

The Morris Ring Bagman's Newsletter

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Newsletter Number 71. January 2011

ARM Special

ARM 2011 18th-20th February

Hosted by Mendip Morris Men

Clevedon Community School, Valley Road, Clevedon, BS21 6AH

<http://arm2011.co.uk/>

Programme for the ARM Weekend

Clevedon Community School,
Valley Road,
Clevedon, BS21 6AH.

Friday

18.30 ARM Reception opens.

The evening is set aside for the usual mixture of informal conversation, interspersed with dancing, singing and drinking as the mood takes you plus the opportunity to learn about the Winster Tradition for those who will.

19.00-21.00 Food available

Instructional: Winster

Saturday

7.30 8.30 Breakfast

9.15 10.30 Instructionals Session 1

Jig Instructional: Opportunity to learn Bonnets so Blue, Bucknell

Welsh Border: Silurian MM interpretation

10.30 11.00 Coffee break

11.00 11.45 EGM (if necessary) or Area Meetings

12.00 12.45 Area Meetings or Open Discussion re Recruitment

13.00 13.50 Buffet lunch

14.00 16.30 Annual Reps. Meeting

16.30 17.00 Tea break

17.00 18.15 Instructionals Session 2

Jig Instructional: Bonnets so Blue, Bucknell

Welsh Border: Silurian MM interpretation

Advisory Council Meeting

19.00 - FEAST (followed by informal dancing/singing)

With invited guests from the Morris Federation;

the Open Morris and the EFDSS

as well as the Rector of East Clevedon.

Sunday

8.00 9.00 Breakfast (in a different room, as the hall will be in use by a church) & departure

Reports

- Please note that reports will not be read at the ARM but the authors will comment on, or highlight particular points as they see appropriate and answer questions from the floor. It will help everyone if specific questions can be submitted to the Squire prior to the meeting.

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Morris Ring Publications

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See: [Downloads](#)

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AGENDA for 2011 ARM

1. Apologies for Absence

Sides:

Ravensbourne

Past officers etc.:

Ray King Past Squire

Brian Pollard NE Area Rep

2. Minutes of the last ARM (Previously distributed)

3. Matters arising from the Minutes

Report on the Youth Fund (Brian Tasker: Chair of Advisory Council)

Up-date on the Olympics (Squire)

Recruitment leaflet / PowerPoint (Bagman)

Performance Standards

4. Squire's Report: Peter J Halfpenney

There are many and varied reasons why an individual might stand for office in an organisation to which he belongs. Some of these might be altruistic, some self-aggrandizement, sometimes a desire to influence and change and sometimes a determination to consolidate and preserve. In my case it was a sense that the Morris Ring had lost its way somewhat and was wandering aimlessly with no clear focus or objective. As an organisation we had become introspective, looking more over our shoulders at the past than ahead to our future. I considered that it was time for change and I wanted to be active in promulgating the realisation that we live in a new age and no matter ones heritage, the Morris Ring needs to adapt or be swamped by the urgency and modernity of the 21st century. We are all aware that there are three umbrella organisations overseeing the promotion of Morris dancing and it is no secret that of the three, the only one shrinking in size is the Morris Ring. I believe there to have been complacency in the past; a sense that the Morris Ring is THE organisation and the others don't really count. Well it is time to wake up and smell the coffee. It is no accident that we are fast becoming the third horse in a race, in which we should be galloping along with the front-runners. So, let us look at our present strengths and failings, and see if we can better enhance the things we are doing right and eradicate some of the things we are doing wrong.

Attitude. In certain quarters we have been referred to as "dinosaurs" and that label has not attached itself to us without some justification. It is all well and good to fly the "protection of our ancient heritage" flag and that we do often, however "heritage" and being "old-fashioned" are not synonymous. It is possible to demonstrate pride in our history in a manner more appealing to present-day audiences without appearing to be old men desperately clinging on to a dying ritual. Pride and enthusiasm is the key here. Engage with your audiences, tell them what you do, where Morris has taken you in the past, describe the fun you have had and the significance you feel in continuing a dancing rite that has been performed in an unbroken chain going back to the court of Queen Elizabeth the First and beyond.

Rivalry. Thankfully the misogynistic or scornful attitude towards the other two Morris

organisations has greatly abated. Most of us realise that women have danced Morris since the middle ages and it is a certain fact that the continued existence of Morris dancing today is in no small part due to women continuing the tradition at times when men were unable, particularly times of war and conflict. The Open Morris and the Morris Federation are the homes for women dancers and mixed sides and they are working as hard as we to showcase Morris dancing to their audiences in a manner that has flair and appeal. Never forget that the general public don't distinguish between our organisations; they simply enjoy what they see. Any promotion of quality Morris dancing and positive exposure of our art is welcome. The Morris Ring stands to gain as much as the Open Morris and Morris Federation from good publicity so applaud them, don't denigrate them. We should work with them, not against them.

Standards. Neither Morris dancers themselves nor our audiences wish to see lacklustre performance and shoddy showmanship. "When he is dancing, the true Morris-man is serious of countenance, yet gay of heart; vigorous yet restrained; a strong man rejoicing in his strength, yet graceful, controlled, and perfectly dignified withal." It is by adhering to this tenet that we best display our skills. To this end the Officers are considering a number of measures that will encourage better performance. There is no better way of improving individual technique than by learning and practicing jig dances. The Morris Ring wholeheartedly supports the jigs instructional weekend in January, and financial enticement for newcomers that we have introduced has already impacted on the popularity and diversity of the weekend. If you have not yet attended the jigs weekend, you are strongly encouraged to do so. I would further remind club Squires and Foremen to use jigs as a teaching tool within their own club practices.

Providing financial support or underpinning, particularly for Morris Ring Meetings has always been a bone of contention. Of course the Morris Ring wants to give encouragement and confidence to sides wanting to run a Morris Ring Meeting but has to temper that by declining to provide a blank cheque and carte blanche to run amuck with the budget. I am working closely with the Morris Ring Treasurer to explore financial underpinning of Morris Ring Meetings only if there is a tutorial element during the event. Keeping the balance sheet in the black is still paramount but at least the Treasury will be able to justify subsidy with some practical reward.

All sides should be encouraged to tap into resources that could lead them to improve their own standards and to make it an enjoyable experience so to do. A simple way to achieve this is to invite neighbouring sides, or individuals with recognised skills, to join you in a home-grown day of instruction. Complacency is a sure route to boredom and malpractice. Proactively is a stimulant that will ultimately reward both your club and your public.

Support. Sadly there is an element in our midst that seems determined at every opportunity to undermine, belittle, criticize, and personally abuse those who are trying to fulfil a role within the Morris Ring, be that a major office or a supporting department. Our strength and our future are dependent on unity. We need willing volunteers to fill the roles of office and for such people to come forward and undertake these roles the expectation has to be that the experience will be pleasurable and rewarding. Whilst constructive criticism out in the open leading to meaningful discussion and debate is expected, scattergun politics and clandestine hacking at our foundations is despicable and unacceptable. Those perpetrators unable to contribute to our development in an ordered, polite, and meaningful manner will henceforth be heavily censured and rebuked. In particular I remind you that our Google Groups are

established for the exchange of ideas and information and not for personal rants or public displays of disaffection. Those abusing them henceforth will be debarred from further postings. The correct way to deal with disgruntlement is to report concerns to the Officers not to broadcast it to the membership.

Image & Recruitment. There is no doubt that the public perception of Morris has a huge influence on the willingness of new blood to join us. To be seen as elitist, sexist, loutish, self-adulating, foppish, or separatist is simply not acceptable and will do nothing to endear us to our public. We are all aware that Mr Media is king and the way we are reported exerts great sway over our public image. Thankfully our relationship with the press has improved immeasurably in recent years but there is still much work to do. Part of the problem is that newspapers have their own archives, which they consult whenever a new article is to be published. So often delving into past stories unearths the "Incest & Morris Dancing", "Beer-swilling Louts" or "Grown Men with Bells on" adages, which we are heartily sick of hearing. Part of the blame lies within our own camp. We simply have not provided the press with better content for them to publish. Whilst the Morris Ring Officers are working together, and with the other JMOs discussing ways that our national image can be improved, I strongly urge all sides to build up a relationship with local TV, press and radio so that it becomes habit to issue them with press releases whenever you are doing something newsworthy. Never miss an opportunity to advertise in the content that you are actively encouraging new members to join and highlight some of the attractions of being a member of a Morris side. The key to stimulating sufficient interest is to empathise with the media and to remember that their principal objective is to sell their product. Dull does not sell; quirky and interesting does, so always be on the lookout for a "hook" or point of interest that will attract readership.

