lack of suitable articles. I did not inherit any articles from my immediate predecessor Eddie Dunmore. Having been encouraged to present a themed edition; this position has changed. The 2010 edition, which has as its theme the North West Dances, has plenty of material.

The present edition has dipped into the Archives of Manchester Morris Men, thanks to their archivist, in their anniversary year. The Millbrook, Medlock and New Mills dances are given. Roy Smith, of Leyland Morris Men, submitted a piece on the Mawdesley Dance and I have reprinted an article about the Glossop Rushcart and associated dance with its tunes and figures.

This edition was later in publishing than I had hoped, for technical reasons. The problem is that Microsoft Publisher, the easiest way to produce a booklet with graphics is not truly compatible with Microsoft Word. The truth of the matter is that the ARM (i.e. the Morris Ring membership) needs to decide the form or forms in which the Morris Dancer is to be made available to the member clubs. The question needs to be asked do we want such a journal at all. The point is the decisions need to be taken.

For next edition will have Cotswold as its theme. This seems appropriate since one of the Morris Ring's founder club's celebrates 100 years since it was reformed so I am in the Market for appropriate articles.

## 11.i. Overseas Bagman

John Maher

The most significant event occurred at the end of the year: We decided after some discussion with the Elected Officers, to leave CIOFF (*Consiel International des Organisations de Festivals de Folklore et d'arts traditionnels*) as an Associate Member. This membership cost the Morris Ring £45 pa with little tangible advantage. We still support the aims of CIOFF, and will carry links and information on our web site. Hexham, Adlington and Mendip, (Cameleonic?) are CIOFF Group Members. Other clubs might consult these clubs about the pros and cons of CIOFF membership.

I receive occasional reports of groups leaving these shores, field enquiries about overseas Morris from individuals and our members (and others), and try to keep an eye on all 'overseas Morris'. I keep a section on the MR website showing some festivals advertising for dancers. There is a link there to a Yahoo Group that I find useful, it has over a thousand members -festivals and individual folk dance and music groups. My usual advise concerning overseas festivals and trips abroad nowadays is 'Google -it!' The WWW has changed everything involved with foreign travel and contacts with festivals and other dance groups. A look on Facebook and its foreign language equivalents may also be apposite.

## 11. ii. The Morris Ring Website: <http://www.themorrisring.org>

John Maher

This site goes from strength to strength and we should rightly be proud of it. Well he would say that wouldn't he! However we are a major contact point for pretty well all things Morris, this was very obvious during the 2009 extinction scare! The **Morris Shop** does



much business from the web site links. We now have a **Google Analytics Account**. This shows (e.g. for Jan 22 to Feb 21 2010), 3101 visits and 7240 page views, with 58% of these new visitors. The 3101 visits came from 89 countries/territories, 2361 being from the UK, 161 from USA. etc.. At the bottom of the list I'm not sure of what to make of one from Iraq and one from Jersey. In the same period a month earlier, the system enabled me to confirm that there is a Morris Side based in Ulaan Baatar, the capital of Mongolia. I think they have applied for Associate Membership (Eddie?). It is pleasing to see that both our Morris Shop and my new Morris On The Map (below) are getting lots of visitors. A failure of the system was revealed very recently in that I had not tagged some important pages on the site. (I have to put a small patch of Javascript code onto the end of each page that I want Google Analytics to follow i.e. tag it).

**Morris On The Map.** See <http://www.themorrisring.org/MorrisOnTheMap/index.html>. In years past, when we had a printed Morris Ring Directory with a membership list (*I don't support a reprint, it dates far too quickly, Excel is much better*), the back pages had a location map for our clubs. For some years I have wanted to set up a web-based version of this map. Finally Google Maps got easier to program, and I found a good model so that we now have a Google Map page which locates all of our clubs (Member and Associate) around the planet (can we add Mongolia yet?), and which (I hope) is both up-to-date and easy for the public to use. The latter point is particularly important.

**Will all clubs please:** a) check that your entry is correct;  
b) send me any details that you want updated.

**N.B. Concerning updates.** A bland statement of 'we are in the wrong place' without details of where you should be, **and a latitude/longitude** cannot be acted on. You must send a latitude/longitude (the site link tells you how), plus any other information that you want - included or excluded. I cannot use photo's, don't include emails, but do put in web site links. The present design for the link page lists all 205 clubs within 800km of Leicester (where else?), so includes Jersey, Silkeborg, Utrecht and Helmond. This enables punters to see club information in alphabetic order in a table, making the page rather more like the old lists for Members and Associates. These latter pages no longer exist. I am working on an international version of 'Morris On The Map',  
<http://www.mainlymorrisdancing.org.uk/MorrisOnTheMap/index.html>

**Photographs and the Slideshow.** I'm always looking for material to put into the Flash slideshow on the home page. Send pictures, ideally 400px (width) 500px (height) to: [john.maher@mac.com](mailto:john.maher@mac.com). However I can edit photos for you, and this is often better since I can compose the material for the slideshow. Action shots are always best, six Cotswold dancers standing around at the beginning or end of a dance is rarely very memorable except for side photo albums.

**The 'Black Book' and 'abc' files.** See <http://www.themorrisring.org/more/Tunes/index.html>. A reminder that these files exist and can be used to see and hear music for the tunes. However some errors have been found (and corrected). More use might make the data more accurate. There are other ways to produce music on the web, notably Mozart music software. I cannot help with this since it only works for Windows (MSDOS!). Very little propriety music software works on Macs, with the very notable exception of Sibelius (and



abc) I would like to provide something other than the abc notation for our dance music in the Black Book. Any offers of help?

