The highlights of Newsletter No.96

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Morris Ring Squire’s Diary 2015 is as follows;

- October 31st Anker Morris Ale, Nuneaton

* * * * *

Squire’s Massed Dances for 2016

- Bampton: Rose Tree, Maid of the Mill
- Bledington: William and Nancy, Young Collins
- Brackley: Jockey to the Fair
- Bucknell: Queen’s Delight
- Fieldtown: The Valentine, Balance the Straw
- Headington: Constant Billy, Getting Upstairs
- Lichfield: Vandals of Hammerwich

Future Events

2015

23rd – 25th October  Fools and Beasts Unconvention

Open to all budding or experienced Fools, Beasts and Morris Characters from any team from the Ring, Open or Federation. A truly JMO event!

This year’s Unconvention will be based at Cromford Community Centre, 7/9 Market Place, Cromford, Derbyshire DE4 3RE and will involve workshops, Saturday bus tour to Carsington Water and various other delightful beauty spots! The Feast will probably be at the Greyhound Inn in Cromford. Plus the AGM of course - your chance to have your say!

Accommodation is indoor camping. No showers, I’m afraid, but we may be able to use the amenities of a local camp site a few miles away.
2016

5th March

ARM Hosted by Uttoxeter / Stafford MM.

*Venue will be the same as last year; full details of the weekend to follow in the October/ November Newsletter. Please see page 6 for details of nominations for office.*

23rd April

JMO day of dance, York

*Hosted by the Minster Strays, no further details yet.*

3rd – 5th June

Thaxted Morris Meeting

8th – 10th July

Greensleeves MM 90th Anniversary Meeting

*Based in Chipperfield village, near Hemel Hempstead. For more information contact [bagman@greensleevesmorris.org.uk](mailto:bagman@greensleevesmorris.org.uk) or look on the Greensleeves website.*

15th – 17th July

East Surrey MM 90th Anniversary Meeting

*Based in and around Tadworth, provisional cost £60-70.*

20th – 21st August

Saddleworth Rushcart Meeting

2nd – 4th September

East Suffolk Meeting

*The meeting will be based in the Thomas Mills High School in the small Suffolk Market Town of Framlingham. Accommodation will be in the two large sports halls of the school, with adjoining shower facilities. These halls are linked to the large refectory which will be used for a meal on Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday breakfasts, the formal Feast on Saturday evening, and lunch on Sunday. A large separate room and showers can be provided for female musicians.*
The school is one mile from the town centre, with its impressive thirteenth century castle, and parish church of St Michael the Archangel, which contains important Howard family tombs. The town pubs and hotels serve ales from East Anglian breweries, local ciders, and wines from Suffolk vineyards. The Saturday tours will visit country pubs, and towns on the Suffolk Heritage Coast.

During this weekend meeting the Ring Squire Elect will take office from Adam Garland, the current Ring Squire and member of East Suffolk Morris Men.

There will be a limit of 120 visitors for the weekend, and the estimated cost is £90 per man. Hopefully the final cost will be less than this. A small bursary may be available to offset the cost of the meeting for any young dancers who wish to attend.

28th – 30th October  
Fools and Beasts Unconvention  
Hosted by Wyvern Jubilee.

2017
March  
ARM Hosted by TBA

2nd – 4th June  
Thaxted Morris Meeting

9th – 11th June  
Hartley 65th Anniversary Meeting (provisional)

28th – 30th July  
Ravensbourne Meeting (provisional)
What is the Morris Ring?

From the Desk of Adam Garland, Squire of the Morris Ring

When we dance we represent the Morris Ring; the oldest organisation in the world which promotes Morris Dancing. But, when we consider this, what exactly is the Morris Ring?

The Ring was formed 80 years ago on the back of the arts and crafts movement. Cecil Sharp saw the dance and was inspired to write down what he saw. Along with Mary Neal and the Esperance movement Morris came to the public eye and a number of men developed their dream of a single organisation to represent this traditional dance.

The Ring was formed on a number of basic principles; dancing together, ensuring quality of performance, sharing dances, promoting the dance and so forth; all excellent principles to work to and this has continued to this day.

However, the difficulty is, as soon as someone writes something down, there is a danger that the topic is basically fossilised; it becomes an absolute truth; the way it has been, is, and always should be.

Bearing in mind we have records of Morris dating back to the 14th Century, I do not believe the dance Cecil Sharp saw was exactly the same as those performed in the 1350s. Times change, things evolve; new figures, new steps, new tunes, new musical instruments, and this development, this evolution, is driven by the society around and in which the dance is performed.