The recruitment package that has been assembled from the questionnaire feedback last year should go a long way towards stimulating interest in Morris dancing and attracting new members to your club. The cornerstone of this endeavour is appointing a Recruitment Officer for your own club. If you have not yet done so I would encourage you to take this step without delay. We shall do what we can on the national stage to generate interest but local endeavour is what will ultimately pay dividends.

I would like to close on a very positive note. It is only by being close to the epicentre of the Morris Ring that you come to realise what a leviathan of an organisation we are. Our responsibilities at the forefront of Morris worldwide require a massive machine to maintain its history, ensure its present-day good health, and to pave the way for its future prosperity. I cannot be over-effusive in the praise and admiration I have for my fellow Officers. They have been staunch and unrelenting in their support for me and in executing the requirements of their own offices. In addition there is an enormous army of editors, publishers, archivists, collectors, teachers, shopkeepers, and organisers all beavering away in the background to ensure that their areas of responsibility run efficiently and serve the purpose for which they are intended. Some members may not appreciate just how dedicated are these contributors to our well-being but be advised that their input is vital. To all of them I say, we know that you are out there and although much of what you do is achieved quietly and without fuss in the background, the significance of what you do is greatly appreciated.

This is a time of change and change is an entity always viewed with suspicion. I would urge all our members to be positive about our future and not to be afraid to consider steering our ship into new waters. We have to adapt to a world of changing values and attitudes. We should do so in measured fashion, balancing our historical traditions with the requirements of

a modern age. It is time to shake off the dinosaur image for after all history itself records the ultimate fate of the dinosaur!

5. Bagman's Report. Charlie Corcoran

In the five years since I took over from John Frearson as Bagman I have enjoyed having the honour, and I do consider it to be an honour, of being the Bagman of the Morris Ring. Due to the nature of my day job I do not have the opportunity to travel and visit as much as John used to but I have made and renewed many friendships.

The growth of computer access has dramatically changed the duties of the Bagman especially with regard to the Morris Ring Directory which many of you will remember as a thick tome of tiny print that was out of date before it left the photocopier. Eddie, God bless him, now maintains what is a simple excel spread sheet. Easy to update when, and if, sides think to pass on details of changes in Bagman etc.

When I started we also used to produce a Handbook that contained the Constitution; lists of Past Officers; maps showing vaguely where sides were located; details of where hats, trousers, tankards and the like could be obtained. Now all of this information is available from the Morris Ring website. The Morris Ring website (thanks to John Maher here); the Google Groups, and now Google Site: <https://sites.google.com/site/morrisring/> for storing files etc (thanks to Geoff Jerram for setting this up); Google Maps and now the Morris Ring Facebook site all have dramatically increased the opportunities for individual members of each side, as well as their Officers, to communicate. Sadly this does seem to have a downside. Historically if someone had a problem with me or something that I had done, or failed to do, then a letter (remember them?) or a phone call usually solved the issue. The past few months have been fairly tiresome. I have always considered my role, along with that of the Treasurer, to be the Civil Service to the Squire. Like genuine, Civil Servants our role is largely non-political but like them we have recently been subjected to unfortunate levels of indirect personal criticism and abuse.

My role as editor, or in reality largely author, of the Newsletter, remains for a small but vociferous minority oddly controversial. As I said in my report to last year's last year ARM my interpretation as to what I should include covers reporting up-coming events and any 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.

It is with regret that we have had to accept David Thompson's resignation, due largely to ill health, as editor of The Morris Dancer. As the principle mouthpiece of the Archive Group the Morris Dancer is the academic arm of our publications: the means by which the general membership and the wider Morris world are informed and inspired by the invaluable work of this dedicated group of individuals and work they commission. David's first edition showed great promise and we look forward to the edition that he is currently compiling but will then be looking for a successor.

Now, my usual catalogue of thanks:

- Foremost of which must, as usual, be to my fellow Bagmen. The administrators who keep the 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.
- To my fellow Civil Servant, Eddie, I offer both thanks and commiserations. He has such a low profile that people still send the cheques for their subs to me, and in one case to his predecessor.
- Speaking of Steve (BfB) I must thank him both personally and on behalf of the wider membership for his unstinting efforts in maintaining the Morris Shop, offering an unparalleled service to performers of the Morris not just in the UK but across the world.
- The Squire. Peter took office in interesting times and is extending his previous business experience to include diplomacy; refereeing and side-stepping none of which appear to be Olympic disciplines.
- I have already mentioned the many supportive and encouraging friends that I have made within the Morris but I must highlight my own sides: Leicester Morris Men and Man Friday. Their support and encouragement continues to be invaluable. I enjoy dancing the Morris with them.
- Finally I mention my family. They have borne the brunt of my irritation over the past months, when I have resisted the temptation to respond to some of the more infantile "discussions" on the Google Group. Jane in particular has reminded me that my obsession, the Morris, is in fact only a hobby. I thank them.

5. Treasurers Report. Eddie Worrall - proposed subscriptions for next year

Well, I thought my first year as Treasurer was busy Before looking at some of the detail in the accounts for 2010, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Brian Tasker for his work during his term of office as Squire and his continued involvement as Chair of the Advisory Council. Unless you've been in the hot seat or seen it close at hand, it's hard to imagine the demands it can bring, or I guess, how rewarding it can be. As part of the Morris Ring "Civil Service" the demands on me are somewhat different and I'd like to pay tribute to Brian's frankness and dignity in how he served our member clubs as Squire.

I would also like to pay tribute to Pete Halfpenney as our new Squire in how quickly he has hit the ground running on a number of issues since dancing in, some well publicised and to be debated at the ARM. He, myself and Charlie as Bagman have had a very busy end to 2010 addressing the items that make up the majority of our Agenda at the ARM and I hope, in bringing these into focus for debate at the meeting.

OK, protocol out of the way, how has 2010 shaped up for the Morris Ring's finances?

Accounts for the year will be circulated in advance of the ARM, once the audit has taken place, unfortunately this has not been possible by the copy deadline for the Newsletter. However, the accounts show that income and expenditure on the General account are broadly in balance. Some of the main themes from this year are as follows:

Jigs weekend. As reported last year, the initiative to subsidise first time attendees through their clubs, proved very popular, and Geoff Jerram and his team of instructors had a clutch of new recruits to put through their paces. It was quickly decided to repeat this offer of subsidy again for 2011, with a further incentive for returning first timers of £5 off the weekend. Full details are given on the Jigs application form. Demand has again been strong and promises to be even more popular this year.

75th Anniversary Youth Fund. The rate of donations to the fund has slowed in 2010, although is keeping pace with those being made to the Archive fund. To date however, no applications for assistance have been made to the Officers and this is of long term concern. The purpose of the fund was to promote the running of youth sides via our member clubs and this of course may well happen without the need for assistance by the 75th Fund. However, if it becomes clear that the fund has no viable future as it is not fulfilling a need, we will have to review its future and how the funds should be used. That said, now is not the time for this as it is still in its early days. The challenge to make use of the funds donated for the purpose proposed is open to you as our member clubs to take up and the Officers are open to proposals on this.

Reserve Account As set out in last year's account, the sum of £20,000.00 was transferred into the newly set up Reserve account and has not been required in 2010. A further £5,000.00 has been transferred into the account at the end of 2010, representing my estimate of the balance being retained in the General account that was not required for day to day expenditure.

The Reserve account is intended purely as a mechanism to help identify funds which are available for investment according to the Morris Ring's objectives, outside of regular costs and expenses. Much of this has been accumulated over a long number of years from various sources of income (Shop sales, subs, publications, Morris Ring Meeting surplus etc) and is not easily or quickly replaced. Care should be taken over how it is spent. It is also a source of potential capital investment, should it be decided that it is appropriate. My recommendation to the ARM, is that the reserve is held as it is at this time, as the future activities and expenditure of the Morris Ring is unclear, given the items for discussion and set before the meeting for vote. Only once these are resolved and the outcome fully developed will financial plans be able to be set. I am however pleased to note that we are in a relatively strong capital position to help move the Morris Ring forward in its objectives.