**Publications.** The Morris Dancer Vol 4.1 2009 appeared on our web site, see <http://www.themorrisring.org/themorrisdancer/>. I expect that future editions will also appear on our site. The Bagman's Newsletter appears on the site as soon as I can get it translated into html, it is a slightly truncated version in that internal Morris Ring matters, more appropriately placed on the MRGG, are edited out. You can find Newsletters No 39 (June/July 2005) to No 64 (February 2010) via <http://www.themorrisring.org/Bagman/index.html> I have mixed feelings about putting the Morris Dancer on-line, similarly the Circular. However it might be a good plan to have an index to the content (past and present) of both of these publications on our web site.

**2009 companion to Arthur Peck's "Fifty Years of Morris Dancing, 1899-1949.** I converted this for the web. See [http://www.themorrisring.org/fifty\\_years/index.html](http://www.themorrisring.org/fifty_years/index.html) and included the comment "*As we approach our seventy-fifth year in 2009, it is interesting to look back at the state of the Morris Ring at that time. Perhaps, also, it would be interesting (mainly too those in 2034), to set up a current version of the booklet for the coming anniversary, but this time using the Web.*" This comment went unnoticed, or did not excite anyone, but could still be set up, and would be a fitting and useful reminder of our current status. Any volunteers?

**Links to/Use of, our web site.** I continue to find that some of our clubs, where they have a web site, do not link to us. From Brian Tasker's survey it is also appears that not too many of our members use the site! Use it or lose it.

**Other language versions of The Morris Tradition.** I have had an offer for a Japanese translation; can anyone provide a Chinese version for us? Putting these on the web will prove to be a challenge! I'm still looking for an Italian version. Eventuali volontari di più?

**British Library archiving of our site,** <http://www.themorrisring.org> (and thus the linked sites named themorrisring.org.uk and themorrisring.co.uk. Our website has been archived by the Internet Archive (Wayback Machine) since 1999 ( <http://www.archive.org> ). This archive has gaps, particularly site photos, nevertheless it is a very useful digital archive. The British Library UK Web Archive <http://www.webarchive.org.uk/ukwa/> accepts nominations for archiving (since 2004), our Morris Ring site has been accepted, and archiving will commence soon. I hope that the whole site (now >20MB) will be archived, and that changes will be logged as the site develops further. I encourage our member sides, to nominate their sites, so that the grass roots of morris dancing is well represented on our own UK Archive. What we do is worthy of recording for posterity! This does not stop you applying for archiving by the Wayback Machine!

**Facebook.** There has been some discussion amongst the Officers about a Facebook entry for the Morris Ring. I favour this and would like to see a Morris Ring **Page**, NB not a **Group**. I think someone else should set up the entry, and don't want anything to do with the admin. A Facebook Page could provide a very welcome public view of our organization that would augment the web site and the Google Groups. I'm on Facebook. The Fed, Open, EFDSS, Folklore Society, CDSS and numerous morris groups have Facebook entries. It would not serve the same function as a Google Discussion Group, to

do that it would need to be a closed, private Facebook Page. I don't favor that idea and would not join.

### 11. iii. Google Groups - Morris Ring - MRGG and Advisory Council – ACGG

The MRGG and ACGG were both started in 2007 and now have 392 and 37 members respectively. To assist with the smooth running of the Groups I set up a **netiquette page**, also a page of instructions about **how to sign up and use** the Groups. These two pages are linked from the top page of our web site as is a link into the MRGG; the ACGG is not linked into the website. The current settings for access to both Groups are shown below, underlined. These conditions were assigned when the Groups started and have not been changed since.

- i. **Who can view?** Only members can view group content Anybody can view group content
- ii. **Directory listing** List this group in the Google Groups Directory Do not list this group
- iii. **Who can view members?** Only members can view group members list Only managers can view group members list
- iv. **Who can join?** Anyone can join People have to be invited People can request an invitation to join
- v. **Who can create and edit pages?** Managers only Members only
- vi. **Who can upload files?** Managers only Members only
- vii. **Who can post messages?** Managers only Members only Anyone can post Allow posting from the web
- viii. **Who can invite new members?** Managers only Managers and members
- ix. **Message moderation** All messages are held for moderation No moderation - messages are delivered directly Messages from new members are moderated

**MRGG Owners** - Charlie Corcoran & John Maher, Manager - Steve Adamson

**ACGG Owner** - Charlie Corcoran, Manager - Steve Adamson

Soon after the ARM I intend to change my membership of the MRGG to that of a Member, as will Steve Adamson. I have already done that for the ACGG. This means that neither of us will be able to manage the Group in any way, and since I consider that Google's Help and Forum pages for its Google Groups are now adequate to deal with member's problems, I won't be available for any Group technical queries. I'll explain my decision at the end of this part of my report.

The questions for the ARM are therefore: Who should act as Owners and Managers? What should the policy be regarding postings to the present MRGG, i.e. what changes, if any, to the above access rules are needed? Depending on any changes to the MRGG, should another Discussion Group be set up? If so who will do this? Is there a need for a netiquette file? I assume that the ACGG remains 'as is'.

**Who should act as Owners and Managers?** Until recently I was the Owner of the MRGG since I was responsible for starting it in 2007. Charlie Corcoran and Steve Adamson were recruited as Managers. Charlie has now taken on the duty of Owner, without an 'Owner' the MRGG would cease to exist, so we need at least one Owner. There can be as many Owners/Managers as a Group considers necessary for administration. When we (SA and JM) step aside I think that there should be at least two more Managers appointed to help Charlie with the administration. Administration should only concern signing members on and off, and pointing them in the direction of our web-based instructions and the Google Help and Forum pages, so the 'job description' is not onerous!

**What should the policy be regarding postings to the present MRGG, i.e. what changes to the above access rules are needed, if any?** This is best described by a series of options. The (ARM) meeting may identify others. If no decision is reached at the ARM, then both groups will be left exactly as they are, and it will up to the new Manager(s) or Owner to make any changes. (See Option 1)

**Option 1: Do nothing, that is, leave the posting policy the same as at present.** Maybe rewrite the initial instructions on the web site and the netiquette page. I'm happy to help new Managers with this task; in any case this kind of information can always be improved. Note that when the MRGG started in 2007 there was rather rudimentary Google Help pages, and no Forum.