External influences and social thinking will have driven the changes in the performance and the look of the dance and this is still going on today. Only a few years ago the Ring voted to accept female musicians. Having regard to the fact that society is still changing and, including legislative changes, there is a greater desire for more inclusivity the Ring will have to evolve further to survive.

So, I go back to the question I asked at the beginning; what is the Morris Ring? Is the Ring an inward-gazing organisation fossilised 80 years ago? Or, is it an organisation which still works on the original principles, is forward thinking, lively, evolving and vibrant, and still valid in today’s societal climate?

Transcript of the Squire’s Toast to the Morris Ring at Anker Meeting 349, 5 September 2015
Morris Ring Annual Representatives’ Meeting, 5th March 2016

This is initial notification that the format for the ARM in March 2016 will be much the same as for the 2015 ARM. Details of alternative accommodation, as requested at the 2015 ARM, are still being finalised. The date was notified earlier via the Google Group.

Final details and booking form will be sent out with the next Newsletter.

With this Newsletter, Bagmen have access to the annual Subscriptions Renewal form, included as an appendix at the end. Subscriptions are payable before 30th November 2015.

Elections

At the 2016 ARM we shall be electing a new Squire of the Morris Ring and several Area Representatives are due for triennial election/re-election.

For the post of Squire, the Constitution requires the following:

1. A biographical statement, 250 words maximum, ideally with some general information about the candidate’s history and general philosophy regarding Morris in general and the Ring in particular.
2. A photograph of the candidate.
3. A supporting statement of 250 words maximum, submitted by the nominating club on their headed paper. Any additional supporting documentation will not be published.

The above documentation must be submitted to the Bagman of the Morris Ring before 30th November 2015. This is also the date for all proposed alterations to the Constitution and formal resolutions to be discussed at the ARM (all submissions to the Bagman please).

Area Representatives (year of re-election in brackets)

North East, Brian Pollard (2016)
Hartley Meeting 346, 11-12 July 2015

Hartley hosted an experimental pay-as-you-go meeting using the Tonbridge Rugby Club at the same time as its Beer Festival. Who would have thought that would work? The Saturday tours and the Sunday JMO day were both very successful and most of the participants became regulars at possibly the only welcoming and friendly Wetherspoons. Due to unexpected demand for alcohol and the toilets at the beer festival (again, who would have thought it?), the speeches at the Feast in the public bar had to be curtailed due to noise. Is this the first time a Ring Meeting Feast has had no Immortal Memory? Is the Immortal Memory mortal?

(Squire of the Ring’s Jig, Lumps of Plum Pudding, Bledington, Hartley JMO event 12th July. Picture courtesy Richard Reader of Steampunk Morris, appropriately in black and white)

Chipperfield Weekend, 10 – 12 July 2015

From the Watford Observer: A crowd of more than a hundred spectators gathered on Chipperfield Common last weekend to watch the Greensleeves Morris Men of Wimbledon. Together with Dolphin Morris of Nottingham, Barnsley Longsword and the Great Yorkshire Morris Men, the group performed a programme of traditional dances from Friday, July 10 to Sunday, July 12, outside the Windmill pub and the Two Brewers pub, which received a “great reaction from everyone”.

David Legg, Greensleeves squire, said: “We had a fantastic welcome from the people of Chipperfield. We are always guaranteed a warm welcome.”

(Picture courtesy Watford Observer)
**Mersey Meeting 347, 15 August 2015**

A hugely successful day of dance hosted by Mersey began with a Ferry across the Mersey (can you guess what they played over the tannoy?). The sun shone, the various teams (Adelaide, Adlington, Chapel-en-le-Frith, Harthill, Kinnerton, Thelwall and Mersey themselves) were treated to appreciative audiences of both locals and tourists and the lunch spot at the Baltic Fleet in Wapping was also graced with a party of 30-odd Irish lady runners, several of whom insisted on demonstrating their Irish dancing skills!

**Saddleworth Rushcart Meeting 348, 22-23 August 2015**

All human life is here! The Saddleworth Rushcart should be on everyone’s bucket list. To see the controlled aggression and precision of Saddleworth Morris dancing on home turf, with what seems to be the entire population of the area turning out to support them, coupled with the opportunity to haul a 2½ tonne cart seven miles....

Apart from one three-minute downpour (itself a welcome refresher for warm dancers and cart-pullers), there was none of the traditional Saddleworth liquid sunshine. The standard of dancing from the many guest teams was high, as every team performed their best in front of a large and enthusiastic audience. This is always an enjoyable event – a unique experience, plenty of dancing opportunities and a warm welcome from the hosts and the public.