Subscription rates As mentioned, income and expenditure are broadly in balance and I recommend that no change is made to the rates of subscription for 2011/12.

Morris Shop The Morris Shop has been very active again this year and has appeared at an ever wider range of events and occasions throughout the year. In addition the unseen side of the Shop is the steady stream of postal sales and internet enquiries that keep Steve busy during the weekdays! Recent ventures such as Facebook and Ebay are helping to spread the reach of the Shop and to connect the Morris World with the service the Shop provides, in

gathering an unbeatable collection of Morris related products at a reasonable price. The recent VAT hike to 20% in January, has prompted a larger than usual re-stocking at the end of 2010, to help keep prices as low as possible. This is particularly the case again this year with bells and is reflected in the accounts.

And finally ... It remains for me to wish all a good 2011, whatever it may bring, and to thank the many Treasurers, Bagmen and Squires in our member clubs who have helped me in carrying out the tasks of a Morris Ring Treasurer, in particular the clubs who have hosted Morris Ring Meetings during 2010, or are going to be in 2011.

Without exception, all I have met (in person or via telephone/e-mail) have been generous in their help and support and shown the fellowship and friendship that help make the Morris Ring the organisation it is.

On a very final note, I must also thank Charlie Corcoran as Morris Ring Bagman (and my fellow Civil Servant!) without whom, much would not happen as smoothly or as well as it does.

7. Chair of Advisory Council's Report Brian Tasker

The Advisory Council has met twice during the year. Many issues were discussed but I will report here only on new matters of on-going interest to the membership. The first meeting was on 27th March 2010 at the ARM in Abbots Bromley. It was attended by all nine area reps, eight ex-officers and all the current officers.

- The most important issues raised in the questionnaire will be brought to the 2011 ARM for decisions to be made.
- The role of the AC as a body, whose role is to advise the Squire and not to make decisions, needs to be emphasised to the membership.
- Recruitment is the key issue facing the Morris Ring and is a priority of the Squire Elect, Peter Halfpenney. Good PR is essential for the Morris Ring, even if it has to be paid for.

The second meeting took place on 3rd October 2010 at Packington during the 18/30s weekend. It was attended by seven area reps, nine ex officers and all the current officers.

- The possibility of appointing an independent chairman for the meeting rather than the immediate past Squire was discussed. After some discussion it was decided to follow previous practice and Brian Tasker took the chair.
- The next JMO event will be hosted by the Morris Ring in Sheffield on 14 May.
- PR was again discussed. It seems that the Morris Federation may be interested in joint PR to promote the Morris.
- The resolution submitted by Rumford Morris regarding the attendance of female musicians at Morris Ring meetings was discussed. At the time the AC had no knowledge of the Equality Act 2010. It was noted that female musicians had been present at the recent Trigg Morris Ring Meeting and that the Rutland Morris Men had announced that female musicians would be welcome at their meeting in 2011. While some reservations and doubts were expressed there was a general feeling that the Morris Ring should accept that an increasing number of sides had female musicians

and that provision should be made for them by permitting their attendance at Morris Ring meetings where the host side was agreeable.

- It was suggested that candidates for Squire of the Morris Ring should announce their candidature a full year before the election so that they could become better known to the clubs.
- Morris will not play any part in the opening ceremony at the Olympics but it is planned that the 2012 JMO event will be in London, though venues will be difficult to find.
- Several young dancers joined the meeting to discuss how the Morris Ring can attract more young men into its clubs. Various suggestions were made which will be incorporated into Peter's forthcoming paper on recruitment.
- The role of the area reps must be more clearly defined and this will be included in the agenda for the 2011 ARM.
- The resolution changing the composition of the AC, which has been proposed by the Horwich Prize Medal Morris Men for discussion at the 2011 ARM, was discussed. The key issues were the need to understand the needs of clubs at grass roots level and the experience of the long serving members of the AC.
- Artwork for the new Morris Ring roller banner displays was shown and approved. Three sets of displays will be ordered and a set shown at the ARM. A decision will then be made on further orders.

Since this meeting the Morris Ring has been hit by the Equality Act 2010. The AC has not met to discuss the implications for the Morris Ring of this piece of legislation but there has been much discussion on the AC Google Group. It is hoped that the various views expressed were helpful to the officers in framing the revised proposal known as KISS.

8. Archival Reports

a. Chair of Archive Committee: Chris Metherell

I was able to report to the ARM in March last year that the Morris Ring Archive had finally secured a long-term home for its collection at the Essex Record Office, in no small part due to the hard work put in by Paul Reece. I am delighted to be able to report that the paper and film archive has now been delivered to the ERO and is safely stored. Work has begun on the lengthy process of reorganising the collection to fit with the ERO's cataloguing strategy, and weeding the collection of duplicates and library items which are unsuitable for storage within an archive office.

Where "library" items are concerned, such as books, journals and so forth, a two part strategy has been adopted. Where possible extracts are being scanned so that electronic copies can be made available to researchers at the ERO. For items where scanning is impractical, the close co-operation which has developed with the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library over the years has resulted in an agreement to give them first refusal of items which they do not hold (folk festival programmes are a good example), to ensure that nothing of value is lost during this process.

This process is on-going, however much has already been digitised. The same process has been followed where the Morris Ring Archive holds photocopies of manuscripts which are held elsewhere. The Russell Wortley collection has already been digitised through the good

offices and hard work of Ron Shuttleworth, and Andy Padmore has been working through the Maud Karpeles papers. Again the process is on-going.

Because of the distances involved, it was clearly impractical for me to continue as the Morris Ring Archivist and I am pleased to report that Geoff Douglas, who lives close to the ERO has agreed to take over the task and indeed has already begun. I wish him well.

And so this is my last report to you as Archivist, although I hope to carry on as Archive Committee Chair for as long as I can be useful. It only remains for me to thank all those who have generously given me their time, support and indeed paperwork over the years. It has been a delightful experience and a privilege to work with you all.

b. Paper: Geoff Douglas

Apologies offered in Australia

c. Photographic: Duncan Broomhead

The Photographic Archive continues to grow in size and more rewardingly; it also continues to be used as a resource by a wide range of people & organisations. It is these enquiries that make the lonely hours of scanning and cataloguing, worthwhile.

If I was to list all the enquiries and deposits in this report, it would be far too long; they range from supplying photographs for the new Morris Ring display boards, to individuals researching for books or articles and liaising with TV researchers.

There was a spread across all styles of Morris in both the new material and enquiries; interestingly the majority of them were not related to Cotswold' Morris. At best, the archive is a two way process material in and material out, a particularly rewarding example of this was when a lady in Cheshire sent me some photographs of her grandfather who had danced with the Over Peover Morris in the 1930's in his Morris kit, in return, I was able to send her a copy of some film footage of her grandfather dancing. The archive is there to be used it is not deposit to be guarded jealously and not shared. The other members of the Morris Ring Archive Group have been particularly helpful with both identification of individuals and events in photographs already held in the archive but also in their generous donation of photographs to the archive.

I would also like to thank the Leominster Morris Men, I got involved with them in trying to track down some lost' photographs, for my part this involved dozens of letters, e-mails and phone calls following up possible leads. In the end it was the Leominster men who tracked the photographs down, and kindly sent copies to the Morris Ring Archive. Since then they have continued to send in new material for the archive.

Send in your queries, if I can answer them I will, and please continue to send in your photographs, whatever their format. It is your archive, use it, and add to it.

d. Mumming: Ron Shuttleworth

I have completed the digitising of my audio cassettes and discs and gone a long way towards including video material on disc. This year I hope to borrow a machine which will allow me to digitise my VHS cassettes.

I have over a hundred "booklets", soft-cased, one section items usually bound with two wires. To scan all these one spread at a time on the flat-bed would be very tedious, and I thought it worth the expense to get most of them photocopied so that I could do it using the automatic feed. Once this was done the photocopies were superfluous and I passed them all on to Duncan Broomhead who kindly reimbursed me half the cost.

I have continued to service any queries that came in and the greatest user this year was a Canadian from the University of Alberta studying for both his M.A. and PhD. on aspects of Mumming. He contacted me asking if I could suggest a Mummers' team that he could film and interview over the Christmas period. Guess which Side he ended up with. He stayed with me for three weeks, during which he spent many hours reading in your archive. I expect to receive, a copy of the finished project.