**Option 2: Essentially the same but modify the netiquette to allow attachment of relatively small (say, <200kB) files to posts.** Most other Google Groups have attachments (probably discouraging large ones) to Discussion Posts. The Group system does not ban them or provide Managers with the option of stopping them. The technical reason for this is that such attached files can be detected by a Google search of the Group, however anything in the Files section is not seen by a Search. A Group will eventually run out of File space (100MB limit) whereas (at present) posting space, even with large attachments is essentially unlimited. The contents of the Pages on the MRGG web site are searchable and I have put an index of the Files section onto the Pages section to help with searches. Note that I think that Charlie will still need to put his Newsletters into Files since the attachments would probably be too large for some of our members email deliveries, and some ISPs might regard them as spam!

**Option 3: Change 7) in the Settings so that ONLY the Owner (who is also a Manager) and Managers can post messages.** It is probably sensible to change 5) and 6) in a corresponding fashion. This would convert the MRGG into an "announcements only" system on the same lines as the system run by the Morris Federation. There would be no discussion, only Officers notices. My original intention with the MRGG was to provide the Morris Ring Officers (Elected and Appointed), with a means to communicate with our Morris groups through their Bagmen - whose emails would be on the MRGG. Adding individual Members was secondary and my own experience of discussion groups such as MDDL was (still is) that a few individuals rapidly dominate the Posts. The MRGG was not intended as a discussion forum and the netiquette page was written to try to moderate this and to ensure that Posts are of use and interest to all members. Without using the next option.

**Option 4: We could have all messages to the MRGG moderated, preferably by an Elected Morris Ring Officer.** This *might* cut unnecessary Posts (one to one Posts - Dear Fred - and what I refer to as "one-liners" and "me-to's"); it could be used to prevent any over-large

attachments being sent to all members (item 2 above). I don't like it since it smacks of censorship, even if that is well meaning.

**Option 5: The corollary of 3) is to start a parallel Morris Ring Discussion Group.** This would involve setting up another Google Group. There are other media for this, but stick with the devil we know since it would mean that members would see the discussion group on a list when the login to their Google account. I discovered (from the Google Help Forums) that to transfer members from one Google Group to another isn't possible, so anyone starting a new Discussion Group would have to invite or add members to the new Group. I did this in sets of 25-50 emails when I started the MRGG. I used the emails of the Bagmen on the Excel list at the time. Adding a list of emails for new Members to a Google Group invokes intervention from Google to check on the reasons for the mass sign-up and the standing of the person (Manager) of the Group making the request. The downsides to this option are: it adds yet another layer to communications; it might attract a small number of people (some have already set their emails on the MRGG to 'none'); it needs a new Owner or someone to set it up and administer it (not me!). Nevertheless I favor this option combined with option 3). An alternative would be option 1) with 'no change' to the current MRGG, and to set up a new Morris Ring Announcements Group using the 'managers only' in the Group settings.

#### **Other points:**

- Is there a need for a netiquette file? Yes, I think so for 1), 2) and 5) above!
- I assume that the ACGG remains 'as is'. Up to the Advisory Council.
- Any other ideas that come from the floor during the ARM.

**My involvement with the Google Groups.** Whilst I believe that management of these need not be onerous I will still step aside as a Manager after the ARM. I started the Groups, and have had a mixed time with administering them since 1997. The Elected Officers will confirm that I have been very unhappy with this duty for a while, particularly in the last year. So far as I'm concerned the Groups take up too much of my time. It is time someone else did some of the work, however I'm very unhappy that Charlie should shoulder this task, especially on his own. This is the reason for my first item in the report. "Who should act as Owners and Managers?" I have also made it very clear that I think that Members should help themselves using the on-line Google Help and Forum pages rather than looking to an "expert" within the Morris Ring. I'm afraid that my message to all in future will be 'don't ask me for help, look to the on-line files'. There is a technical reason for this action since what I see from my computer is often not what another Member sees. Thus a major problem with trying to act in a Group advisory role (apart from the time involved) is also that there are differences in the behavior between my Mac OSX system and Windows (in its various forms), *viz a viz* Google Groups, which I just cannot see or help with, let alone those due to any differences with different browsers.

**So, if you have a problem**, typically not being able to login and see the MRGG web site and its files: **a)** check that your email is registered for the MRGG; **b)** check that you have registered a Google Account and that the password you chose is the one you think it is; **c)** remember that passwords are case sensitive (morris is not the same as Morris); **d)** note that if you don't respond to the notice (from Google) that you have been added to the MRGG, your account is marked as 'non verified', you won't be able to post, and there may be other problems with your membership (I think that you will still get emails from the

MRGG (I think); **e)** browsers - try a different one – also clear the browser cache; **f)** read <http://groups.google.co.uk/support/> then, if necessary, search in the Help Forum at <http://groups.google.com/group/Google-Groups-Guide> Maybe, we should make a list of problems and solutions and put this on the MR web site?

## 12. Elections (Part 2)

- a. Election / Ratification of **Treasurer**
- b. Election / Ratification of **Area Representatives**.  
Area Reps whose term of office expires but are eligible for re-election:
  - East *Graham Cox is retiring*  
Mike Stevens of Peterborough MM
  - North East Brian Pollard
  - South East Regions Fred HandsOther vacancies due to resignations of incumbents
  - West Midlands. Pete Simpson
  - South West & Wales Robin Springett
- c. The appointment of a **Morris Ring PR officer**. (Volunteer required!)
- d. Admission to Full Membership: Adelaide Morris Men

## 13. Area Representatives' Reports.

- a. North West David Loughlin  
*No report received*
- b. Northern. Stuart Bater  
*No report received*
- c. North East.

Sides in the area continue to enjoy their dancing enthusiastically. Numbers within sides seem to be fluctuating – new dancers coming in while others move on but teams are holding their own, by and large! Most of us have continued the sharing and mutual support of last year to make sure days of dance, dance outs, paid bookings and weekends can continue. Otherwise I find there is nothing significant to report!

