



Secretary's Newsletter January 2009

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OM News

AGM 2008

Minutes and officers' reports have recently been sent by email to the nominated address for distribution to side members as seen fit. Where we don't have an email address, the email address bounces or members have said they cannot read attachments, the documents will be sent by snailmail.

Next AGM

The next Open Morris AGM will be held on a Sunday as usual in late November 2009, hosted by Rag Morris of Bristol. More details nearer the time. Many thanks to Rag Morris for offering to do this.

Area Reps

The AGM voted to keep the post of Area Reps for them as wants to do it. We could do with new reps for East Midlands (though Phil Watson who has recently volunteered to be Area Rep for the West Midlands could do this too if no-one else volunteers) Central South, South East England and Wales – but if you would like to do the job for your area, we'll carve one out for you!

Subscriptions

Can I remind members that by the time you read this, you should have paid your subs to Wendy Bostock. Having to remind people creates extra work for Wendy so please feel free to feel guilty if this applies to you!

Side email addresses – emails still bouncing

I know I've said this before, but I'll say it again: we now have a more-or-less comprehensive list of email addresses for our members. However some addresses occasionally reject our emails. This is very frustrating and time-consuming, so it would be a great help if the side member whose email address has been given to us could tell their email account to accept emails from the Officers of OM. The addresses are:

Membership Secretary: wbstock@mistral.co.uk
Chair: stevebutler62@supanet.com
Secretary: secretaryofom@yahoo.co.uk
Treasurer: phil.watson3@ntlworld.com
Web Officer: jlw1002@cam.ac.uk
Publicity Officer: OpenPublicity@aol.com
Editor of Dancing On!: jen@bunkfest.co.uk

Thanks very much in advance!

New Editor of Dancing On

We now have a new editor for "Dancing On!", Jenny Newson of Borderline Morris. She's a graphic designer and festival organiser, has been involved in Morris for 13 years, and dances or has danced with 5 sides. She's very keen and has lots of good ideas, and all she needs now is stuff to put in – so please send her articles, letters, photos etc to

***** Amplified Music and Insurance – an important message to all member sides *****

From the Treasurer and Membership Secretary, following discussions with our Insurers:

Please remember that you can only use amplified music to accompany Morris Dancing where you are at/on premises or events covered by a Public Entertainments Licence, or a Temporary Events Notice. The onus is on YOU to check that the event organisers have the appropriate licence/notice in place should you wish to use amplification.

Morris is normally exempt from the Provisions of the Licensing Act only when using unamplified music. Using amplified music without a licence is illegal and thus may invalidate the Insurance.

The implications of this are that should you then cause any damage or injury (that would have been claimable through the Public Liability Insurance) the Officers of your side may become jointly and personally responsible for the ensuing costs.

Personal Accident Insurance – upper age limit increased to 70

Here is a message from our broker Michael Stimpson, about an increase in the upper age limit to 70. Please read it carefully as a time limit applies to applications.

Over the years I have received a number of requests from Sides wanting to decrease and / or increase the age limits on this policy.

Some years ago I got the minimum age reduced from the normal 18 to 16 but failed to increase the maximum age from 65.

With the bulk of Side members being in their late 50s and early 60s I have made the point that the policy will lose about 50% of its members over the next four or five years.

As a result I am pleased to advise that RSA have just agreed to increase the maximum age to 70 with effect from the March additions.

This is, in fact, quite a concession as it is not normal to alter the ages on a group PA policy for a number of very sound underwriting reasons.

A Group PA policy is aimed at those of employment age and is designed to go some way to replace lost income in the event of an accident.

There are also underwriting problems with those under or over the normal age limits and PA cover for both groups is not normally available on the same basis as for those between 18 and 65.

Sides need to be made aware that they can make a second application for those who fall into the age group 65-70 from the 25th of March (applications by 19th March).

The 25th of March addition date is for A) Sides who failed to get a return in by the 19th of January. B) The odd new member and now C) those who are between 65 and 70.

The cost, including ipt, is £1.25 per person for 10 months' cover.

March is the only time additional Side members can be added to the policy.

Any Side who has not paid a subscription to at least one of the three Morris Orgs. but who has paid for Personal Accident Insurance will not be covered even though they have paid the premium. If they are not members then they can not be covered.

I mention this as one Side I was speaking to were unsure if they had paid (I hope they have now) and another Side sent me their membership forms twice (but without a cheque). No names no pack drill. I hope I have done all I can to ensure that both these Sides communicate with the relevant MO.

Michael Stimpson

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Workshops

OM North West Morris Workshop

hosted by [Rumworth Morris of Bolton](#)

Date: Saturday 14th March 2009

Times: 10:00 Tea/Coffee;

The workshop will commence at **10:30** and will be in 2 sessions, with 1hr for lunch and a programmed session for discussion, finishing at **4pm**.