All the material digitised to date fills 20.68 GigaBytes and comprises 4,467 files in 340 folders. I would like to thank those who have sent me material and especially Chris Little of the Traditional Drama Research Group for his invaluable help in expanding and refining the databases.

e. Sword: Ivor Allsop

Little has changed since my last report in 2010. Cataloguing new stuff (I try to do this as it comes in, but fail sadly), transferring the existing index in to the Morris Ring Archive, this takes time as I have to physically handle each piece of paper, each video or DVD. This is caused by an unfortunate aspect of the transfer programme which doesn't allow for the transfer of the author or the keyword(s) or one or two of the other fields that are used in the catalogue; we have over the years tried to eradicate this but have been unsuccessful so it is easier to just carry on. Transfer of the Sword Dance Archive to the next archivist has begun and Phil Heaton now has the majority of the Rapper part of the SDA.

One aspect of the SDA Index that I have continued since its inception is to catalogue all the Morris Ring publications that are produced as paper; the question now is 'What happens to Ring publications which only appear as electronic mail?' I only get what every other past Squire gets as I am no longer on the Advisory Council(1) or the Morris Ring Google Group (2) . This is something that you, the ARM, must decide! Do we want a complete record of Morris Ring publications or not. If you answer yes then the next question is 'Who is going to do it?' If I continue then I am going to need someone to send me the stuff. If the answer is no then you need take no further action. But you must make a decision one way or the other.

Help has been given to various people and organisations over the past year. Two things stand out, one is helping Duncan to fill in some of the gaps in the photograph collection with names, dates and locations; the other was to help Grenoside Traditional Sword Team with a project to celebrate the centenary of Sharp's visit to Grenoside in 1910 to check that the Pall Mall Gazette (January 8th 1895) article Twelfth Night on the Moors -Morris Dancers in Yorkshire was correct. Grenoside found out that the actual location used by the team on August 27th 1910 was still extant and they re-enacted this auspicious occasion with the present team performing the Grenoside Sword Dance in front of and invited audience of local

dignitaries, past members of the team and representatives from other sword dance teams both local and from further afield. This was followed in October by an enactment of The Sword Dances of Northern England Part 1 1912 during the Sword Dance Union's Longsword Tournament.

In 2002 I was approached to see if I knew anything about why we handed out staves of office to new member clubs. This I looked up and during the research into this I came across several other interesting facts about Morris Ring regalia which is/was not generally known. I pulled all these together and edited them, wrote about what I knew of other facts and in particular about the Morris Ring Logo and the Morris Ring Archive. I put these into booklet form with the title Information for Squires & Members of the Advisory Council: Regalia, Gifts & Doles together with notes on the Advisory Council, the Morris Ring Logo and the Morris Ring Archive. In 2003 this was distributed to the Advisory Council and all those men standing for Squire in 2004. It has been issued to all those standing for Squire ever since. At the last meeting of the Archive it was suggested that I revise it and that we should issue a copy of it to every member club in the Morris Ring, with copies given to the Morris Federation, the Open Morris and the EFDSS. This I have now done under the title The Morris Ring: Information etc. and it will be available at the ARM.

(1) Ivor decided to retire from the AC last year. (2) Ivors choice.

f. Sound: Andy Padmore

Not much to report except that I continue when time permits to transfer audio cassette recordings to digital. This is an on-going process and there are many left to do to get up to date. Only one cassette tape has so far been unplayable due to deterioration and that in itself is quite remarkable. I expect others to be in the same state, but so far so good.

I am always willing to receive contributions of recordings to the Archive and these can be on any subject matter you feel needs to be included. Recordings of old dancers reminiscing, or musical items from past and even present musicians are welcomed as are sung items and even recordings of talks and lectures on related matters. Email: [Andy Padmore](mailto:Andy.Padmore@arm.org.uk): if you want to discuss anything with me.

In time I would like to actually record new material from those dancers and musicians who it is felt have something to say about any aspect of our hobby, but so far I have not made any move to do this nor yet do I feel confident enough to take the first step; But it is on my things to do list. Suggestions are welcomed for suitable candidates together with reasons and brief details and of course their location.

Most of what we have in the sound archive is not good quality as it was, generally, not recorded with posterity in mind but I hope to make what we have, available at some stage in the future.

g. New Dance Collator: Mike Wilkinson

At the 2010 ARM, it was mentioned that the post of New Dance Collator had been unfilled for several years, and there was a suggestion that perhaps the time had come to drop the idea altogether. As I have some experience of describing and notating dances, I put myself forward immediately after the meeting.

The position is "New Dance Collator" rather than "Collector" which suggests to me that the job is to maintain a central record of new dances that are submitted to me, rather than going out into the field and actively collecting dances. However, I took some initial steps to attract attention to my role. This included a short piece in the Circular, and some experimental emails to a few sides beginning with "A". I also started to write down one or two of the new dances that my own side, Dolphin, has developed. Finally, in a small number of cases, I wrote to sides I know fairly well, asking for details of some of the non-standard dances that I had seen them perform.

A few people responded, and now my PC has a folder full of notes and descriptions. There is not yet enough here for it to be a useful resource, and it is readily apparent that a lot of what has been sent to me was already written down and available somewhere before I asked for it. I cannot honestly say that my first year's activities in the role have achieved anything of great value to the Ring, other than to lay the groundwork for the next year of collating. Unfortunately, from the collating point of view -although very fortunately for myself -events in my personal life have put the Morris further down my list of priorities than has been the case for many years. I have not made time to try to convert the various notes and descriptions that I have into a standard format for publication or circulation. With a house move and a wedding imminent in 2011, this is likely to continue to be the case for another year, although that does not mean that I will be ignoring the New Dance Collator's role entirely. I am equally willing to carry on in the post, or to hand over to someone else who has more time to offer. If I am asked to carry on, I expect to be able to devote time in the later part of 2011 to putting what I have into a standard format suitable for circulation, and I hope to become more active in chasing people to supply details of more dances to me. Once the Ring membership becomes more widely aware of the existence of a New Dance Collator, I hope that it will start to take on a life of its own.

What Does the New Dance Collator Want?

I believe passionately in the need for gradual evolution of the Morris. Choruses that "don't quite work" get "improved"; new figures get invented; sides try to fit an existing dance to a new tune, then change the dance to make it fit better; dances are composed for special occasions. All of this healthy activity is what keeps the Morris fresh. Most of the new ideas sink into obscurity after a season or so, but every now and again, a new dance, figure or chorus really catches on. These are the ones of most interest to me.

I am interested in:

- A genuinely new figure or substantially changed common figure introduced into an established tradition.
- A genuinely new chorus (distinctive figure) in an established tradition.
- An interesting combination of an existing dance with a different tune. (For example, Young Collins, Bledington fits nicely to Idbury Hill.)
- A brand new dance which is broadly in the style of an established tradition.
- A "stand alone" new dance that is not in the style of any particular tradition, but is clearly Morris as we understand it.
- A "new tradition" which I would loosely define as two or more new dances in a novel but consistent style.

In each case, as Collator I am only interested in dances that have made it into your side's repertoire. I don't want to get too hung up on definitions and criteria, but I would suggest that a dance that is performed more than once in the first season, and carried over into the repertoire in the second season would be "collectable".

I am not interested in:

- Minor variations in side style such as substituting a mirror hey for a parallel hey, or vice versa; or substituting galleys for hooklegs.
- One-off dances, especially composed for a special occasion, never to be danced again.
- "Good ideas" that were tried in practice but never danced out, or were made up on the spot and danced out once, badly, under the influence of beer.
- Pipe dreams: dances that you have talked about or written down, and which might work in principle, but have never been tried.
- Standard choruses and tunes simply translated without alteration from one tradition to another. (e.g. Balance the Straw, Bledington.)
- Innovation for innovation's sake. Anything that would make me think, C'es magnifique mais ce n'est pas le Morris, such as dances for exactly 17 men; dances in 5/4 time; social dances; fusion with other non-Morris styles.

As soon as I try to define what is or isn't acceptable, someone will set out to find an exception. With this in mind, the two overriding principles should be: "Is it recognisably Morris dancing? Is it substantially new?"