Brian Pollard.

- d. West Midlands.

Being new to the post and still finding my way round I don't feel I could put together a well round and concise report.

Pete Simpson

- e. North Midlands.

My memories of the year 2009/10 are of the weather; whatever happened to the English summer. My memories of what there was of the summer was the 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Morris Ring Meeting at Thaxted were a number of the sides from the area attended. Truly wonderful event and single-handedly fulfilling on of the Morris Ring's objectives.

I attended an Advisory Council Meeting to advise the Squire which was interesting to say the least.

I like to have a little area project and at the moment it is to ensure the continuance of the East Midlands only Morris tradition. Winster needs 16 dancers, four characters and music for its annual event of Wakes Saturday. To that end local sides were invited to a workshop on the Winster Dances, which amount to the traditional five which have been remembered in various ways and at various times. The Burton Institute was filled to capacity and the men present were enthusiastic to swell the ranks for Wakes Saturday.

For the future, Thommo's Cotswold Tours will operate in 2011; over a weekend it will be possible to dance at all the villages that have enough of a tradition – watch this space.

David Thompson

#### f. Eastern.

**Status of the Clubs:** I attended an evening tour of The King's Morris at the end of July. One show had an audience of over 100 and a view of the sun setting over the North Sea. The final spot brought out two dragons but one had a minder who was able to calm down the inevitable conflict. The evening hymns covered an unusually wide repertoire including "Norfolk and Good".

I enjoyed the Peterborough MM day of dance in September. The side is strengthened by an enthusiastic, vigorous and young recruit. This is the second occasion on which PMM have welcomed sides with female dancers to their day of dance.

In November I visited Hageneth MM, finding a strong club with two sides up at practice and four enthusiastic new members. Their dancing was vigorous and their choice of post-practice drinking venue showed innovative and critical thought. OK, I'll explain. The village pub is run-down but there is a restaurant serving real ale where the *patron* welcomes extra trade late in the practice evening.

In December I was able to see the substantial progress made by the new recruits at Coton Village Morris when they shared a local tour with Cambridge, Gog Magog Molly and a ladies' border side from Ely. Coton have been associate members of The Morris Ring since their inception about 12 years ago but have always had female musicians who have been full members of the club. They have now decided that their position within The Morris Ring was anomalous and have left to join the Morris Federation.

Full sides from Thaxted MM and from Mayflower MM attended the Cambridge Ale. They confirmed conversations at other events, the gist being that they continue much the same. Thaxted's recruit of last year is now settling in.

Graham Cox

#### g. South West and Wales.

Greetings, I am Robin Springett a long standing member of Dartington MM, and your newly co-opted area Rep for the South West (no one said anything about Wales as well, but hi anyway!). As there don't seem to be any other candidates for the post, I expect to be elected at the ARM. There seem to be no Reams of Reference, no surprise there then, but the subject is also up for discussion at the ARM. I have found out very quickly something the Ring Bagman knows too well I guess, few of you answer emails, and lots of

the published 'phone numbers are no longer correct. After the ARM, I intend to get in touch with all the Bagmen in the area; so if you are reading this, please don't wait for my email, send me an up to date contact at the email address at the bottom of this entry; thanks.

One thing I am keen on is the encouragement of youth sides; Dartington have an active junior side and Chalice has juniors also, whilst Plymouth are trying to encourage young members. I know finding youngsters is not easy, but I hope to be able to report "Best Practice" for those of you out there looking for ideas on the way to go about it. We should all have the target of encouraging our juniors to take part in Weymouth 2012, the Olympic welcome for the sailing section of the Games, where we hope to have a good showing of juniors dancing. There will be practices in 2010 and 2011, the third weekend in September, so please put it in your diary now.

Robin Springett

#### h. South Midlands.

All the great and small sides that have been out and about doing it for local communities and being our ambassadors for our country are encouraging more to join.

By having a display stall at their local Fete Datchet MM are showing the way and this is where we can all help – using Morris Shop and the Morris Ring materials – please ask. The media will also help by seeing us more when we let them know where to find us in advance. Let them have your Programme well before and send them good pictures after the event.

Many of our Traditional sides have celebrated their good loyal members' lives both past and present by holding a celebration for them; the 'dancing in' of the new Squire of a side can be a great public event as well as for devotees: Thank you to the sides that do it.

Celebrating Rogation Sunday with the Bishop of St Albans at Great Wymondley Allotments and Church Service will be another way for Letchworth MM to enjoy community friendship.

Headington Quarry have another fine Squire in Dave Townsend to follow Will Partridge. The music and song in the Quarry is a joy to hear and see.

The Ancient Men are still enjoying their travelling week and danced with Whitchurch MM on their Tuesday night pub spot last Summer. Now joined with Oxford City and Oxford University Men, known as Town & Gown, are having loads of fun with new friends keeping up the ambassadorial role, like Mendip MM and lots of other sides who help to promote our ciders and ales as well as the Morris abroad. It is good to see and helps to promote cultural exchange. Thanks to John Thatcher of Somerset.

The last thanks for the fun at Ales and Feasts is to you, where the Manx Scallop Dance has now risen to require more documented research into the rhythm method of the Scallop Band in its many forms. The "Third Eye" of Joe and the Bacup Coconut Team is watching.

Roger Comley South Midlands Area Rep & Fool to the Morris Ring Squire

#### i. South East.

The majority of the clubs in this area have been active as usual hosting their usual variety of weekends of dance, days of dance, winter evening feasts and a variety of other events.