Cost: £4/head

Venue: Deane Church Hall, Junction Road, Bolton

Workshop:

The workshop will teach the Deane Memorial Morris Dance (in the Deane Memorial Hall!). We shall discuss the Rumworth philosophy regarding the North West tradition and our approach to it. We shall focus also on the music and its relationship with the dance.

Who Should Come:

Anyone, dancer OR musician who is interested in the North West tradition, its roots and learning something about the style.

Booking (by 21st Feb please):

Please let us know your interest in attending by sending an e-mail to norman.bearon@btinternet.com or a stamped addressed envelope to

Further details and directions will then be sent out.

Footwear: Please note that dancing will be in SHOES – no clogs please.

Other Events

Joint Morris Organisations Day of Dance – Nottingham Revels - 28 March 2009

You should all have received an invitation to this event in Nottingham, organised by Lady Bay Revellers. The Open Morris side quota was swiftly filled but we are running a waiting list in case anyone drops out or the other two organisations don't manage to fill their quotas. Junior sides are exempt from the quota and there is a separate rapper event outside the quota, so places may still be available – contact Chris Hall. However Lady Bay Revellers will need to be drawing up their rotas so don't delay too long!

Scarborough Fayre – 19th – 21st June 2009

Yorkshire Coast Morris are organising Scarborough Fayre's 20th Morris Festival and Yorkshire Coast's 30th birthday celebrations on this weekend, as well as Shirley's 40th birthday – or so she says. For more details contact Shirley Doyle at Northfield, Middle Lane, Hutton Buscel, Scarborough, YO13 9LP, or email sadoyle04@yahoo.co.uk and she can send you booking forms, camping details, B&B concession list and all the bumph. Tel 01723 862842.

I've got a flyer for this but it's big so I won't be emailing it to you. However the gist is as below, and you can find a brief description here <http://www.yorkshirecoastmorris.org.uk/>

All teams are invited and there will be scratch teams for Border (Freaks in the Peaks) and Cotswold (Scragenz) for lone dancers. The all-inclusive cost for the weekend is £30 per person, free for children 14 years and under. Payment must be made by 1st May 2009 after which the cost will be £35 each.

If you can let Shirley know you are interested by 3rd February that would be helpful, but don't worry if you cannot commit yourselves until later. A £10 deposit per person (non-refundable) will secure you a place.

Events are:

Friday night: get-together at the Downe Arms Hotel, Wykeham, Scarborough.

Saturday: Tours of Scarborough and surrounding district (Whitby, Robin Hood's Bay, Filey, Bridlington, Burton Agnes Hall.

Saturday night: Ceilidh with "Peeping Tom", plus a young person's ceilidh; alternative dance band; Scragenz's Dance Out, and interval acts. There will be buses to and from the campsite.

Sunday morning: dancing on Scarborough seafront, and presentation of the Gordon Crowther Memorial Staff. Procession to the Spa Complex. Plus dancing on the beach, breaking the Guinness Book of Records for the most morris dancers dancing all in one place at the same time.

Sunday afternoon: ceilidh in the Spa Suncourt.

Two Rivers Folk Music & Morris Festival – 3rd – 5th July, Chepstow, Monmouthshire An Invitation from the hosts, The Widders Border Morris

Dear Morris friends

You are invited to join us in Chepstow for a fantastic weekend of music, dance and crazy capers. The festival will be held at Chepstow Racecourse and in picturesque Chepstow town, nestled between the River Wye and River Severn in the beautiful Wye Valley. This year looks like being the best so far with new campsite (walking distance to town), indoor toilets and hot showers, shuttle bus, major concerts under the grandstand, ceilidhs, workshops, beer festivals, sessions, folk club and of course plenty of dancing around the town on Saturday 4th and at the riverbank with procession on Sunday 5th.

Our headline is **Seth Lakeman**, plus many more performers such as **The Clay Faces, Cruel Folk, 3 Daft Monkeys, James Hollingsworth, Whapweasel, 5 Furious Fish, Catrin O'Niell, Zooxs, Black Rat** and many more to follow.

Two Rivers is a friendly Community/family festival with lots to do for everyone, so we hope you will be able to attend and join with us in making it a fabulous weekend of fun.

We have done our utmost to keep costs to a minimum. We have reduced prices from last year.

Morris performers and partners £22.00 weekend Inc camping.