My own background is in Cotswold Morris, and I have no more than an interested observer's knowledge of Border, Long Sword, Molly, North West, Rapper, Step Clog, or anything I've missed from this list. This does not mean that I am not interested in collating dances from these traditions; only that I am not well qualified to say what is new, distinctive, or "within the style". With these traditions, I am happy to receive and archive any notes that you send to me, but I am not in a position to write the notes myself.

"Copyright": Some sides guard their dances jealously; some are keen to see their dances being adopted or adapted by other sides; and some have no strong feelings about whether their dances are copied or not.

The New Dance Collator's role is not to promote new dances, but to maintain a record of them, and to make that record available to interested parties within the Ring and perhaps to sides from other Morris organisations if the "originating side" does not object.

If you specify that a dance should not be copied by other sides, I will include this clearly in the notes. If it is very important to ensure that your dance is not copied (for example, a dance composed in memory of a deceased member of your side) then please make this clear. If you do so, I will simply maintain a record of the dance and not circulate it at all. Otherwise, by default, I will be willing to release notes to member sides of the Ring on request.

And Finally: Thanks to all the various people who have sent me notes of their own dances, contact details for individuals and sides, and copies of previous publications. Michael Wilkinson Contactable via: <http://www.dolphin-morris.co.uk/>

h. Keeper of the Morris Ring Scrapbook: Keith Francis (Final Report!)

Logbooks. Logbooks are up-to-date and the latest Logbook will be handed over to Charlie Corcoran at ARM. Charlie has agreed to take on role of Logbook Keeper. Logbooks contain accounts of Morris Ring events ie Morris Ring Meetings, ARM (but not Business Meeting which is recorded in Minute Books), Instructionals, obituaries of Past Officers.

Scrapbooks. I shall continue as Scrapbook Keeper for the immediate future. Scrapbooks will be available at ARM. Archive group will be discussing where the scrapbooks should be kept: at present they are at my house, but they ought to be more readily available. Also more of the Scrapbooks need to be copied in some format so that there are duplicates.

9. Publication Officers Reports

i. Editor Morris Circular: Harry Stevenson

Three Editions of the Morris Ring Circular MRC were published, including the 60th 'colour' edition. The MRC is now accessible in full colour via the Morris Ring Web site. All articles welcome

ii. Editor Morris Dancer: David Thomson

The Morris Dancer it appeared with a North West theme and will appear this year with a Cotswold theme. As a consequence of my recent troubles, and the lack of suitable articles, it is my intention that the next volume will be the last that I edit.

10. Overseas Bagman's / Webmasters Reports. John Maher

The OSB. I continue to field questions about overseas visits where these occur, from individuals and from sides. Note that, with web access, most members can find festivals and other morris or folk dance groups by a bit of "Googling". I maintain a festivals link at <http://www.themorrisring.org/festivals.html> this gets quite a lot of use.

The Web Site. The main task throughout each year is to keep the site up-to-date, and to correct any errors. Conversion of the MR Bagmans newsletters into an html format is the other main task, and Ive been looking for an easier method for these newsletters, you can see a result with the latest, NL70, together with a note about what I have done, it is now coded with html5. See <http://www.themorrisring.org/Bagman/MRNL70/index.html#html5> During 2011 I hope to apply html5 to other parts of the site.

Our site has [Google Analytics](#) installed on nearly all pages (700+ of them), this enables us to see, in great detail, who is using the site, where they come from, and many other details. Below is a graph, a spread sheet and a map to show some of the information for the year 2010. {Click on the thumbnails for a larger image }

The Dashboard is the overall view of our visitors. The top graph shows visits on a daily basis, from 44,000 visits we had 100,000 individual page views. Thus we get around 120 visits per day, the two peaks on the top graph are for the ARM last year and then May Day.

Most people find us via search engines, thus 66% of visits are new ones. The Bounce Rate - Google's jargon "Bounce rate is the percentage of single-page visits or visits in which the person left your site from the entrance (landing) page." i.e. a quickie, in and out!

The Pages visited are shown next; 25 pages of the 700+ total are detailed. Im pleased to see that MorrisOnTheMap, my Google Map system gets a lot of use, Steve Adamson can rejoice in the popularity of Shop, and Vaughan Hully of Shakespeare MM should get renewed plaudits for providing us with the abc versions for the tunes in Lionel Bacons Black Book. Trunch is popular! Apart from these, links to Festivals, Morris Ring Meeting information, the Tradition booklet (English and Spanish versions), and NW Morris all had over 1000 visits in 2010. Not to miss the fact that the Home page gets more visits than any other.

The Map. Our visitors come from 154 countries! Apart from the UK (32836) The largest group are from the USA (2740), then, Australia (644), the Netherlands (575), Germany (560), Canada (480), Mexico (462), Spain (390) (hence the interest in the Spanish version of our Tradition Booklet), France (442), Ireland (269), New Zealand (158). We had 60 visits each from China and Japan. Suffice it to say that we get about 16% Of visitors from outside the UK. Within the UK most visits come from England, Northern Ireland was only 28 visits. London sent 10,000 visits, Bradford 1600 visits (thanks Steve!).

NB: I no longer have anything to do with the Google Groups, I only run the Morris Ring Web site.

Thank you for your attention. Questions will be answered at the ARM or you can email: [John Maher](#)

11. Election / Ratification of Area Representatives

No other nominations received to date

- West Midlands Pete Simpson
- North West Dave Loughlin
- South West & Wales. Robin Springett#
- Northern: Due to Stuart Bater's unfortunate resignation due to ill-health we are looking for a new Area Rep to cover the Northern Area

12. Area Representatives Reports

a. North West David Loughlin

No report submitted

b. Northern Stuart Bater

Apologies for lack of report due to ill health

c. North East Brian Pollard

Nothing to report (Apologies for non-attendance received)

d. West Midlands Pete Simpson

Only 5 clubs have filed reports this year. Whilst this may not seem many it is 5 more than last year and something to improve on next year.

Jockey Morris Men

Well, my club have been to Cyprus, where they performed at a Wine Festival with no wine. Have gained a Grassroots funding and are using it to organise some Free Morris Tasting sessions (not workshops, as power tools aren't necessary) Have been tempted by lashings of beer, chips and chocolate into accepting an invitation to attend a major festival in Flanders next Easter, Are firming up the logistics of introducing a horse drawn plough into Birmingham city centre And had our first book on the club history published So, just the usual really. Gary Chilvers and others

Green Mans Morris and Sword Club 2010

Green Man performed 25 times during 2010. Most of these were at our usual pubs, but in addition, there were a number of "highlights" We took part in the Birmingham Opera's production of Verdi's Othello. This involved members of Green Man devising a 6 minute dance performance which followed the original music of the score but also used traditional Morris movements and steps. We performed nightly for a week, and we also performed the Morris in our official kit before each performance as the audience entered the venue, which was an old disused factory in the Digbeth area. We also performed at the NEC for the BBC TV Gardeners World Live.

We led the Lichfield Bower procession on the late May Bank Holiday. Also in Lichfield, we performed in the St. George's Day Celebrations, The Folk Festival. We were also invited to take part in the MAC reopening in Cannon Hill Park.

Shakespeare Morris Men

After seeing what Greenman MM have been up to this year we must be rather boring as we danced out on Monday nights will invited friends Jockey being one open the Mop Fair in Stratford in the parade for the switch on of Stratford Christmas lights danced at Bidford lights went to a couple of festivals Philip our musician gave a lecture on Bidford Morris to the history society and danced some Bidford for the audience and had now the mummings are doing the rounds before Christmas then a rousing bash on new years day at Binton rather boring really Geoff (SMM Bagman)

1st Sedgley Morris Men

During the year we danced out at our usual annual events namely:

- Jockey Plough Saturday;
- St George's Day Parade for Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council in Halesowen
- Dancing at dawn on Sedgley Beacon on the 1st of May.
- Arranging Annual Maypole Festival (now in its 30th year) for local primary schools in Sedgley. Schools dance with a maypole supplied by Dudley MBC or their own maypoles which we purchased in 2001 with the assistance of a grant from the Millennium Lottery Fund.
- Harborne Carnival
- Bromyard Folk Festival
- Annual pre-Christmas World Tour of the Court House Pub and Dudley

We also danced at two National Trust properties -Dudmaston Hall and, with Ewell St Mary Morris Men, at Chastleton House on a memorable day in June when we also visited Hook Norton Brewery and an excellent selection of Cotswold Pubs. There were also a variety of other events and we turned down a number of bookings -more than we fulfilled.