**Hartley** and **Men of Wight** both hosted very successful Morris Ring Meetings.

The Hartley meeting was a smaller meeting, (120 men) but based on their annual weekend of dance and used smaller village hall accommodation supplemented by tented accommodation in a secure field, thus cost was kept to a minimum. 3 tours visited a variety of local breweries and country pubs travelling by vintage bus. Excellent catering was provided by The Greensleeves MM catering crew. There was no church service on Sunday (the church was available for any who wanted it), but a massed dancing and stand at Igtham Mote, a local National Trust property where a large appreciative crowd can be guaranteed. This was followed by singing in the courtyard and a final massed dance stand in Wrotham Village Square. All this and free beer in the hall all weekend for about £50, proves what can be done at smaller Morris Ring Meetings

**Ewell St Mary** celebrated their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, **Blackheath** and **Cup Hill** celebrated their 40<sup>th</sup> although due to falling numbers, **Cup Hill** are currently in the throes of deciding whether to fold up as the club is now in terminal decline. A number of clubs are experiencing difficulty recruiting new members and are struggling with reduced numbers of older men, however there are clubs, which are thriving, and where membership is increasing.

Several years ago **Spring Grove** were struggling but last summer hosted a midsummer evening of dance with local sides **Thames Valley**, **Ewell St Mary Greensleeves** and **Yateley** at Richmond and Twickenham where they were able to field two sets all evening, a very enjoyable evening attended by myself, and the Squire. **Victory MM** are another side that has hit a purple patch with recruiting having six new younger members last season and another four this winter. Newest associate side **Cinque Ports** have increased their numbers to twelve and recently held an instructional evening with instruction from **Hartley MM**.

Associate member **Merrie England Mummers** who only perform once a year have left the Morris Ring, but are still affiliated to EFDSS, and **Pilgrim Morris men** have also left the Morris Ring and joined the Morris Federation.

Fred Hands

## 14. Report & Discussion Items:

### a. Report on Consultation with membership of the Morris Ring (Brian Tasker)

"I set 31<sup>st</sup> January as the closing date for the return of the questionnaires but this had to be extended because it was essential to get replies from as many clubs as possible. The Area Reps have been helping me by chasing up clubs in their respective areas. I will have to call an end to the consultation soon but there is still time for those clubs who have not yet contributed to send me a completed questionnaire.

I have started work on the analysis of the results and the picture which is emerging will give us all the information we need to determine the future course of the Morris Ring. My report on the questionnaires will be published for the information of all our clubs. With such a varied membership it is to be expected that a wide variety of views will be expressed and the level of support for various possible changes will vary enormously.



I propose to set up a small group representing the various groups within the Morris Ring, i.e. the elected officers, the Advisory Council, the Area Reps and the clubs, to discuss the report and produce a set of proposals which will be circulated to the membership for their consideration. I anticipate that a number of resolutions for change, including some which may require changes to the constitution, will be put forward to the members for decision at the 2011 ARM.”

Brian Tasker

#### **b. Report on the Youth Fund (Brian Tasker)**

“Eighteen sides have so far contributed £472 to the Youth Fund. This sum is sufficient to activate the Fund and invite Morris Ring clubs who are, or may become, actively involved with sides of young people, to apply to the Morris Ring bagman for financial support. The fund is intended to help with long term initiatives with young people, not one off projects with a specific short term objective. It is anticipated that we could help Morris clubs in schools, the scout movement or other youth groups but not junior sections of existing Morris Ring sides.

If your side is willing to become involved in such a project, contact your local youth organisations to see if it is possible to start a new Morris club.”

Brian Tasker

#### **c. Report on the progress being made with the 2012 Olympics (Paul Reece)**

The campaign to have Morris represented at the Olympics has moved up several gears as we approach the April appointment of the artistic directors and teams responsible for the opening and closing ceremonies for the games proper and the planning for the various regional showcase festival arts events currently known as the Cultural Olympiad in the lead up to 2012.



As all Olympic Games have showcased their national culture so it seems proper that our folk culture, in particular our dance, should feature, ideally considering its great variety, in as many ways as possible. The world stage of the Olympics is the best possible opportunity for showcasing our art at its best.

Each of us throughout the country is able to contribute in some way to this spectacle that has already begun, is fast developing in its intensity towards 2012 and its legacy beyond.

Each region has an annual open weekend of activity during the last weekend of July as part of its ongoing Cultural Olympiad. The South West also has the last weekend in September.

Having won Morris involvement in the South West and being given a place on that region's Olympic steering committee, the success of 'Dinosaurs Not Allowed' in Weymouth, this festival of youth Morris, has opened the doors to it being an annual event in the South West and a possible model to be adopted across the regions. Dartington Boys and we hope other youth sides will join them this September.

The chief Olympic executives were so taken with 'Dinosaurs Not Allowed', that it has resulted in a four hour meeting at the London Olympic Committee's Headquarters in London to see how Morris can be further be incorporated into the various country wide events.

Having already established a group of Olympic representatives from the Morris organisations and the Chief Executive and Educational Director of EFDSS we were able with the Olympic and City of London representatives to discuss events and ideas where the Morris would be able to contribute to the success of the Olympics.

**Torch Relay and Long Distance Morris:** The route for the 80 day relay is being published around November/December. Unusual carriers of the torch in 300 meter relay lengths are being considered, Morris, Beasts etc. Together with long distance Morris relay events linking Chipping Campden with Camden, Stratford-upon-Avon with Stratford and Norwich with London these could be events with Morris participation to grab the public imagination.

**Shakespeare Festival:** In connection with the Globe and the Festival Theatre in Stratford a St Georges Day/Shakespeare's Birthday long-distance relay event as suggested above and / or a Fools and Beasts event.

**Discovering Places:** Hidden gems, stories and people event for May Bank Holiday and Autumn 2011.

**Get Set:** An educational initiative based around the Olympic values focussing on Culture and Creativity. **Get Set Network** is a partnership between registered schools and **Inspire Mark** holders.

