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The officers of the Morris Ring would like to wish all of you the very best for the festive season.
Future Events

2016

15th – 17th January  Jigs Instructional

An intensive weekend of tuition in jigs for the main Cotswold traditions, all levels of experience and expertise accommodated with expert and patient tuition, excellent food, hospitality and beer. All for £47. See the advert later in this edition.

21st February  Longborough Instructional

The first Harry Taylor’s Men workshop, exploring the Longborough tradition of Cotswolds morris, will take place on Sunday 21st February, 2016. The workshop will be held at The Lost Theatre in Stockwell, London - SW8 2JU. http://www.losttheatre.co.uk/index.php/your-visit/find-us. The workshop will begin at 10 AM and end at 4 PM, with a lunch break around 12:30 when there will be the option to visit an excellent local pub, The Priory Arms, for food and refreshment.

The workshop starts from the premise that it should be possible for a team of dancers to perform a stand of 5 Longborough dances, and yet current popular interpretation renders the average dancer, having danced properly, incapable of performing more than one. We aim to reintroduce to the Morris world an interpretation of Henry Taylor’s Longborough that we argue is more pleasing to the eye, more suited to the body, and offers tunes played more lyrically to the ear.

Please contact David Thompson at dwhthompson@yahoo.co.uk if you would like to attend the workshop.

5th March  ARM Hosted by Uttoxeter / Stafford MM.

See later in this issue for details.
23rd April  

**JMO day of dance, York**

*Hosted by the Minster Strays, see details below. Applications to the Ring Bagman urgently, please – only 14 places to allocate.*

3rd – 5th June  

**Thaxted Morris Meeting**

11th June  

**Letchworth regional JMO day of dance**

*Day of dance open to sides from all Morris organisations. Applications directly to Letchworth Bagman Andrew Harper on harperandrew937@gmail.com.*

8th – 10th July  

**Greensleeves MM 90th Anniversary Meeting**

*Based in Chipperfield village, near Hemel Hempstead. For more information contact 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**

*Plans are progressing well for the East Suffolk Ring Meeting. Although they have had considerable support from clubs in the South and East they would be pleased to have expressions of interest from clubs further afield, particularly from North West or Sword teams. They would appreciate communication from clubs before **January 20th**. Please remember that it may be possible to offer your young dancers a small bursary. Contact mike.garland1@btinternet.com*
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** (details TBA)

28th – 30th July       **Ravensbourne Meeting** (details TBA)
JIGS THE MORRIS RING Instructional 2016

TUNEFUL JOLLITY MOUTHWATERING FOOD
EXPERT AND PATIENT TEACHING COSY INDOOR CAMPING
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1st/2nd timer discounts. SOLD OUT IN 2015!

Booking info at www.themorrisring.org or get in touch with the Bagman, Tony Foard: jigsawinstructional@themorrisring.org.
Joint Morris Organisations' National Day of Dance 2016 in York
Organised by the Morris Federation and Minster Strays Morris

Where and when?
In York on Saturday 23rd April 2016 from 10 am to 5 pm

How do we get to be part of this event?
Contact your side’s Morris organisation (The Morris Federation, The Morris Ring or Open Morris) as soon as possible, and at the latest by 31st January with the following information:

- Side name
- Contact name
- Contact email
- Contact mobile phone
- Website address
- Dance style (e.g. Cotswold, North-West, Rapper, Border, Molly, Longsword, …)
- Approximate number attending (only for information)
- Will your side be staying in the York area for Saturday evening?
- Any additional notes (e.g. children's side…)

Please note that The Morris Federation would prefer it if teams did not have to share musicians to allow dance tours to be as mixed as possible.

Places will be limited to 55, and allocated in proportion 55% - 25% - 20% so there will be room for 30 Federation sides, 14 Morris Ring sides and 11 Open Morris sides.

What's the programme?
Dancing in York during the day at a number of dance spots within walking distance of each other, followed by all teams gathering together at the end of the afternoon for a massed social dance, which will conclude the formal programme for the day. There will also be an opportunity to get together in the evening for music, singing and socialising, and hopefully a ceilidh.