During summer months we danced out on Thursday practice night, sometimes with other sides, at various Black Country pubs but predominantly the Britannia in Sedgley.

We gained one new member during the year who was in fact a returning member who had left side couple of years ago, we lost one member to a mixed clog side. The average age of the side is now approaching 60 with about 17 active dancers and musicians. During the year we have actively sought new members through:

- Contacts with local media particularly the Express and Star Newspaper who have featured us on a number of occasions during the year.
- Printed leaflets that are distributed whenever we dance out
- Dancing at the Lighthouse Cinema in Wolverhampton for the film "Morris a Life With Bells On"
- Dancing and training others to Dance at local Primary Schools and for the Spice singles group.

We belong to the EFDSS, West Midlands Folk Federation, and Bromyard Folk Festival Ltd in addition to membership of the Morris Ring.

50% of our income from dancing out is shared with 1st Sedgley Scouts in return for the use of the Jubilee Scout Hall in Sedgley for practices and for indoor camping when the need arises. We have also raised money this year for Help for Heroes and other Charities.

Stafford Morris Men

The successful running of the ARM at Abbots Bromley including 2 showings of "Morris a life with Bells". Despite the grip of snow and frost 36 brave souls turned out for the SMM feast, with 4 dancing in. 13 SMM attend Thaxted Morris Ring meeting. A great time was had by all. The highlight of the year was Jack Brown being awarded a Gold Badge from EFDSS with 120 people attending the ceremony including Lady Bagot. The club had a strong showing at the Abbots Bromley horn dance once again.

SMM younger members are doing well often enabling the club to fulfil commitments. At the ARM we were proud to have a team with an average age of 11 performing a show dance

e. North Midlands David Thompson

As you may know during the early hours of Thursday 28th October 2010 I had quite a serious heart attack so much so that I was lucky that it took place in hospital. Such an experience requires quite a life change and you are told to take stress out of your life. Fortunately if I am sensible there is no reason why I should not be able to dance as in the past.

Thanks to the support of other Morris Ring clubs I am happy to report that that Derbyshires only Morris tradition, Winster, was able to happen despite my illness, as it should.

f. Eastern Mike Stevens

During the year I have tried to generate exchanges of information through email, most recently sharing our experiences of recruitment. This is an issue of concern to all, so I am sure that men in all areas will recognise much of what follows:

1. "Open days" and introductory workshops have been tried with varying results, from "no-one turning up" to "well-attended". Even then, actually getting people to take the next step and join is another hurdle and Rutland did well to hang on to two new members recruited this way.
2. East Suffolk recruited 6 in a campaign associated with their 50th anniversary year in 2009. Two of these remain as members. The side is large, having about 30 members, is very active locally and includes strong family representation.
3. Standon has done well developing young dancers but is beginning to lose them as they move on to University, etc. Other sides in the area have teenage dancers who will doubtless also move on. (I suppose that one side's loss is another's gain.)
4. Thaxted maintains a "constant presence" in the town, encouraging recruits 2 new juniors, 2 novices, and 2 transferees from other sides within the last 2 years.
5. Kings Men have benefited from recent transfers from a non-Morris Ring side.
6. Peterborough and Rutland cooperated in attending the local showing of "A life with Bells on" in September 2009, dancing outside, giving out leaflets, and inviting new members. Two men were recruited who continue to dance.
7. Crendon Morris (associate member) has identified an individual to be responsible for recruitment. He intends to update their literature to be more inviting and to produce a poster for schools, libraries and other places where people meet, to create greater awareness.
8. Peterborough has appointed a Publicity Officer to establish links with local press and radio and to provide them with the kind of material they want to publish. This was very effective in advance of both the Day of Dance and Boxing Day, followed by photos of the events in the Evening Telegraph afterwards. Colourful posters have also been placed in a number of primary schools.

Other sides also contributed their experiences but I hope that I will be forgiven for not listing all respondents in this document.

And now some more news Cambridge Morris Men has a new Squire, Ollie King. Just 16 at his appointment in October, he was interviewed on BBC Radio Cambridge. He's already a good dancer and musician, familiar to a number of sides in the East, and a good organiser. He and fellow teen, Matt, planned and led the 2009 Travelling Morris tour of north Norfolk. Both lads are excellent company and I know they'll be valued men in the future of Morris.

g. South West and Wales Robin Springett

No report submitted

h. South Midlands Roger Comley

Thanks to the good response of the South Midlands Morris Ring sides our Squire, Peter Halfpenney has achieved keeping us happy, now we can keep Pater happy by supporting him and the Officers at the great occasions when they come to our Ales; Feasts; Days of Dance and Morris Ring Meetings. It is good to see Officers being appreciated by inviting them and adding prestige to these occasions. Even his Fool has complimented some events by getting his scallops out when requested. Enough grovelling! Individuals in our sides are not always seen and appreciated and because we are all special it is good to congratulate those who try and achieve success.

Paul "Monty" Montague of Adderbury and Yateley helped to make the Fools and Beasts Weekend "Unconvention" a success, with a tour of his new work place the Hook Norton Brewery. Chris Strong will also make us welcome, with Whitchurch MM, at the Chiltern Brewery, as a good place to dance and enjoy hospitality.

Mendip still keep up this tradition at Thatcher's Cider Farm and Butcombe Brewery by supporting each other; sponsorship is valuable to us all and thanks to all who achieve a good representation of respect to the tradition of our fine drinks and food. How about a visit to a Pork Scratchings Factory? Not many in the South Midlands but we do know of some small butchers who do their own, where we can also get bladders.

The Kennett Pickled Brussels are another fine example of good taste at their Ale. Thank you all for the fun and camaraderie of fine gentlemen getting together to dance, sing and be merry. The Scallop Dance research is still underway, unearthing more evidence. Wassail.

i. South East Fred Hands

During the last year the clubs in the south east area have continued to function much as they have for several years, very much business as usual continuing to attend the events that they regularly attend, and to host the round of feasts days of dance and regular evening dancing tours that form their annual programme. Men of Wight inform me that the folk tradition is alive and well and thriving on the isle of Wight, the folk festival has been revived but they now have to compete with seven or eight other clubs on the island.

Recruitment is still a problem for the majority of sides although there are a few who are having some success. Most are losing more older dancers than they can recruit so if they are very lucky if they can maintain the status quo. Victory MM have managed to recruit another couple of new younger dancers for the 3rd year running and now have a large nucleus of younger men. Wadard managed to recruit 2 new members through the squires Scouting contacts, one of his assistant leaders joined, and after some persuasion brought along his young son who danced out on Boxing Day. Buckland Shag inform me that they have 2 thirteen year old boys dancing with them but are otherwise still struggling. Spring Grove who were struggling for a number of years are again thriving, with healthy numbers and are planning another midsummer evening of dance this year.

Several sides in the South East are able to provide instructors for dance instructionals.

Winchester have been asked to teach Bledington at the 50th Chippenham festival and the newest side in the South East, Cinque Ports have asked Hartley MM to run an instructional for them for the 2nd year running.

South East sides again attended Broadstairs folk week dancing as Hartley and friends and comprised members of Hartley Victory Broadwood Ravensbourne & Wadard with Wantsum also dancing and running the festival shop. Wantsum MM are particularly keen to expand

their annual Hop Hoodening festival in September so if any one would like a days dancing in Canterbury please contact Wantsum MM
Finally Long Man MM appeared on the BBC4 programme *Still Folk Dancing After All These Years* dancing on May Day.

13. Future Programme

- Morris Ring Meetings 2012 and beyond (Bagman)
- Instructionals

14. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

15. A.O.B

Draft Agenda for post ARM Advisory Council Meeting

Much of this will have been discussed at the JMO AGM a fortnight prior to the ARM so there will be feedback to contribute from that.