*(All pictures courtesy Hazel Melville)*
**Anker Meeting 349, 4-6 September 2015**

Tony Ashley writes: A benign but noisy invasion of Warwickshire and Leicestershire took place when thirteen morris sides assembled for Anker Morris Men’s 40th Anniversary Ring Meeting.

On Friday 4th September visitors were greeted with hot food and Church End beers, including the special anniversary brew, One-Two-Three Hop, before moving on to a couple of Bulkington village pubs for music and song sessions. Neither of the two landlords had previously experienced a large morris gathering and were somewhat bemused by it all. However, later that night, both were seen sporting wide grins, full tills and empty cellars.

The following day started dull but fine and two tours visited canalside pubs, market squares and a brewery before meeting up at the Rose at Baxterley. This village pub, complete with duck pond and sunshine, was the site for massed dancing overseen by Squire of the Ring Adam Garland. Although all sides were Cotswold four provided sword dances to give some variety with Coventry’s *a cappella* Papa Stour being notable.

Sides were then bussed back to Bulkington for a splendid Feast at Weston Hall Hotel. After the Feast, the speeches and songs, a number of diehards continued dancing until after midnight.
Sunday dawned bright and sunny with sides taking the short walk to St. James Church for a service led by Anker’s own David Wintle with Anker dancing in a very tight chancel.

A convoy then left for Coombe Abbey Country Park on the outskirts of Coventry for more massed dancing and lunch. The park was very full and provided a reasonable audience.

Following what was agreed to have been an excellent weekend of fine dancing sides departed for home.

(photo courtesy Joe Oldaker)

The weekend proved somewhat of a family affair. The picture left shows Squire of the Ring Adam Garland as an honorary Anker man, his sister Emma Melville as bagman and lead musician for the weekend and her husband Jon, the Bagman of the Ring. Anker’s Squire at the moment, and for the weekend, was Toby Melville (can you guess whose son he is?) and Adam’s father, Past Squire Mike Garland, and his son, Sam, were also in attendance.

(photos courtesy Hazel Melville)
Morris Ring Newsletter No 96

Page: 11

October 2015

Sadly Missed

Peter Wallis, Lichfield Morris Men

Peter Wallis of Lichfield MM died on 23rd July 2015 after a long illness.

Peter joined the newly re-formed Lichfield Morris Men in 1980. For the next 34 years he served several terms of office as Squire, Bagman and Foreman of the side. He was also the principal musician for much of that time, playing melodeon, both for Lichfield Morris and for Beggars Oak Clog Dancers, as well as a number of ceilidh bands.

He will be remembered by many within the Morris world and beyond for his good nature, sense of humour and raucous laugh. A full obituary will appear in the next Ring Circular.

(Photo courtesy Duncan Rippon, Lichfield MM).

Ian Heighton, Fool and former squire of The King’s Morris

Ian died on 9th August 2015 after several months battling cancer.

Professor Norman Peacock

Norman died at home in Milngavie on 11th August. His 90th birthday would have been on the 14th. He had been frail for some years. The Travelling Morrice remember Norman's spirited rendition of The Lampton Worm and of Blaydon Races in his native dialect, his habit of tying handkerchiefs when not in use round his neck and his inspired folly. Sword men value his tensile analysis of sword locks.

(Photo (right) by Maggie Easton, provided by Graham Cox)
Syd Barber, Ripley Morris Men

Syd was a founder member of the reformed Ripley side in 1981 and a stalwart right up to the week before his death at the age of 86 in early September. He was a true gentleman, an enthusiast for all things morris and will be particularly remembered for the Selkirk Grace at Ripley's Ale Feast each January and his encyclopaedic repertoire of song and monologues.

From Private Eye, July 20th 2015

... and remarkably lacking in the usual “humour” the Press direct at the Morris.
**Trigg on the Big Screen**

Roger Hancock, Trigg Bagman, writes:

With a history of television appearances with the likes of Oz Clark, James May and Rory Bremner behind them, Trigg were drawn this year by the attraction of a Big Screen opportunity. Early in the year a dozen or so made an early start to Mevagissey that had been transformed into ‘Port Jago’ to feature in ‘The Bad Education Movie.’

Prior to the event there was great discussion with the company about Tunes and Dances that had to be cleared for copyright, but on the day all that seemed to be forgotten. After spending about 6 hours relaxing and entertaining in the local Social Club where food and drink were provided in abundance it was time to do the acting bit for the cameras, leading a procession along the Harbourside.

The day was not too onerous, and there were a few retakes, but the funds provided the wherewithal for many of the side to attend the recent Anker Meeting. A good result all round.

So, if you rush to see ‘The Bad Education Movie,’ look out for Trigg at the head of the procession, but when you do, remember they can do some proper dances too.