**The Inspire Mark** is awarded through the regional Cultural Olympic Creative Programmer for one year for new original projects e.g. bringing and teaching the Morris in new places and to people, the young, prisoners, those with diverse or different cultural backgrounds in schools and clubs, as a native dance style to be explored and considered for incorporation in contemporary dance and choreography, the return of a Morris Tradition to the young of the area. Unless you can do this under the umbrella of a municipal council you need to form a trust. So far **Dinosaurs Not Allowed** in the South West has Inspire Mark status and the **Constant Billy Trust** in East Anglia formed by members of East Suffolk Morris Men are applying for status. Other interest has been shown in the East Midlands and West Midlands regions.

**Morris Ring Meetings** Chipping Campden, with the help of Shakespeare MM, are planning the Cotswold Olympics Ring Meeting in 2012.

**Joint Morris Organisation Annual Showcase Events** Set up to celebrate and now promote yearly the Morris in the lead up to the Olympics in 2012. The Morris Federation is hosting this years event at Bury St Edmunds on 17 April, The Morris Ring is hosting 2011, probably in Sheffield (European City of Culture Candidate), Leeds or York with hopefully a combined effort in London for 2012, perhaps incorporating the **Morris Cousins Project** to showcase the pan Indo-European variants of the Morris linking countries and nations with their communities in UK.

Paul Reece Chair of Advisory Council

### c. Recruitment leaflet / PowerPoint



Discussions at the Advisory Council suggested that some common publicity might be useful to some sides. Whilst recognising that there is little chance that 'one size can fit all' there will be on display some examples that are currently in use and might provide inspiration.

Also a PowerPoint – as an idea and certainly not an exemplar.



Charlie Corcoran

### d. Performance Standards (Arising from Google Group Discussion) (Barry Care)

"I really was stupid to put my head above the parapet by writing up that analysis document and setting myself up as an Aunt Sally, but those who know me well I hope will appreciate I love the Morris and do what I do, believing all of us should do our best to keep it up and importantly - hand it on to future generations.

I am fortunate to be one among three generations of Care's involved in the Morris, so in case some of my well known critics might be tempted again to take aim, let me say my analysis was based not only on my own observations but also those of a son who through his travels as a professional folk musician sees a great deal of what is going on in the folk world, and also on comments of my 19 year old grandson, who has now been around in the Morris for nine years and at his age is enjoying visiting many of the Folk Festivals and fringe events many of us older men might be missing out.

Gentlemen I have said the Morris is changing and there are identifiable problems. The problems are set out in my analysis and I do not intend a further detailed listing, but as an indication of them a recent manifestation mentioned on the MDDL well illustrates the kind of change I mean. A video produced by one of the English Pagan groups included several shots of Morris dancers and the procession of the Hastings Jack in the Green weekend. The costuming, design of banners and overall ethos of some teams enabled this organisation to present this Morris gathering as a "pagan" event. My contacts with Keith Leech, the organiser of the Hastings event, confirmed he shares my worries over the

dumbing-down of Morris performance, and the distortion of traditional presentation. The “pagan” tag could even jeopardize local authority permissions needed to hold the event. Our constitution expects us to be an association of Men’s Morris, Sword, and Mummers teams, performing and maintaining its traditions and preserving its history; and endeavouring to uphold the standards and dignity of the Morris. My call is just to do that, but looking forward to identify what exactly The Morris Ring must do to help its members to maintain the integrity of the tradition. I believe we need to raise our game: not only our officers, also the Advisory Council, and the functioning of the ARM with the purpose of helping our member clubs raise standards and ‘fly the flag’ for high quality traditional performance in their local communities. Gentlemen what are your needs to do this?”

Barry Care. Past Squire & Past Treasurer of the Morris Ring

## 15. Future Programme.

### a. Morris Ring Meetings - 2011 and beyond.

#### 2010

30 <sup>th</sup> April - 2 <sup>nd</sup> May	322	Helmond MM's 75 Anniversary
4 <sup>th</sup> June - 6 <sup>th</sup> June	323	Thaxted Morris Ring Meeting
3 <sup>rd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> September	324	Trigg Morris Ring Meeting
10 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Sept	325	Castleford Longsword Morris Ring Meeting

*Unfortunately Foresters have pulled out of the Castleford meeting of the Morris Ring. This leaves vacancies. Is your side able to take up this opportunity and fill the gap?*

#### 2011

4 <sup>th</sup> - 6 <sup>th</sup> March (TBC)		ARM Hosted By Mendip Morris Men (TBC)
20 <sup>th</sup> - 22 <sup>nd</sup> May	326	Moulton Morris Ring Meeting (40 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of revamped Moulton Festival)
3 <sup>rd</sup> June ~ 5 <sup>th</sup> June	327	Thaxted "Centenary" Morris Ring Meeting
24 <sup>th</sup> - 26 <sup>th</sup> June	329	Wath-on-Dearne Morris Ring Meeting
8 <sup>th</sup> - 10 <sup>th</sup> July	328	Greensleeves 'Chipperfield' Morris Ring Meeting

#### 2012

3 <sup>rd</sup> ~ 5 <sup>th</sup> March (?)		ARM Hosted by TBA
25 <sup>th</sup> - 27 <sup>th</sup> May		Chipping Campden Cotswold Olympic Morris Ring Meeting
1 <sup>st</sup> June - 3 <sup>rd</sup> June		Thaxted Morris Ring Meeting
27 <sup>th</sup> - 29 <sup>th</sup> July		Hartley 60 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Morris Ring Meeting

#### 2013

? March		ARM Hosted by TBA
31 <sup>st</sup> May - 02 <sup>nd</sup> June		Thaxted Morris Ring Meeting
?		Dolphin Morris Men

**b. Instructionals**

21-23 January 2011

Jigs Instructional Sutton Bonington

?

Fools and Animals Weekend

**16. Date and Venue of Next Meeting.** Mendip MM have offered to host the ARM in 2011 - date to be confirmed

**17. A.O.B.**

The Meeting of the Morris Ring Advisory Council will follow the ARM.