1. Recruitment - reaction to recruitment package Media & national image
2. JMO National Morris Spectacular, Sheffield
3. Olympics
4. Queen's Diamond Jubilee 2012
5. Equality Act - outcome of ARM vote; where do we go from here?
6. Morris Dancer -Editor replacement
7. Other publications -content and editorial responsibility
8. AOB arising from ARM

Massed dances for 2011 Morris Ring Meetings

Massed dances for 2011 Morris Ring Meetings will be:

Dropping:

Bampton: Bobbing Around

Bucknell:Queens Delight

Fieldtown: Banks of the Dee

Adderbury: Shepherds Hey

- **Adderbury:** Lads a-Bunchum
- **Bampton:** Rose Tree (Banbury Bill to alt. tune) & Maid of the Mill
- **Bledington:** Bonnets so Blue (William & Nancy to alt. tune) & Young Collins
- **Brackley:** Jockey to the Fair
- **Fieldtown:** The Valentine
- **Headington:** Constant Billy and Laudnum Bunches
- **Lichfield:** Vandals of Hammerwich (Chorus: show first & strike second, unless No 1 indicates otherwise)

Peter Halfpenney; Squire of the Morris Ring

Proxy Voting

Proxy Voting: In an ideal world every Member and Associate side in the Morris Ring would attend the ARM, when the discussions can be brought to a close and votes taken. We appreciate that this is not possible for many reasons. In our efforts to ensure as wide a franchise as possible we considered both Postal votes, as we do for the election of Officers, and Proxy voting, through a process similar to that used by the EFDSS at their AGMs. After careful consideration we are advised that even if we allowed postal votes for motions, which is not mentioned in our Constitution, such votes could not take into account discussions and arguments presented or influence or react to any amendments put to the ARM on the day. Whilst some of the same arguments can be applied to proxy voting with this there is more scope for sides to brief their proxy especially where there has been considerable discussion in advance of the meeting. Below is our adaptation of the EFDSS Proxy-voting policy.

We want to be fair to all and to give everyone the opportunity to express their side's opinion with a vote -after all the Morris Ring is its member clubs. Clearly we do not want to contravene our constitution. Having listened to lots of advice we do not believe that to invite non-attendees to appoint a proxy to vote on their behalf would be a breach of the constitution and would allow every club fair opportunity to cast their vote. With reference to the Motions on the Agenda: Should amendments be proposed the first consideration must be whether or not they are ultimately be lawful, and not require the Morris Ring to act in a way that puts us in conflict with the Equality Act. Therefore it would be helpful if amendments submitted to the Bagman of the Morris Ring by 28th January for evaluation against the above rule by a committee appointed by the Squire. These will then be circulated to all sides on or before 31st January. Amendments from the floor of the meeting will be accepted at the discretion of the Squire.

The idea being that they can be read and considered by a wider audience than simply those attending the ARM and questions can be posed and comments made. Reports are expected from Area Reps (and all of the Area Reps would welcome information from their area sides for inclusion in their report) and all the various appointed Officers.

Morris Ring adaptation of the EFDSS Proxy-voting policy:

Proxy voting allows a side who is unable to attend the ARM to appoint a person to speak and/or to vote on their behalf. This allows all Members equality of opportunity for a wider engagement with the affairs of the Morris Ring and provides for greater democracy. It is entirely possible for the votes cast at a meeting to be overturned by the proxy votes and vice versa.

Policy

1. The Squire of the Morris Ring, as Chairman of the ARM, or the authorized Area Rep, will always use the proxy votes he holds in accordance with the stated wishes of the member sides that have made him their Proxy, regardless of what the Morris Ring Squire and / or Officers may be proposing.
2. When preparing voting papers, the Morris Ring Bagman will advise Member sides how the Squire will exercise discretionary votes he is given, namely:
 - a. The Squire will normally use discretionary votes to support resolutions put forward by the MR Officers;
 - b. If the MR Officers have not taken a view on a resolution put forward by a member side the Squire may ask for discretionary proxy votes so that he can listen to the views expressed at the ARM and take a view based on that debate
3. Member Sides will be advised that members may nominate the Squire or their Area Rep to act as their proxy and that any person appointed as a proxy must attend the meeting for the proxy vote to be counted.
4. Any member side who has already appointed a proxy retains the right to send a side member to attend the meeting in person. On so doing, he will be given the opportunity to revoke their proxy appointment, if they so choose. This representative will be entitled to speak and vote at the ARM only if the proxy appointment has been formally revoked at least ten minutes before the start of the meeting.
5. Members will be offered four options from which to choose when directing their proxy: "*For*"; "*Against*"; "*Vote withheld*"; or "*Discretionary*". The "*Vote withheld*" option allows a positive indication of the decision not to vote. Votes withheld in this way will not be counted when calculating the portion of votes for or against the resolution.
6. In accordance with Best Practice the Squire will not reveal in advance of a poll the number of proxy votes cast or the net weight of the proxy voting, as this could be seen as seeking to influence the poll.
7. In accordance with Best Practice the meeting will be informed of the outcome of the poll and the following information will be included in the minutes of the meeting:
 - a. the number of people who have made valid proxy appointments;
 - b. the number of votes cast for the resolution;
 - c. the number of votes cast against the resolution; and
 - d. the number of votes in respect of which the vote was directed to be withheld
8. It is normal practice for a poll (a paper ballot) to be taken on any resolution that appears contentious, so that proxy votes can be taken into account.

General News and Information

Visit <http://www.efdss.org/> for full information about events organised by the EFDSS not just in London at Cecil Sharp House but across the country.

Morris Ring Instructionals

Jigs Instructional 21st - 23rd January 2011 Sutton Bonington

Only £42 and we will again be offering a £10 subsidy to sides for first time attendees and a £5 subsidy for any first-timers who attended last year who return for a second helping. An Application Form can be found [here](#).

Morris Ring Musicians' 2 Instructional Day

Hosts: Moulton MM Book up now!

Date: Saturday 12th March 2011 9.30am - 6pm.

Venue: Moulton Village Hall

A day course for musicians concentrating on playing for the different genre of Morris. There will be different groups available with tradition-specific playing skills: Border, Cotswold, etc. Food provided plus evening pub session for those interested. Female musicians are welcome to attend.

Full details: Simon Care, 30 Manor Road, Moulton, Northampton NN3 7QU Tel: 01604 670192

Our Cotswold Morris Heritage

An Insight into the way it was

A weekend workshop led by Roy Dommett

Exeter 15th 17th April 2011

It has been a long time coming but now, Roy's health permitting, we will be having a weekend of talks and dance workshops led by Roy Dommett in 10 sessions from Friday evening until Sunday lunch time.

"Following the pattern of the Halsway Manor, Boys Town Barry and Lains Barn Wantage weekends, nearly 40 years of promulgating what is known about the 19th and early 20th century traditional Morris. Not what the clubs do now but how it possibly was then.

All our knowledge is from the period of terminal decline, with the consequential bias, not helped by the collectors knowing what they wanted to find rather than recording everything, including the social backgrounds. But they would not have understood it, would they"

Roy is now 77, in fragile health but with his love of the morris and interest in its present performance and future undiminished. Therefore he is still willing to talk and instruct. He was awarded the EFDSS Jubilee Medal and then the Gold Badge for services to morris. A dancer for 20 years and then a musician for nearly 30. His last workshops were 10 years ago in California.

The workshop and lecture sessions will be held at Isca College of Media Arts, Earl Richards Road South, Exeter. Cost for the instructional side of the weekend should not exceed £17.50 and should be less but accommodation will be extra. In the first instance we are asking for a deposit of £5 per head. If we have to cancel part of this may be refundable.

We have a lot of detail still to be sorted but this advert gives you the chance to book a place. To book please send deposit cheques, made payable to Great Western Morris, to Duncan Moss, 41 Firleigh Rd., Kingsteignton, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 3NH.

If you are booking on behalf of a number of individuals please make sure you include all their names, a contact email address and phone number with your booking. This workshop is being facilitated by Great Western Morris in gratitude for all Roy has done for us and many other teams. Early booking is advised. The workshop will have been publicised using other networks prior to publication of this newsletter.

For further details please

London 2012

London 2012 County and Borough Councils who have signed up for the Olympic Torch route to pass through their administrative regions are about to start drawing up their route and who they want to be involved in torch carrying and entertainment, perhaps in the style of Will Kemp. Now is the time to be insistent and contact their Olympics Officer

about being involved.

Preference will be given to sides or individuals who can demonstrate that they are inspired by the spirit of the games. This could be simply getting more young people involved in carrying on the Morris tradition in particular its regional variants as a legacy for the games in improving physical and cultural fitness and regional identity.