12 to 16 year old £12.00 weekend Inc camping
Morris performers and partners not camping £15.00 weekend
Weekend cost includes entry to all venues including ceilidhs

For attendance form and full details, times, maps etc please contact Mickwider mickwider@aol.com tel:
07870 611 979

Further details also on www.tworiversfolkfestival.com

Other stuff

Mr Fox

Open Morris members Mr Fox don't often get to attend events with other sides, as they are an after-dark side. They say, "It is such a shame that there is so little we are able to join in with involving lots of other teams. We seldom get the chance to mix and mingle!" If you're organising an event with after-dark activities, please consider inviting them. Have a look at their website www.mr-fox.org.uk. Contact Mr Fox at reynard@mr-fox.org.uk

Request for Photos of Morris kit

"I am about to restart my collection of photos of Morris Kit now that I have a bit more spare time (just stood down as chairman/organiser of the Potty Morris Dance Festival). I would like photos of one or two members in full kit from as many sides as possible. I'd like them in jpeg format so that I can enlarge them to be A4 size. Photographs from websites are generally not of good enough quality to enlarge. Please send them to me at thelobsterpotties@btopenworld.com, or phone 01263 821514 for my address.

Thanks,

Tony Chadwick (Lobster Potties)"

Invitation and Request from Red Stags Morris

Red Stags Morris - still dancing after all these years - will be celebrating their 40th anniversary on Saturday 23rd and Sunday 24th May 2009.

They would like to invite as many past members as possible to join them in their celebrations. If you are, know of, or suspect anyone else of being a previous member or associate of the side and are interested, please, contact Christina Pritchard, email: christina@redstagsmorris.org.

If you have any photos, newspaper clippings, amusing anecdotes, etc. they would be grateful for copies of these for the archive.

Bells

The manufacturers have produced a run of morris bells and these are now available from the Morris Federation and the Morris Ring. Many thanks to Steve Adamson of the Morris Ring for organising this.

Morris Federation shop (current prices are not shown on the website so you'll need to contact the treasurer for these – link to Treasurer's email is on this page): <http://www.morrisfed.org/mf/reform.cgi?file=shopuk.html>

Morris Ring shop <http://www.themorrisring.org/Shop.htm#bells>

Morris Film – “Morris: A Life with Bells on”

There's a feature film out about Morris which Chaz Oldham from Twist Films assures us, is

“a heartwarming feature-length comedy shot in documentary format that follows the fortunes of one of the leading Morris teams in the country, Milsham Morris, and in particular those of its leader, Derecq Twist. *Morris* is a gentle and affectionate look at an aspect of English culture which is, in the

finest traditions of this country, unapologetically eccentric ... *Morris* boasts a cast which includes Derek Jacobi, Harriet Walter, Greg Wise and Aidan McArdle."

Here's a link to the film's website <http://www.morrismovie.com/> where you can read the plot and see some footage.

At present it has only limited distribution through a company called Moviola, a rural mobile multiplex service in the South West of England, and Twist Films, who made it, would like to get it a wider circulation – of course. They hope that if enough of us go to see it and talk about it, this might be achieved. They also suggest we might like to lobby our local cinemas to show it. One local cinema in Norfolk has been known to show it.

Apparently larger distributors were enthusiastic about the film but don't feel it has a big enough potential audience.

Here's a link to a web page which gives details of showings currently planned.

<http://www.moviola.org/Morris.htm>

Tourist Information

Here's an idea – why not send details of your upcoming performances to your regional tourist office? They can then include this in the information they send out to the media and in their newsletters and websites such as Visit Britain and Enjoy England, so tourists planning a visit to your area can include watching traditional dance in their list of things to do. Though having had a look at the websites, I have to say that finding morris on there isn't easy beyond events such as Jack in the Green and Padstow. (Thanks to the Morris Ring newsletter for this suggestion)

School of Everything

This looks like a very good thing -a website where you can publicise your morris (and other) teaching skills. Lots of morris people have apparently joined since this post appeared on the Morris Dance Discussion List (MDDL) on 6th January.

I'm looking for people involved in morris dancing for our website, School of Everything.

The site was inspired by the idea that everyone has something to learn and everyone has something to teach. People come to us looking to learn new skills and find activities in their local area - and we're particularly keen on ensuring traditional skills are passed on to a new generation. Prompted by this week's news reports about the shortage of new recruits for morris sides, we thought we'd try and do our bit to help:

<http://schoolofeverything.com/blog/lets-save-morris-dancing>

To give you some background, School of Everything launched in September 2008 and has been growing fast, with over 10,000 members already. The site is funded by Channel 4 Education and the Young Foundation (which carries on the work of the founder of the Open University). Our aim is to support all kinds of informal learning and skill-sharing.

Anyone can create a free "teaching profile" on the site - and you don't have to be offering teaching in a conventional sense, it's simply a page on which you can promote your activities and people can contact you. So if you're looking for fresh blood for your morris side, we'd love to help you find new members!

There's more information on the site itself: <http://schoolofeverything.com/>

And if you have any questions, myself or my colleagues will be happy to help.

Best wishes,
Claire Medcalf

claire@schoolofeverything.com

And finally ... for some reason all the news seems to come in in January! Please let me have stuff throughout the year to secretaryofom@yahoo.co.uk for inclusion in the newsletter. Ta!