**Massed dances for 2010 Morris Ring Meetings** will be the same as last year:

- Fieldtown: The Valentine and Banks of the Dee
- Adderbury: Shepherds Hey and Lads a Bunchum
- Bledington: William and Nancy
- Bampton: Banbury Bill and Bobbing Around
- Headington: Constant Billy and Laudnum Bunches
- Bucknell: Queens Delight (full version)

Brian Tasker Squire of the Morris Ring



**Location Location**



**Location**

**Need some help finding your dream home?**

**Kirsty and Phil are back for a series of Location Location they're looking for Morris currently looking to buy a you're on the hunt for the home and would like our help hear from you.**



**brand new Location and Dancers home. If best new we'd love to**

To apply send your name and number to [locations@iwcmmedia.co.uk](mailto:locations@iwcmmedia.co.uk) or Call **0141 353 8496**

**Joint Morris Organisations Day of Dance** This year's spectacular on Saturday 17 April in Bury St. Edmunds. We have ten Morris Ring sides participating. They are:

Kings Morris

East Suffolk Morris Men

Standon Morris Men

Hageneth Morris Men

Devil's Dyke Morris Men

Milton Morris Men

Dolphin Morris Men

Belchamp Morris Men

Peterborough Morris Men

Colchester Morris Men



**Steve Hampson** On 17 February Steve Hampson, who was leader Horwich during 2004-06, collapsed at home and died shortly afterwards. This has been a great shock to everyone in the team and obviously devastating for his family.

Steve was apparently the fittest member of the team, so this has added to the sense of shock. Steve was not just a Morris man. He had a wide range of interests, including distance walking, amateur dramatics and visual arts. Although Horwich was important to Steve, and he to us its members, it was just part of a very full life. Steve is greatly missed by members of the team. His immediate family, his wife Jennifer, son Andrew and daughter Elizabeth will experience this loss far more deeply.

Bob Bradley. Secretary Horwich Prize Medal Morris Men



**Cecil Sharp's diaries now available in full** The final part of the project to get Cecil Sharp's diaries online has now been completed - you can read all of Sharp's diaries from 1915-1918 online, searchable by date. These are his only surviving personal diaries, in which he describes his collecting experiences in the Appalachian Mountains of North America.





## **DETR 2010 & DETY Rap! April 10th 2010**

**DETR** ( Dancing England Rapper Tournament) began in 1984 and now is an annual event and rotates around the country. Last year it was held in Rapper's birth place, the North East and was centred on the Cumberland Arms in Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne.

**DETY Rap!** The junior event, will take place in the Guildhall in Derby on Saturday Morning April 10, with school and dance club teams from Loughborough, Derbyshire, West Yorkshire and the North East competing.



The main competition begins at 12 o'clock and takes place in 4 different pubs and the Guildhall. The 20 teams will walk a pub crawl, dancing and being judged in each pub by two highly skilled ex performers. On their circuit the teams will dance in the Guildhall in front of a panel of judges including Dave Pearson of Royal Earsdon Sword Dancers. Also on the panel will be Ivor Allsop and Aubrey O'Brien, both Gold Badge members of the Society. The Guildhall Theatre stage will present a different challenge to the teams who normally only appear in pubs and smaller venues. High Spen, the only remaining Traditional Rapper team are part of the Guildhall Event.

The stage performances hark back to the days of the North East competitions when the Rapper teams only had one chance to show off their dance. Cecil Sharp, Douglas Kennedy and Kenworthy Schofield were invited at various times to judge at these one~dance Rapper tournaments. Today's format has moved on and now rapperists look forward to having a few attempts to prove their worth. Pubs of course are the perfect venues for Rapper teams, being the breeding ground of the art in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

In April the competition day rounds off with a Traditional event when a few of the teams show the dances as they were observed and notated by Sharp in the 1910 ~ 1913 period.

Every team gets the chance to perform at the evening Showcase before wandering off to celebrate a win or to commiserate with a few quiet cups of tea and a planning meeting for next year's attempt on the trophies.

Last year's Premier Class and overall winners, the Kingsmen from Newcastle will be making their presence felt. Hopefully the Rapper Rascals from York will be on hand to defend their Open Class win but many will be carefully watching Candy Rapper from the Great Meadows dancing school in Boston in the USA. These teenagers won the

Centenary Class last year and represent a slightly newer Tradition with a different outlook on the old Miner's dance from Durham and Northumberland.

Day tickets are on sale : Telephone Phil Heaton 01332874186.

[WWW.DERT](http://WWW.DERT)



## MORRIS RING PUBLICATIONS

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**Ashley's Rise** is hosting a **Junior Cotswold workshop:** FieldTown

For young people aged 8-16yrs to be led by The Young Men of Great Western

Sat 27<sup>th</sup> March from 2-4pm Cost £2

At Spaniorum Farm Gym, Berwick Lane, Compton Greenfield, BS35 5RX

(not far from Cribbs Causeway)

**Advance booking required**

If you would like to come or you have any questions please give Kim a ring on 0117 940-1566

Or email [ashleyrisemorris@aol.com](mailto:ashleyrisemorris@aol.com)

*Ashley's Rise is a performing Morris side for young people aged 8 to 16 years.*

*Ashley's Rise practices Border and Cotswold Morris dancing and attends workshops in all different styles of Morris*



**Loving Cup etiquette:** In the last Newsletter I asked for information and comments regarding Loving Cup etiquette - on the grounds that if it going to be done then people need to understand what is going on - and perhaps know what they are expected to do. Amongst the responses I have received is this one from Allen Craig of Faithful City MM:

“For goodness sake what has this got to do with the Morris - it's a relic of early 20<sup>th</sup> century gentleman's drinking clubs (which have largely died out as anachronisms). It and other rituals at Morris Ring Meetings is the major reason why I personally will not attend them.