The Olympics organising committee have already said that they want varied and unusual torch carriers for the short relay sections of the route over the 70 days that it moves around the country during the Summer of 2012.

The publicity/recruitment opportunities for your side and the Morris in general are huge so do get involved, their future may depend on it. Some of you are going into schools and clubs and engaging young people to get involved in the Morris. This could be an extra incentive to put your local efforts on the regional and national stage.

Further details will be sent to Bagmen and can be found on the Morris Ring Website.
Paul Reece

Morris Ring Meetings 2011

326th Meeting 20th - 22nd May. Hosted by Moulton Morris to mark the 40th Anniversary of the revived Moulton Festival. Sides attending are King John's; Richmond on Swale and Yateley **There are still a few spaces available at this meeting.**

327th Meeting 3rd June - 5th June. Hosted by Thaxted Morris. This meeting marks their Centenary. Sides attending include Dolphin; Moulton; Helmond; Westminster; Ravensbourne; Leicester; Cambridge; Dartington; St Albans; Chanctonbury Ring; Saddleshorn; Mayflower; Greensleeves; Monkseaton; Stafford; Letchworth; Shakespeare; Standon; Jockey; Whitchurch; Harthill; Chalice; Hageneth MM; East Suffolk; Offley; East Surrey; Het Utrecht and Bedford. There are still a few spaces available at this meeting.

328th Meeting 24th - 26th June Hosted by Wath-on-Deerne Morris Now running as a Family Day of Dance, with a feast. Those requiring accommodation will be able to B&B at the hotel as planned for £50 per night, with two people sharing. For teams travelling and staying on the Friday and Saturday evening there will be a "session" in a local pub on the Friday, with dancing on Sunday morning for those that will. As a "family day of dance" with wives / partners and children being welcome to attend on the day and at the feast.

329th Meeting 8th-10th July Hosted by Greensleeves Morris Men to mark the 50th Anniversary of their Chipperfield weekend. Sides attending include Dolphin; Martlett; Long Man; Ripley; Greenman and Winchester.

330th Meeting 22nd-24th July Hosted in Rutland by the Rutland Morrismen. Sides attending include Devil's Dyke; Thelwall; Foresters; Northwood; Colchester; Hartley; Thaxted; St Albans; Peterborough; Men of Wight; Traditional Ilmington; Horwich Prize Medal; Redcar Sword and Lincoln & Micklebarrow

Morris 18-30 Weekend 7th - 9th October 2011

Venue: Oxford.

Hosts: Icknield Way MM

Further information and application information see <http://www.morris1830.org.uk>

Morris Ring Meetings 2012 & beyond

2012

3rd - 5th
March (?) ARM Hosted by TBA

25th - 27th
May Chipping Campden Cotswold Olympic MR Meeting

~~1st - 3rd~~
June Thaxted Morris Ring Meeting

8th - 10th June *Due to the changes to the late May/Whit Bank Holiday to accommodate the Queen's Jubilee the Spring Half Term has been put back a week by Essex Education Authority.*

27th - 29th July Hartley 60th Anniversary Morris Ring Meeting

TBC *Letchworth Centenary Morris Ring Meeting*

2013

? March ARM Hosted by TBA

31st May - 2nd June Thaxted Morris Ring Meeting

21st - 23rd June Dolphin Morris Men

2014

? March ARM Hosted by TBA

TBA Thaxted Morris Ring Meeting

Use of the Morris Ring Logo.

Please use the Morris Ring logo on your side website, and add the link to the Morris Ring website. <http://www.themorrisring.org/> NB. If you want a logo image, then the one on display here will give you a .png file, dimensions 400px by 400px. For other formats and sizes contact the Web Editor.

Not to be forgetting our new [Facebook Page](#)

And finally

I am indebted to Peter Halfpenney for spotting this on youtube. "For too long we have considered Morris dancing to be an activity principally confined to spring, summer and early autumn months. That we are experiencing climate change is irrefutable - my pond is still frozen over and has been since November! Dancers all, it is time to adapt and to accept that we must be prepared to perform in the weather conditions that prevail today. To this end the following link to a Helsinki Morris instructional video may be useful to you."

Press Release (missed by the rest of the media!)

Morris dancers take over Rugby Art Gallery and Museum

An extraordinary new exhibition exploring the eccentric Morris dancing tradition is to open at Rugby Art Gallery and Museum. The exhibition, Seaside Holidays for the Working Classes, which shows from 11th January to 6th March, sees Birmingham-born artist Faye

Claridge bring together Rugby Youth Dance, Warwick Folk Festival and numerous Morris dancers to create works looking at the past and future of the Morris tradition.

Finding no Morris dancing group in the borough of Rugby, Faye brought dancers from neighbouring counties to work with a local contemporary dance group. She then arranged for a public performance at the region's largest gathering of Morris dancers, the Warwick Folk Festival, giving the dancers just hours to prepare their ground-breaking debut.

Talking about the themes of her latest work, Faye said: "Morris dancing is often ridiculed but it's a rare tangible example of the social and political history we've all inherited. It informs our sense of Englishness and influences every personal and political decision of the present and the future. The dancing can seem daft on the surface, but it's actually really important."

During the exhibition, members from Rugby Youth Dance will give a one-off performance. This will be the first time they have performed in the gallery and only the second public performance of the unique Morris/Contemporary Dance fusion style created through Claridges residency. (The exhibition runs from 11 January to 6 March and admission is free.)

For further information see www.ragm.org.uk/exhibitions.

I have been asked for details of the printers used by Leicester Morrismen for our Tour Lists. I am not on commission but I recommend that you look at their web site:

<http://print24.com/uk/> Leicester MM have been impressed by the quality, service and price.

Read the rest on [Page 3 of the Wantage Herald Wednesday 5th January 2011](#)

Thanks as usual to those who have contributed news and information for inclusion in this Newsletter, or simply pointed me in the right direction. For future publication please let me have details of your May Day venues so that I can publish and publicise where we do what we do.

In the immediate future if your side has yet to pay its subscription please may I remind you that you will not be covered by our insurance unless you do and if you have booked places at one of the Morris Ring Meetings in 2011 please get your deposits paid a.s.a.p..

Included as an appendix with Newsletter No 70 was the [renewal / application forms for 2011 Personal Accident Insurance](#). Any questions about this please address to Michael Stimpson and not to myself or Eddie. (Email: [Michael Stimpson](#) or Tel: 01923 770425).

I look forward to seeing many of you at the ARM.

Bagman of the Morris Ring

Email:

HTML5 format for News Letters 70 on: Notes from John Maher, Morris Ring Web Editor

With thanks to Free HTML5 templates! This page is based on the '[BlondePlanks](#)' free html5 template created by <http://freehtml5templates.com>. *"We license our free templates under the Creative Commons Attribution (by) 3.0, which put simply, means you can distribute, remix, tweak, and build upon our work, even commercially, as long as you credit us for the original creation.*

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I did think of basing the Newsletter on "[AnyBunnyHome](#)" However *BlondePlanks* has a built-in drop down menu system which I wanted to use to link to past Newsletters. Bagman's Newsletters Nos 39-70 are now on-line - as can be seen from the menu. So far as The Bagman's Newsletters are concerned I hope that this new format makes it easier for me to

edit them for the web - and that they are readable in the various browsers "out there", [html5 is still an experimental format](#). As usual IE makes a dog's dinner of the markup, the templates have a fix for this. My advice is simple, ditch IE and use Google Chrome or Firefox, Safari on a Mac.

The print button should provide a simplified print of the Newsletter with images. Use Print Preview to see what you will get, and restrict the printing to the pages you need. *Save Trees!*

The folder containing the Bagman's Newsletters has grown 'like topsy', so that a new system is needed and pruning necessary. If you try to read one of the previous newsletters, and pictures, email addresses or other items are missing, and you need to see these, contact me. Similarly if you have problems reading this new format newsletter. Comments without provenance will not enable me to help, and will probably be ignored. *Thus, I need: your PC system; which browser; details of the problem.*

The 'photo on the right was taken during the 1999 Eastbourne Ring Meeting, warmer, younger days!
[John Maher](#)

Morris Ring Newsletter No 20xx

**The Morris Ring is the National Association of Mens Morris and Sword Dance Clubs ©
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