**Dolphin Morris Men make the Spanish press**

Dolphin’s excursion to Orpesa in Spain made it into the local newspaper.

*(Photo provided by Bob Hine)*
Morris Ring Display Boards

Are you making full use of this asset?

If you have any opportunity to make use of one of the five sets we possess please contact your Area Rep or the Ring Bagman.

If you want to use them, even if a set is not currently in your area, arrangements can be made to get a set to you.

This is what the complete set of three banners looks like.
Morris Ring Publications

😊 Anthony Foard: Editor of the Morris Circular
33 Cunningham Drive, Bromborough, Wirral, CHESHIRE. CH63 0JX
Mobile Tel: 01513344566
thecircular@themorrisring.org

😊 Mac McCoig Editor of the Morris Dancer
8 Redhills, Eccleshall, Staffordshire ST21 6JW
Tel: 01785 851052
mac.mccoig@btinternet.com

The latest edition of The Morris Dancer is available for download
http://www.themorrisring.org/publications/morris-dancer

😊 On-line Links:

The main MR website with millions of pages stuffed to the gunnels with all you need to know about the MR:
http://www.themorrisring.org/

Follow the latest media reports concerning Morris Matters at
http://www.themorrisring.org/article/morris-matters

The Morris Ring Google Group (MRGG). Private Forum for debate or announcements.
http://groups.google.com/group/the-morris-ring?hl=en&pli=1

Contact the Morris Ring Bagman to register to use.

Morris Ring Facebook site:
http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Morris-Ring/158759257502840

Morris Ring Twitter:
http://twitter.com/#!/TheMorrisRing
Call for Contributions

Any items of Morris-related news, please send to me at bagman@themorrisring.org for inclusion in the next Newsletter. Longer pieces to Tony Foard, please, for the Circular.

If you have any photographs, you can send them to Duncan Broomhead, the Morris Ring Photo Archivist (duncan.broomhead@btinternet.com) and any articles, ideally accompanied with photographs, can be submitted to Tony Foard, the Editor of the Morris Ring Circular, details above.

Cliff Marchant, Keeper of the Morris Ring Scrapbook, is always delighted to receive appropriate contributions, and Charlie Corcoran, the Keeper of the Morris Ring Log Book, is keen to receive stories about Ring events, both the formal and the quirky (Charliecorcoran7@ntlworld.com).
Appendix – Ring Subscription documentation

PLEASE DO READ THIS ~ IMPORTANT for 2015-2016

If any person in your side wishes to receive their own personal copy of either the Morris Ring Newsletter or Circular, please contact the Treasurer for the ‘Individual Publication Subscription’ form.

My thanks to those of you who have taken the time and trouble to assist me by setting up your annual subscription Bankers Standing Order. It is hoped that this will not require any amending for some considerable time. To help us do so, by keeping our costs down, please will all sides that can set up a BSO. Details are:- HSBC Sort code 40-41-44 Account number 31276018 Reference name of side

I am aware that some members’ bank accounts do not allow them to initiate BSO’s. If this is the case for your side, please send your payment with the completed renewal form. As in previous years the subscription deadline remains St. Andrew’s Day ~ 30th November 2015. All sides must complete a form.

If you are not the person responsible to your side for settling this payment please forward this form to the person who is….. ASAP. Please do not hang onto it until after the deadline date.

This subscription renewal document can be completed either by hand or, when received via email, as a FORM word.doc. When opting for the latter, please note that the ‘repertoire’ boxes can be crossed by double left clicking on the desired box to cause the ‘Check Box Form Field Options’ menu to appear. Left click on the ‘checked’ bullet and then [OK]. An ‘X’ will then appear in the box of your choice. It’s that easy.

THIRD PARTY PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE

Your new insurance document will run from the 25th January 2016. If you settle your annual subscription dues before 30/11/15, you will receive your Morris side’s insurance document by e-mail from the Morris Ring Treasurer before the insurance renewal date. If your subscription is NOT received by the date stated, the additional £10 becomes due and your insurance document may be delayed.

PLEASE NOTE. Should an incident occur and you believe that a third party claim could be likely, never admit liability or sign anything that may later be taken as admitting liability. Obtain all personal details of any possible witnesses, preferably independent, and if appropriate, produce a small sketch plan or photograph of the area in question. If the Police were involved, include their case reference number.

PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE (OPTIONAL)

This deadline remains 20th January 2016. The application/renewal form will be available in our next Newsletter. For a policy schedule, please see:-


STATEMENT FOLLOWING MENDIP ARM FEBRUARY 2011

At the ARM changes were made to the Morris Ring Constitution to clarify those Morris clubs eligible for membership. These were expressed to be those clubs who restrict their dancing or acting (in the context of mumming or associated traditions) to men.