You will be responsible for your own travel, accommodation, food and drink at your own cost. Information on accommodation, transport links, park+ride, cafés, pubs etc. will be provided through the JMO Day of Dance website, which will be updated on a regular basis. However, please do not book travel and accommodation until your place is confirmed.

So, if you would like to join us, please remember to let your Morris organisation know as soon as possible before 31st January, so that Minster Strays Morris can make the final arrangements with full knowledge of the number and styles of teams attending.
**Morris Ring Annual Representatives’ Meeting, 5th March 2016**

**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.

**Squire of the Morris Ring**

There is one candidate for Squire of the Morris Ring, Eddie Worrall.

Personal statement:
"I started Morris dancing in the mid-1990’s when I joined a Cotswold side, Green Oak Morris Men, my home town team in Doncaster. Following a work move to Manchester, I joined Saddleworth Morris Men in 2000 and have danced with them since. I have been the team’s Treasurer, Rushcart Secretary (twice) with responsibility for organising our Rushcart weekend and am now Squire of the side. I also served as Treasurer of the Morris Ring during the period 2009-2012, taking over from Steve Adamson (BFB) who was a valuable source of help and advice. I currently am a member of the Morris Ring Advisory Council and act as Morris Ring Auditor. A major change in the Morris world in my time has been the emergence of the JMO with greater communication and co-operation between the 3 Morris Organisations. The Morris Ring has played a full part in this. Working together across the Morris world on areas of common concern has brought significant benefits to all. I believe it will continue to do so and would work for that. Issues such as recruitment or sides folding remain as pressing as ever and initiatives already in place need to be supported and developed. There are no quick answers but despair is not an option we can accept. Whatever else, we must remember we dance Morris because we enjoy it!"
Eddie is nominated by Jockey Morris Men:

Jockey are honoured and delighted to support Ed Worrall’s nomination as Squire of the Morris Ring. We’ve known Ed around fifteen years and always held him in high regard; he is friendly, approachable and very knowledgeable about morris.

Best known as a member of Saddleworth, Ed started with Cotswold in Doncaster; from 1996 dancing and playing melodeon for Green Oak, a side he still has close ties with.

2000 saw the birth of the Ed Worrall everyone in morris knows; joining Saddleworth as dancer and musician. Within two years he’d become treasurer, putting that role aside to take on arguably one of the most high-profile roles in morris – Rushcart Secretary. Ability to work with all types of people from councils to police and residents to morrismen ensured this landmark event ran successfully.

In 2009 Ed was elected Ring Treasurer, a role held until 2012. During his tenure, apart from Ring affairs, Ed was involved with JMO. His people skills enabled him to forge excellent working relationships with officers of Fed and Open; relationships that still hold.

After two more Rushcarts Ed is now squire of Saddleworth.

He is well-known at dance-outs, festivals and feasts across the country; either as an individual guest, or part of Saddleworth. He keeps his finger on the pulse of current morris, particularly through social media; Ed contributes wise comments on many threads, covering the whole morris continuum.

Ed has the experience, knowledge, support and personality to be an excellent Squire. Jockey fully supports his nomination.
Area Representatives (year of re-election in brackets)

North East, Brian Pollard (2016)

Mike Stevens has decided not to stand again; Nigel Strudwick of Devil’s Dyke Morris Men has been nominated for the position:

Nigel Strudwick has been a member of Devil’s Dyke MM since 1992. He has been their Bagman in 1996-1999 and 2010-2011, and Squire in 2003-2006 and again in 2015. He was a strong advocate of DDMM finally applying for full membership of the Ring. An Egyptologist by profession, at universities and museums, he has many publications to his credit. Other interests apart from Egypt and the Morris are wine, railways and blues music.
Morris Ring Newsletter No 9

December 2015

Sadly Missed

Roy Dommett 1933 - 2015

Mike Garland writes:

Roy Dommett first saw Morris Dancing at Bristol University in the early 1950s. He followed the Morris Side during the summer and the Rapper Team in the winter, but although he was asked to carry the collecting tin he did not start to dance until after University, when a friend invited Roy to help form a new Morris Side in Farnborough. Through their musician, Reg Hall, he was introduced to Frank Purslow, and to Abingdon Morris Men. He was with them for twelve years, but also had connections with other Sides, including Oxford City and Thames Valley. He was working at the time on the Blue Streak project, but when it was cancelled he found that he had a two year period when little was happening, so Roy took to investigating the recent history of the dance. He went to see every surviving collector, and every surviving member of the original Travelling Morrice team – Kenworthy Schofield, Douglas Kennedy, Maud Karpeles, Clive Carey. Using the information he gathered from them and from original field notes he began to run instructional sessions, often helped by Tubby Reynolds.

I spent a day with Roy and Marguerite in June 2011. It was perhaps not so much an interview as a gentle ramble through many topics, but there were interesting points made. Talking of the old Cotswold Sides he said, “The notations are only the core – the dances could be elaborated.” In Eynsham – “Each man had a range of favourite figures, so if he was No.1 he would call his own figures.” He spoke of the eventual stabilisation of the dances, largely because there were so few dancers. Four at Bampton one year, four at Abingdon, so visiting dancers had to be drafted in to the teams. In some of his comments Roy echoed the sentiments of Ivor Allsop. Ivor once said that young dancers should have one foot in the past but two in the future. Roy spoke about including jive and Bunny Hop in his folk dance sessions, and the need for Morris dancers to take on some elements of classical dance and acting. “A little
bit of acting training would do wonders for the average Morris Side.” Dancers, he suggested, should be on the balls of their feet, should look as if they are enjoying their dance, and should make eye contact with the audience. As with any time spent with Roy there was much laughter, much to consider, a little controversy, but an overwhelming sense of pleasure at having been able to spend time in company of a great personality.

**Dennis Salt**

Dennis started dancing in the 1940’s with Thames Valley and became the first Squire of the Broadwood side. He died on 11th November aged 85.

**John Havercroft**

John, squire of North Wood Morris 2007-2011, lost his battle with leukaemia on 11th November. Stephen Collingwood, current North Wood squire, recalls his infectious smile and as a “general piss-taker and deflator of pomposity.”

**Vic Godrich**

Greensleeves member Vic Godrich passed away on 19th November. As far as we are aware, he was the only morris man to have won a BAFTA (for sound recording in 1987).

**Ben Green**

Brian Pearce of Redcar Sword writes: Ben Green passed away on Thursday 26 November 2015 at the age of 71.

Ben was an active member of Redcar Sword Dancers from 1968 to 2008 until ill health eventually forced him to give up an activity that he greatly loved. During this time he performed a number of roles at our annual Boxing Day performance of the Greatham Sword Dance and Play, and appeared twice
with the team at the EFDSS Albert Hall events. He was also part of the winning team on a number of occasions at the Sword Dance Union’s Longsword Tournament. Despite moving away from the area for work reasons for a couple of years, he would always try to join us whenever we had bookings at festivals, becoming what we termed a ‘country member’.

Ben was also a fine singer and a regular performer for many years at the Cutty Wren Folk Club and the now defunct Eston Folk Club.

Noted for his sense of fun and an enviable memory for people and names he will be sadly missed.

**Malcolm Walker**

Malcolm Walker passed away on Monday 7 December 2015 at the age of 62

Malcolm was an active member of Redcar Sword Dancers from 1973 to 1986 when he moved out of the area. During his time with the team, he was part of the Boxing Day team at Greatham either as a dancer, clown or doctor. He could also be called upon to be our musician on occasion with a huge six barrelled harmonica that looked like the spokes of a wheel! Malcolm also danced with Redcar offshoots, Cleveland Morris and the Cleveland Country Dance Team.

Malcolm will be sadly missed by all that knew him.
**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

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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

The Morris Shop
"the Bells and Whistles"

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).