Why don't we concentrate on the dance and the enjoyment of the dance and get rid of these sub-Masonic flummeries? We need to move with the time or we will die and that means radical change of attitude and behaviour. For me a Morris Ring meeting would involve a lot of dancing both for ourselves and the public and a convivial meal with no speeches or if we have to have any limit them to one of a maximum of 5 minutes and no silly candle lighting and loving cups.

Well I feel better having got that of my chest! Be assured that I want to ensure the existence of the Morris for generations to come but to do so it must modernise.

Allan Craig Faithful City Morris (but writing in a totally personal capacity)



**And finally.....**

If you are attending the ARM please bring your copy of this Newsletter and the minutes of the ARM 2009 - simply to save a few trees. If you are not attending please seriously consider the various reports and discussion items that are included on the ARM agenda. Even if you are unable to attend but have a comment or opinion that you would like to share with the meeting please ensure that it reaches one of the elected officers by Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March. Remember to vote.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charlie". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single, thick, black stroke that extends to the right.

**Bagman of the Morris Ring**

## **THE MORRIS RING CONSTITUTION 2004**

### ***OBJECT AND DEFINITION.***

1. The object of the Morris Ring shall be to encourage the performance of the Morris, to maintain its traditions and to preserve its history; to bring into contact all the Men's Morris Clubs or Teams. The purpose of the Ring is not to replace or supersede the existing organisations, but to subserve them. The Clubs shall in all respects retain their independence.
2. The Ring shall be an association of Men's Morris, Sword and Mummers Clubs and Teams. Any established Men's Club or Team which meets regularly for Morris or Sword Dancing or Mumming, and which endeavours to uphold the standards and dignity of the Morris, shall be eligible for Membership of the Ring.

### ***GENERAL MEETING.***

3. A Meeting of Representatives of the Member Clubs shall be held annually for the conduct of business. Each Club shall have one vote. Additional meetings may be called at the Squire's discretion. In addition, a General Meeting of the Member Clubs must be held within six weeks of a written request by at least one third of the Member Clubs. A notice of this Meeting must be given at least three weeks before the Meeting.

### ***OFFICERS.***

4. There shall be three Officers of the Morris Ring, to be called The Squire of the Morris Ring, The Bagman of the Morris Ring and The Treasurer of the Morris Ring. The Squire may appoint a deputy for any Officer in case of need. In the event of a vacancy occurring in the Office of Squire, the Advisory Council shall take such action as it thinks fit, pending an election to that Office.
5. The Squire, Bagman and Treasurer shall be elected biennially at the Annual Meeting of Club Representatives. The elections of Squire and Bagman shall take place in alternate years. The election of the Treasurer shall take place at the same time as the Squire. The Squire may not, but the Bagman and Treasurer may be re-elected. The Officers shall be elected by an absolute majority of the votes cast. If there are more than two candidates, Clubs shall indicate their order of preference and a transferable voting system will operate. A short biographical sketch, photograph and the nominating Club's supporting statement of not more than two hundred and fifty words, shall be submitted for each candidate, for circulation by the Bagman.

### ***ADVISORY COUNCIL.***

6. The three Officers, Officers Elect and all Past Officers of the Ring together with the nine Elected Members shall constitute the Advisory Council of the Morris Ring. The duty of the Advisory Council shall be to consider how best to further the objects of the Morris Ring and to take action in an emergency. The Advisory Council shall meet at least once a year. In such cases where it is entrusted with executive powers, a quorum shall consist of five members, including three Elected Members.
7. Three Elected Members of the Advisory Council shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of Club Representatives each year. They shall serve for three years and will be eligible for re-election. For the sole purpose of choosing elected Members. Member Clubs will be allocated to nine areas within the United Kingdom and may only vote in one area. The candidate for an area must be a member of one of the area clubs, be nominated by at least one of those clubs and be elected by

a simple majority of votes cast by Clubs in that area. Clubs from overseas shall be represented by the Officers. The only co-options to the Advisory Council are to be replacements for Elected Members, as appointed by the Squire.

### ***ADMISSION INTO THE RING.***

8. Admission of a Club into Membership of the Ring shall, after recommendation by the Officers, be effected by a majority of votes cast at the annual Meeting of Club Representatives. Each Club so admitted shall be provided with a Symbol of its Membership of the Ring, and shall, from within its members, depute a correspondent whose name and address shall be communicated to the Bagman, together with an indication of the central geographic location of the Club and details of the costume of the Club.
9. Clubs whose standards fall below those generally accepted by the Member Clubs, may, following the advice of the Officers, be suspended from Membership of the Ring if at least two thirds of the votes cast at the Annual Meeting of Club Representatives are in favour of such suspension.

### ***GENERAL.***

10. There shall be at least one gathering of Morris Men in each year, to be sponsored or arranged by the Morris Ring.
11. The Ring shall encourage research into all aspects of the Morris and conserve its history as it is able.
12. There shall be an annual subscription from each Club, the amount to be determined from time to time by the Annual Meeting of Club Representatives.
13. Any alteration to the Constitution shall require at least two thirds of the votes cast at the Annual Meeting of Club Representatives to be in favour of the alteration.

### ***PERIODS OF NOTICE.***

14. Member Clubs shall have at least six months notice of the date of the Annual Meeting of Club representatives.
15. Nominations for the positions of the Officers and the Elected Members of the Advisory Council, 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.
16. Details of the nominations for the positions of the Officers and the Elected Members of the Advisory Council, proposed alterations to the Constitution and formal resolutions for discussion at the Annual Meeting of Club Representatives shall be circulated by the Bagman to Member Clubs at least one month before the Meeting.
17. Clubs unable to send representatives to the Annual Meeting may, in the case of elections, send a postal vote to the Bagman, to arrive at last seven days before the Meeting.

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This Constitution was agreed at the Annual Meeting of Club Representatives at Nottingham, 25th February 1978, and amended at the Annual Meetings at Sheffield, 26th February 1983, Yateley, 21st March 1987, Cheddar 16th March 1991 and Moulton 21st March 1992.

Founded ~ the MORRIS RING ~ 1934 ~