By renewing membership for the year 2015-2016 and subsequent years, member clubs in the Morris Ring will be deemed to accept this restriction into their own clubs’ Constitutions whether written or informally held. If any member club of the Morris Ring should not abide by this restriction, the Morris Ring Officers reserve the power to take action to uphold the Constitution of the Morris Ring, including the suspension from membership or expulsion from, the Morris Ring of such a club.

Steven Archer
Treasurer, The Morris Ring.
MORRIS RING ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION – MEMBER SIDE – 2015-2016

Before completing this form, please read the notes overleaf. The information you provide below is needed to ensure our records are up to date. If you have already settled by either BSO or cheque, please complete the top section of this form. Your continued assistance in helping us to help you is appreciated.

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Please indicate if any of the above information differs from last year: Yes ☐ No ☐

Repertoire:
- Cotswold Morris ☐
- Border Morris ☐
- North West Morris ☐
- Longsword Dances ☐
- Rapper Sword ☐
- Mummers Plays ☐
- Molly Dance ☐
- Other ☐
- Please describe: |

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Contact information provided to the Morris Ring is collected for its database, to be used for Morris Ring membership purposes and activity. It will be published and circulated to members and others with a legitimate interest in the information. However the person supplying it to the Morris Ring agrees to any disclosure of the information that may occur inadvertently outside of that purpose. Please contact the Bagman if this presents any problems.

MEMBER (Cheque Payments) SUBSCRIPTIONS 2015 - 2016

The member’s annual subscription: [Includes two copies of each Morris Circular and one copy of each Bagman’s Newsletter]. If any person wishes to receive their own copy of the Morris Ring Newsletter or Circular, please contact the Treasurer for the publication subscription form

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Subscription TOTAL

| Morris Ring Archive group donation | £ : |
| Morris Ring 75th Anniversary Youth Fund | £ : |
| TOTAL | £ : |
MORRIS RING ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION – ASSOCIATE SIDE – 2015-2016

Before completing this form, please read the notes overleaf. The information you provide below is needed to ensure our records are up to date. If you have already settled by either BSO or cheque, please complete the top section of this form. Your continued assistance in helping us to help you is appreciated.

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Email contact if other than above

Please indicate if any of the above information differs from last year: Yes ☐ No ☐

Repertoire:
- Cotswold Morris ☐
- Border Morris ☐
- North West Morris ☐
- Longsword Dances ☐
- Rapper Sword ☐
- Mummers Plays ☐
- Molly Dance ☐
- Other ☐
- Please describe:

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ASSOCIATE (Cheque Payments) SUBSCRIPTIONS 2015 - 2016

The associate’s annual subscription: [Includes one copies of each Morris Circular and one copy of each Bagman’s Newsletter]. If any person wishes to receive their own copy of the Morris Ring Newsletter or Circular, please contact the Treasurer for the publication subscription form

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|                    | £        | £        |
| Morris Ring Archive group donation | : | : |
| Morris Ring 75th Anniversary Youth Fund | : | : |
| TOTAL | £ : | £ : |

Please make your cheque payable to ‘The Morris Ring’ and send the same, with this completed form, to: -

Steven Archer, 28 The Glade, Fetcham, Surrey KT22 9TH

If you pay by BSO please e-mail this form to:- RingTreasurer@themorrisring.org
Appendix – ARM application documentation

### The Morris Ring – Annual Representatives’ Meeting Sat 5th March 2016

Name of Side: ..........................................................

Contact Name: ..........................................................

Names of other attendees: ..........................................................

Email: ..........................................................

Tel No: ..........................................................

Address: .................................................................

Postcode: ..........................................................

**Saturday: Workshops:**

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<td>&amp; Sunday breakfast (£25 per person in shared twin room)</td>
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<td>Saturday Breakfast (for campers* &amp; early arrivals)</td>
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<td>Saturday ARM - including feast</td>
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* There is **very limited** camping available (for which there will be a small charge). It is essential to book in advance through Mac McCoig. There may also be the possibility of local indoor camping in the village hall in Church Easton; please notify Mac McCoig if you wish him to pursue this option.

Please specify number of non-alcohol drinkers ............................................

Please specify how many require vegetarian meals ...........................................

Please indicate if disabled access is required Yes / No

Please print this form, fill it in and post it (with a cheque for the requisite amount) made payable to "**Uttoxeter Morris Men to**":

Mac McCoig, 8 Redhills, Eccleshall, Staffs. ST21 6JW